UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

This is a repository copy of *The transition of EAP practitioners into scholarship writing*.

White Rose Research Online URL for this paper:
https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/186267/

Version: Accepted Version

eprints@whiterose.ac.uk
https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/

The Transition of EAP Practitioners into Scholarship Writing

Abstract

EAP practitioner scholarship is a key element of EAP teacher professional development (Martin, 2014) and the credibility of EAP as a discipline (Hamps-Lyon, 2011; Ding & Bruce, 2017). It also allows a professional knowledge base to develop and pedagogical advancements to be made (Borg, 2013). Whilst the BALEAP community values and promotes such scholarship (Gillett, 2021), limited research has been conducted into EAP practitioner beliefs about the written outputs of this activity (Davis, 2019). In particular, there is an absence of research exploring the process by which EAP practitioners begin their scholarship writing. This paper presents a case study of an EAP setting in which a workload allocation has been introduced for scholarship. It explores the motivations, challenges and professional identity implications of scholarship writing for EAP practitioners in this context. The findings suggest that the institutional workload initiative facilitated a cultural shift in which scholarship writing became more normalised and academic identities of EAP practitioners were strengthened. The inclusive institutional understandings of scholarship were also seen to promote practitioner agency in overcoming perceived challenges to the production of early written scholarship outputs.

1. Introduction

As BALEAP celebrates a milestone in its development, this study responds to the increasing profile of EAP practitioner scholarship in the EAP sector. The significance of practitioner scholarship for EAP as a discipline is well established (see, for example, Ding & Bruce, 2017). However, although there is recognition of the importance of practitioner scholarship for collective professional identity, the impact of institutional change on individual EAP practitioner cognitions regarding scholarship has received less attention. As Davis (2019) notes, this literature is more limited still where the focus is on EAP practitioners' beliefs about written scholarship outputs.

This study was designed to align with developments in the evolution of both BALEAP and JEAP. BALEAP has been actively promoting scholarship as a desirable practitioner activity for several years. The BALEAP professional competencies framework, for example, positions scholarship as a central instrument for EAP practitioner professional development (Martin, 2014). The appointment of a research officer position to the Executive Committee of BALEAP has further strengthened this strand of practitioner activity. Moreover, in recognition of the challenges associated with undertaking scholarship, the Research Training Events Series (ResTES) was introduced by BALEAP to support practice-led research (Gillett, 2021). These training sessions have served to scaffold the transition to practitioner research of those EAP practitioners who are not experienced researchers and, in many cases, have not received research training. JEAP has also sought to promote such practitioner research through the introduction of the 'Researching EAP Practice' article format (Hamp-Lyons, 2015).

A broad aim of BALEAP has been to align EAP practices with those in the academy for EAP to gain greater recognition as a discipline. The TEAP Competency Framework, for example, states the following regarding professional development:

> An EAP practitioner will recognize the importance of applying to their practice the
> standards expected of students and other academic staff whilst engaging individually

and collaboratively in continuing professional development, research and scholarship in the TEAP discipline. (BALEAP, 2014, p.23)

As EAP research and scholarship publication constitute such established university-wide academic activity, they offer potential to afford EAP practitioners the desired credibility within university settings (Hamp-Lyons, 2011; Ding & Bruce, 2017). However, until now there has been limited understanding of what EAP practitioners believe the written output standards expected of other academic staff to be. Similarly, there is a lack of research exploring the degree to which EAP practitioners feel invested in the production of such written outputs and its perceived challenges. This paper, then, explores these key issues relating to EAP practitioner research outputs through the case study of an institution in which a workload allocation was provided for EAP practitioners to engage in scholarship, including the production of written outputs. It aims to identify the implications of the innovation from a practitioner perspective as a means of informing potential developments in the sector.

2. Literature review

2.1 The concept of scholarship

This paper draws on the concept of 'scholarship' in its analysis. Scholarship includes a range of activity exploring and applying ideas of teaching and learning. Whilst ´research' tends to be defined in terms of university expectations and is subject to institutional measures, scholarship resists the pressure to conform to conventional external expert norms as a default setting. This empowering interpretation (see Smith, 2015) incorporates the desirability of teacher inquiry being made public with an inclusive interpretation of the activity that might be included. Shulman's (2001) definition of scholarship is based on this premise:

> We develop a scholarship of teaching when our work as teachers becomes public, peer-reviewed and critiqued, and exchanged with other members of our professional communities so they, in turn, can build on our work. (Shulman, 2001, pp. 2-3)

'Scholarship writing' can therefore be understood as encompassing a broad range of outputs, including blogs, grey literature practitioner publications and high-impact articles. This lower compliance with institutional agendas allows greater scope for small-scale, practitioner-based and potentially critical research to be institutionally recognised (Leathwood & Read, 2013). At a sectorial level, it therefore facilitates increased understanding, and sharing, of EAP practices within the profession, thereby developing the professional knowledge base (Borg, 2013).

2.2 The significance of scholarship

Scholarship has significant implications for the status of the EAP sector within higher education (HE) internationally. As Ding and Bruce (2017) point out, it plays a central role in defining EAP as an academic field of study. In the UK, where this research was carried out, an increased focus on research-led teaching and learning in HE is also evident in the Teaching Excellent Framework (Gourlay & Stevenson, 2017). These factors and the value placed on CPD within the BALEAP professional competencies framework (Martin, 2014) contribute to an understanding of why departments responsible for EAP might be invested in the development of a scholarship culture.

Scholarship is also highly significant for the individual practitioner. EAP practitioners and their practices are not always best represented in the research that appears in leading journals (Ding & Bruce, 2017, p. 151). The introduction of the 'Researching EAP Practice' article genre in JEAP, however, was designed to address this situation (see Hamp-Lyon, 2018). It recognised that practitioner scholarship allows practitioners to address the issues that they view as most relevant to their needs. Furthermore, the process of exploring areas of personal pedagogical interest can also facilitate closer engagement with practice and enhance professional growth (Burns, 1999).

2.3 Scholarship writing

The challenges of scholarship and research writing *per se* are well-documented (see, for example, Turner et al., 2014; Habbie & Hyland, 2019). Creating a publishable manuscript requires not only a deep understanding of what is valued in the respective research field but also the ability to write in ways that conform to disciplinary expectations (Huang, Pang & Yu, 2018). Indeed, the 'major work' involved in writing for the top journals can be demanding even for those with research training (Thomson & Kamler, 2012, p.82). For the novice research writer, lack of experience with the writing process and the need to engage with reviewers and editors can make the prospect especially daunting (Wisker, 2013). Moreover, scholarship writing also involves exposure to a critical readership and this can limit teachers' willingness to put work into the public domain (Bai & Hudson, 2011; Turner et al., 2014; Habibie & Hyland, 2019).

However, there are a number of potential motivations for EAP practitioners to take up the opportunity to produce written outputs. One such incentive is the cultural capital that practitioners can accrue from publication (Ding & Bruce, 2019). This capital can serve to enhance their status in the institution and improve their professional prospects (Braine, 2005; Davis, 2019). For those EAP practitioners seeking formal recognition of their professional development, production of written outputs also represents the dissemination of practitioner scholarship expected of senior BALEAP fellows (BALEAP, 2014, p.23). In addition, it should be recognised that teachers may be motivated by an altruistic sense of responsibility to share what they learn with the wider teaching community (Shulman, 2001).

However, empirical EAP practitioner cognition research is scant, and this lacuna is especially evident regarding written scholarship outputs (Ding & Bruce, 2017). Davis' (2019) article for JEAP exploring EAP practitioners' beliefs about writing for publication is an exception and makes a valuable contribution to the field. In the research, Davis (2019) explores the opportunities and threats which publishing research in journals represents for EAP practitioners. The article focuses on those EAP practitioners writing to publish their research 'in journals such as JEAP' (Davis, 2019, p.74), however, which excludes a range of other written outputs that EAP practitioners might produce. Moreover, the practitioner research sample consisted entirely of those who had either completed or were working towards a doctorate, whereas the DELTA and the MA feature far more prominently as the highest level of qualification across the EAP sector (Ding, 2019). There is a case to be made, therefore, for studies which are more representative of the broad EAP practitioner community. Academics holding doctoral qualifications, for example, tend to report a stronger belief in their ability to conduct research owing to the training they have received (Hemmings & Kay, 2009).

2.4 Scholarship writing development

There is limited research exploring the process by which the skills and knowledge required for written scholarship might be acquired. The institutional environment emerges as a significant factor, however, with low individual publishing expectations reported in EAP settings where there is not a strong publishing culture (Blaj-Ward, 2014). The interaction with published writers and feedback from peers and mentors identified as contributing to the development of written scholarship is likely to be absent in such settings. Where socialisation into understandings of how to be successful in research publishing does take place, it can also be a lengthy process requiring whole person investment given the complexity of skills and knowledge required (Mullen, 1999; Tusting et al., 2019).

Knowledge of written discourse genres plays a significant role in successful publication (Tardy, 2009). Work needs to be appropriately formatted to be accepted by the editor-gatekeepers, and requirements can differ not only across disciplines but also between publications (Hyland, 2016; Xu, 2019). In formal professional development settings, genre-based pedagogies have been introduced to develop appropriate understandings of written outputs for research (e.g. Huang et al., 2014). Much of the existing research focuses on developing the publication skills of doctoral students; however, Murray (2002) explores the transition into research publication of practising academics. His findings emphasise the need for both practical and theoretical scholarship writing development to take place. To achieve this, he recommends mentoring, the publicising of successes and the creation of non-intimidating opportunities for publication (Murray, 2002).

2.5 Identity implications of scholarship writing

The complex impact of writing for publication can be seen to include cognitive, social, emotional and ideological levels (Barkhuizen, 2017). Particularly pertinent to the present study is research conducted into ELT lecturers' responses to a new institutional research policy (Tran et al., 2017). Although anxiety over the pressure to publish was identified (see also Turner et al., 2014), stronger academic identities emerged as a result of the formal reclassification of the lecturers' roles. Responses to new managerialist agendas requiring academic publication can be seen to vary, however. Huang et al.'s (2018) study, for example, reveals how academics either negotiated, challenged or complied with the imposed change.

In an EAP context, there is strong recognition of the professional identity implications of scholarship (see Ding & Bruce, 2017; Ding 2019). Empirical research, though, remains very limited. Davis' (2019) aforementioned article for JEAP is unique in its exploration of the threats and opportunities that EAP practitioner-researchers associate with publication. A gap remains in the literature, however, for those EAP practitioners who are new to scholarship writing and who are experiencing an institutional transition towards increased scholarship activity.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research questions

This study of the EAP practitioners' beliefs about scholarship writing aims to answer the following four research questions:

RQ1: What investment do the EAP practitioners at [institution] have in the production of written scholarship outputs?

RQ2: What (if any) challenges does scholarship writing present for the EAP practitioners at [institution]?

RQ3: How does the transition into scholarship writing impact the professional identity of EAP practitioners at [institution]?

RQ4: What beliefs do the EAP practitioners at [institution] have regarding the standard of scholarship writing expected of other academics in the academy?

3.2 **Research setting**

The research was conducted in a large UK higher education language centre in which a new scholarship workload allocation policy had been introduced for EAP practitioners. As a result of this institutional innovation, EAP practitioners were each assigned 10% of their workload allocation for scholarship purposes. They also had the opportunity to apply for an additional 10% scholarship allocation on the basis of specific scholarship projects. The stated aim of this development was for the language centre to transform itself from one which was almost exclusively teaching-focused to one which was more academic. As one of the senior managers at the time explains:

> The introduction of a workload allocation for scholarship was designed to create a
> dynamic culture in which issues of language learning and teaching were explored and
> discussed. […] You can't suddenly ask people to do something additional to what they
> are already doing. Time is the biggest obstacle, the pragmatic, 'How am I actually
> going to be able to do this?'

In addition to facilitating the professional development of individual EAP practitioners, there was also a desire to raise the profile of EAP within the wider university. The innovation made a noticeable impact on professional activity in the language centre: two years after the introduction of the workload allocation for scholarship, almost all of the centre's EAP practitioners were engaged in some form of scholarship activity. Although dissemination of this scholarship was encouraged, however, no formal requirements regarding writing for publication were prescribed by the senior management. The EAP practitioners were not, for example, subject to research assessment exercises. The second member of the senior management team explains the position adopted as follows:

> The idea of going public has been left quite vague. We have the usual for that -
> presentations, seminars and within that, writing. But I was also attempting to include
> the potential of things like blogs, materials development, publishing textbooks… so,
> the wide range of going public.

This study investigates EAP practitioners' beliefs about scholarship writing in this new professional context.

3.3 **Participants**

A convenience sample of 12 EAP practitioners and two senior managers (14 participants in total) took part in the research. The criteria for the selection of the EAP practitioner participants were the following:

a) They all had a minimum of three years' EAP teaching experience in the institution. This ensured that practitioner participants had been in post for at least a year prior to the introduction of the new scholarship policy.

b) They had not published any research prior to the introduction of the workload allocation for scholarship.

c) They had undertaken a scholarship project at the time of the research and were therefore in a position where they might be engaged in, have already produced, or be considering scholarship writing.

Potential EAP practitioner participants in the research setting were invited by email to participate in the research. Of those contacted, all 12 agreed. All but one of these practitioner participants held a master's qualification (predominantly related to ELT or applied linguistics) in addition to their teaching qualifications. None of the practitioner participants was either working towards or had completed a doctorate.

The two senior managers who participated in the research both held responsibility for the introduction of the workload allocation for scholarship. They were also contacted by email. These two participants both held doctorates and had strong publication records.

3.4 Research design

This study adopts a qualitative case study approach (Yin, 1994) to explore the beliefs of EAP practitioners who are new to scholarship writing. Such case study research can be useful to capture unique characteristics of the individual professional setting (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). It is also widely used to explore the impact of professional settings on teachers' beliefs owing to its potential for fine-grained exploration of the influence of environmental factors (Lewis, 2003; Simons, 2009; Wyness, 2010).

Individual semi-structured interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) of approximately one hour in duration were conducted with each of the twelve EAP practitioners and with the two senior managers. Interviews were adopted as they facilitate access to the EAP practitioners' own perspectives on events (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). In this study, EAP practitioner beliefs about scholarship writing in a period of institutional change could therefore be explored. The interviews were structured to explore the main research questions systematically, whilst allowing space for the interviewer to probe interviewees' comments and follow up emerging themes (Cohen et al., 2007). The interviews were audio-recorded.

The research also employs departmental documentation, including the minutes of the language centre's executive management group and official statements regarding workload allocation policy. This allowed accurate accounts to be established of institutional decision-making regarding the workload allocation for scholarship.

3.5 Data analysis

The interview recordings were transcribed externally and then reviewed by the researcher to confirm the accuracy of the transcriptions. The data were subsequently analysed through the adoption of an abductive approach, which combines deductive and inductive data categorisation (Kennedy, 2018). The analysis began with provisional a priori data categories (Rose & Sullivan, 1993) based on the four research questions. The interview transcriptions were reviewed several times for the researcher to become familiar with the data (Terry et al., 2017) and then coded deductively according to these categories (Braun et al., 2018). However, new themes were also allowed to emerge inductively from the data (Braun & Clark, 2006) to avoid excessive influence of existing understandings and analytical frameworks (Kelle, 2014). As an example, teacher efficacy, emerged as a significant and unanticipated theme in the data. Commercial coding software was then used to code all interview data according to the final categories. For the trustworthiness of the data analysis to be increased (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), an independent researcher checked the coding categories for accuracy. The minor differences that emerged were resolved through agreed refinements to the coding process. The depth of engagement with the data during the analysis process was also designed to contribute to the trustworthiness of the research (see Nowell et al., 2017).

3.6   Research ethics

The study received official ethical approval from the researcher's home institution and protocols were strictly observed. Potential research participants all received information about the study, including the optional nature of their involvement, data security and the guarantee of anonymity in research outputs. Careful consideration was given to the relationship between the researcher and participants and no power relationship was identified that might influence participant involvement. Informed consent of the participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) was obtained in all cases prior to data generation.

4.   Findings

The research findings are presented here to address each of the research questions in turn.

4.1   EAP practitioner investment

The first research question relates to the EAP practitioners' investment in the production of written scholarship outputs. Several of the practitioner participants identified a changing EAP sector and the resulting employment requirements as providing motivation to engage in scholarship writing. The following interview extract provides an example of this:

> I think the scholarship side of things is not just here - it's everywhere now. I don't
> really see places advertising university EAP positions that don't expect a research
> profile and a list of publications. (Practitioner 8)

Most of the practitioners, however, regarded the internal promotions system as having greater relevance to the value that they placed on scholarship writing. This view can be seen in the instance below:

> I mean, from a promotions point of view, I think it's very desirable to be publishing.
> Even if it just states that you need to have been engaged in scholarship, to show you've

done something substantial and of the right quality, it needs to appear in print and be peer-reviewed, I guess. (Practitioner 2)

In addition, a significant number of the participants believed publications were indirectly expected by the senior management as a result of substantial time being granted for scholarship. This perception is apparent, for example, in the following two interview extracts:

We've been given this time to do scholarship and that's a real privilege. […] Even if it's not stated explicitly, I get the strong message that scholarship here involves publishing something in some journal or other form. (Practitioner 5)

With my original proposal [for increased workload allocation for scholarship], I said I would present and publish the findings. I put a journal article in there as I thought that was what they probably expected by outputs. (Practitioner 11)

However, the two senior managers interviewed both indicated a broader interpretation of outputs. Thus, scholarship outputs such as presentations, teaching materials and blog posts were also considered to be valid. One of the manager participants summarises this position in the following way:

A desirable output is something which is constructed in a way that allows for constructive review and feedback, and by virtue of that, contributes to our body of knowledge. (Manager 1)

Many practitioner participants expressed the belief that a shift in the institutional culture was taking place and indicated that this in turn motivated them to consider written outputs for their scholarship projects. As one practitioner who perceived an increased level of scholarship writing in the work environment comments:

Some of my motivation might be because you see people from here getting their things published in [the in-house journal] or perhaps other people had it published somewhere like Applied Linguistics. I started to think, 'Hang on. I've worked here longer than they have but I haven't done that. Why haven't I done that?' Maybe I should do more with what I found in my research. (Practitioner 3)

Indeed, several practitioner participants described the motivating effect of the 'change of mind-set' which they regarded as having been established by the degree of scholarship writing activity taking place in their professional setting:

If lots of people are doing writing, there's lots of people to ask questions to. You can read what other people have done. You can see what steps they've taken. It's something to aim for. It's quite nice when you see a colleague who's done something and you are like, 'Oh, I want to do that!' (Practitioner 12)

The desire to produce written outputs to disseminate the findings of their scholarship projects also emerged as a strong motivational factor for several of the practitioner participants. The following extract, for example, illustrates such a desire to share pedagogical practice:

How could no one have done this before? It seems a really rich area and it's made such a difference with my students; they've really opened up. That really motivated me to want to get into doing the writing so that other teachers in other places might be inspired to start experimenting with these ideas. (Practitioner 9)

Moreover, the findings strongly indicated that EAP practitioners believed they had expert knowledge of their classrooms and of EAP teaching pedagogy which could be disseminated through scholarship writing. One of the senior management participants emphasizes the significance of professional knowledge taking this written form:

> The only way to avoid the disconnect between language acquisition research and teaching is if practitioners themselves start to articulate their expertise. It's okay practitioners going to conferences but that's limited. So, we should have practitioners themselves writing and putting their work in the public domain. (Manager 2)

Scholarship writing also appeared to present an opportunity for practitioners' personal-professional development. One of the practitioner participants explains the motivation to engage in scholarship writing as follows:

> I'm interested in the question of 'Can I write something?' because I've never written anything to be published and… self-worth is maybe too strong a term for me, but to see whether I could do it. To be honest, my main reason [for writing] is probably developmental and I can use the scholarship time to take my research to the next level. (Participant 8)

In summary, a range of factors were identified as influencing practitioner investment in scholarship writing. Overall, the perceived shift from a purely teaching-oriented environment towards a more academic culture appeared to increase EAP practitioner motivation to engage in scholarship writing.

4.2 Writing challenges

This section presents the findings for the second research question, which explores challenges in the production of scholarship writing and EAP practitioners' strategic responses to such challenges. One of the key findings was that most participants expressed concerns about the exposure which results from scholarship writing. The following extract provides one such example:

> That's one of the things on my mind - the public scrutiny thing […] You've got people who know a lot more than you do picking over your writing. They probably write a lot better than you do and so on… or are more experienced in that particular type of writing. It's daunting. (Practitioner 9)

Several participants contrasted the precision required for scholarship writing to that required for oral presentations at conferences and professional issues meetings. Lack of subject expertise, more visible in the permanent written form, was a major factor identified by participants as reducing their sense of self-efficacy:

> I'm very conscious of the fact that the things I will be writing about, I probably have about an MA level understanding of. I'm not an expert. I have some knowledge of it. (Practitioner 7)

A lack of doctoral training to design a robust research methodology was also highlighted by several participants as lowering their sense of self-efficacy. One practitioner participant puts it as follows:

> I know that everybody suffers from imposter syndrome to a certain extent, but I do feel
> I don't have any theoretical foundations for anything because I haven't been through
> that research training. (Practitioner 11)

These concerns, however, were contrasted by the high sense of self-efficacy reported for the crafting of scholarship outputs. The following two extracts exemplify such findings:

> I think that you would have a couple of strategies as an EAP practitioner up your sleeve
> in terms of being able to uncover features of genres […] Who better than an EAP
> practitioner to try and pick your way through to produce an unfamiliar genre of
> writing? (Practitioner 2)

> I've not got training in it. But I think… I mean, the writing is what I teach. I should be
> able to understand the genre and structure of a piece of writing. If I can't do that, then I
> shouldn't be teaching what I teach. (Practitioner 11)

The practitioners also made strategic choices regarding the choice of written scholarship genre. Several participants, for example, reported writing for publication in an in-house journal that they felt would support the development of their written work. As one of these practitioners put it:

> I'm trying to not be over-ambitious with this first piece of writing. That's why I really
> want to write for [the in-house journal] because I feel that it will be a developmental
> process. Plus, with this kind of practitioner research, who else could I write it for?
> (Practitioner 6)

Identifying a suitable forum for the publication of their scholarship writing was therefore an important consideration for the practitioner participants. One of the senior manager participants also commented on the limited publication options available for practitioner scholarship:

> Another obstacle is that there don't seem to be many outlets for scholarship. There are
> the traditional journals that are more on the research side of scholarship but there aren't
> many choices beyond that. So, [the in-house journal] was a starting point. Even so,
> there aren't enough outlets even now. (Manager 2)

In several instances, practitioner participants reported adopting 'safer' methodologies in their written scholarship. The following extract illustrates one such strategic approach:

> My [the in-house journal] first piece, just to get me going, is going to be much more
> practitioner reflection. That would be my methodology - quite exploratory practice,
> which doesn't open up as much criticism, I believe. Because it's very much, 'I'm
> leading it. I'm demonstrating it.' (Practitioner 4)

These strategic decisions were at times framed within a developmental trajectory as another practitioner explains of her planned scholarship writing:

> [The in-house journal] feels like a security net. It feels safe because it's within the
> university. It's with people that I know, and I feel very safe with that. Like journal
> articles are bigger and scarier. That's why I really want to write for [the in-house
> journal] because I feel that will be a developmental process. That's me transitioning to
> scholarship, if you like. Whereas, the book chapter is me doing it. They're different in
> how I will approach them. (Practitioner 12)

The book chapter which the practitioner above refers to was for an edited EAP book. Two other practitioners who had made the same strategic choice also referred to the guidance and support the group publication project provided. As one of them comments:

> There's guidance from [the book project] team as to what the expectations are and clear deadlines as well. I think it will be quite structured in the end and there will be plenty of feedback. (Practitioner 5)

Scholarship writing, it can be seen, had self-efficacy implications for many of the practitioner participants, particularly in relation to the perceived robustness of the subject knowledge and of the methodology adopted. However, many of the participants had developed strategies to compensate for these concerns.

4.3 **Professional identity**

The third research question explores the implications of scholarship writing for the EAP practitioners' professional identity. Many participants made distinctions between the term 'teacher' on the one hand and 'academic' (or 'lecturer') on the other. The following participant, for example, felt that written scholarship outputs were a sine qua non for classification as a lecturer:

> I don't want to call myself a lecturer yet. Maybe if I did manage to publish things, then that would change how I view myself in the centre or in the university as a whole… more of not just a teacher. (Practitioner 1)

Self-classification as an academic (or lecturer) was also problematised by a participant who questioned its applicability to those working in the field of EAP:

> We are encouraged, I suppose, to do research that teaches us that this is going to inform our teaching and something like that. But it does mean that we are thinking more closely about the practices of the university. But then, we are more about language than lecturers across the university. I'm a language teacher not an academic. (Practitioner 9)

Other participants believed that working in a university setting in itself necessitates the production of written outputs:

> But I mean, beginning to write for publication, it's part of being acculturated into being an academic, really, or into someone who's able to work in that sphere in collaboration with academics, anyway. Yeah. It's possibly a professional obligation working in a university, right? (Practitioner 3)

Several participants also stated that they associated written outputs with increased academic credibility and influence in the wider university. As one of them comments:

> If you can show people buying publications that you have a list of things that you've published within the university that you work in, that you are part of their community in some way, you then get more respect. People will take you more seriously. (Practitioner 11)

It was felt by one participant in particular that without the academic credibility conferred by publishing, EAP practitioners were positioned unfavourably in the 'university hierarchy':

I don't think we're anywhere near the top of it in comparison to doctors and professors with probably years of publishing. We are language assistants in many minds. (Practitioner 7)

Whilst the above examples address the positioning of EAP practitioners in relation to the wider university, some practitioner participants indicated that they also sought credibility with their own EAP colleagues:

Well, I think when you write programmes, people need that confidence that you know what you're doing. If you want people to believe in you as a course leader and a course writer, and embrace your materials, and your programme, the assessments you've set and all the rest of it... I think you do need some credibility for that. (Practitioner 11)

The practitioner participants' professional identity vis-à-vis their students was also influenced by their engagement in scholarship writing. The following two interview extracts exemplify this:

I feel like I have a bit more kudos with the students when I'm doing research and writing because I feel like I'm a bit more in their shoes. (Practitioner 2)

I'm more confident with the students now. Is it too strong to say you feel a little bit fraudulent as an EAP practitioner if you haven't done it yourself? (Practitioner 9)

In summary, the production of scholarship writing appeared to have strong professional identity implications for a significant number of the EAP practitioners. Increased professional credibility was associated positively with the production of written outputs However, there was also evidence of a tension for some between scholarship writing and teaching, with the latter considered to constitute the primary professional activity.

4.4   The wider academy

This section reports on the findings for the fourth research question, which explores practitioner beliefs regarding the scholarship and research standards expected of academic staff in the wider university. With the increased opportunity and encouragement to conduct scholarship, a significant number of the EAP practitioners suggested that similar expectations to those of the wider academy would ultimately be placed on them for written scholarship. Practitioner 10, for example, argues that such obligations 'come with the territory' and goes on to say:

In (the university department the participant was seconded to), for example, they are encouraged to have a certain amount of output in terms of academic publications. (Practitioner 10)

Moreover, the perception of such output being validated by journal ranking was reported by several participants, such as in this example:

Other staff in the university seem to be under all kinds of pressure to publish and to publish in the right places. (Practitioner 8)

The belief that research in the wider academy takes very specific forms also emerged quite strongly in the findings. Many participants, for example, referred to journal articles, books and book chapters as having the desired currency in the wider academy. One practitioner participant explains her thoughts on this issue as follows:

> We need to show the traditional markers of educational achievement, and those sorts of written outputs serve to show impact in the university. (Practitioner 3)

Whilst many participants associated the activity of the wider academy with high-powered research (often including substantial research grants), others questioned the uniformity of output in the wider university. The comments by the following practitioner participant, for example, illustrate a more critical perspective:

> There is pressure for impact. In the university, there's still a lot of discussion about what impacts means in terms of scholarship. People seem to fluctuate between expecting the top-end REFerable stuff and it being more practical in terms of an impact on student education within the university. (Practitioner 11)

This more nuanced interpretation of scholarship activity in the wider academy is also reflected in the view expressed by one of the senior management participants:

> There is a myth that what goes on in the rest of the university is always high-powered, single-authored articles that they churn out… and in some cases that's clearly the case. You know, the stereotype of the professor who doesn't teach and just writes. But the teaching and learning community, who we are more aligned with, includes academics in law, education, whoever it might be. I think the kinds of things that we collectively produce are easily on a par with the things they do. (Manager 1)

Overall, the dominant belief expressed by the practitioners was that the wider academy is solely engaged in highly impactful research activity. As a result, many of them felt that similar expectations were likely to be placed on them. However, beliefs were also expressed both by EAP practitioners and senior management that challenge such a narrative by identifying the diversity of scholarship writing produced within the wider academy.

Table 1: Summary of main findings by research theme.

Research theme	Main findings
Investment	- Expectations arising from workload allocation - Employment and internal promotion requirements - Institutional culture - Expertise-sharing - Personal development
Challenges	- Exposure to critical audience - Lack of subject expertise - Lack of research expertise (Responses to challenges) - Strategic choice of format - Strategic choice of methodology
Professional identify	- Division between 'academics' and 'teachers' - Questions of core EAP activity - Internal credibility with peers and students - External credibility within the university
The wider academy	- High impact of written output of wider academy - Uniformity of written outputs by wider academy

(Counter positions)
- ▪ Varied impact of learning and teaching community output
- ▪ Diversity of written outputs by wider academy

Table 1 (above) provides a summary of the main research findings presented in this section according to the four main research themes. The implications of these findings are discussed in the following section.

5. Discussion

Two years after the introduction of the workload allocations for scholarship, the resulting high level of scholarship activity had significantly impacted EAP practitioner investment in scholarship writing. The research participants had all developed scholarship projects in areas of individual professional interest and there was evidence of a desire to share the resulting findings with the wider EAP community. Whilst there are different possible forms of dissemination, the findings suggest that many practitioners believed that written scholarship outputs would be expected due to the institutional investment in providing time for scholarship. The EAP practitioners were also invested in the capital provided by publication. Scholarship publications were viewed as enhancing the professional advancement of the EAP practitioners (see also Davis, 2019) and increasing the participants' professional standing with colleagues and students. Investment in initial scholarship can therefore be seen to operate at a number of levels.

A perceived normalisation of scholarship writing as valid EAP practitioner activity was identified as having emerged in the professional setting. This publication culture is often lacking in EAP settings (Blaj-Ward, 2014) despite its importance in creating expectations of writing for publication (Mullen, 1999). The presence of a growing number of EAP practitioners with successful scholarship writing experiences appeared to be a motivating environmental factor for other practitioners. Moreover, the availability of peer expertise and initiatives such as an in-house journal with editorial support appeared to have also contributed to a 'can do' culture amongst the practitioners. The gradual development of this publication culture stands in sharp contrast to the lack of appropriate change management in contexts where publication requirements have been institutionally imposed on teachers (e.g. Habibie & Hyland, 2019).

Many of the practitioner participants reported anxiety over the exposure of initial written outputs to expert scrutiny in the public domain. This anxiety was particularly evident where participants believed that they lacked a robust understanding of research practices and of theoretical knowledge in the field of study. These concerns would appear to be attributable, in part at least, to the fact that the majority of EAP practitioners do not have the benefit of doctoral studies and research training (Ding, 2019).The findings therefore highlight the desirability of appropriate research training (such as the new Research Training Event Series for BALEAP) for EAP practitioners to develop both their methodological understanding and their confidence in the research methods adopted. They also suggest the value of continued engagement by EAP practitioners with specific scholarship areas for robust subject knowledge to be developed.

Practitioner participants did report strong self-efficacy beliefs, however, in the crafting of written scholarship. Producing scholarship writing can be demanding owing to the specific requirements of individual publications (Huang et al., 2018). Moreover, where the appropriate

genre knowledge is lacking, publication attempts are unlikely to be successful (Tardy, 2009). The EAP practitioners were aware of such publication gatekeeping but appeared less daunted by this dimension of scholarship writing than they were by the challenges of producing robust content. Indeed, several participants stated a belief that the genre analysis skills developed in their capacity as EAP practitioners prepared them well for the scholarship writing crafting process.

The findings indicate that the framing of the institutional scholarship policy created the flexibility for practitioners to respond strategically where there was anxiety about initial scholarship outputs. The inclusive framing of scholarship opened a variety of routes into initial scholarship writing. Without the pressure to publish in high-ranking journals, the participants exercised agency in seeking out non-intimidating opportunities for publication research (Murray, 2002). These scholarship writing outputs included blogs, articles for an in-house journal and book chapters for a group project. However, the participants also made strategic decisions about the choice of research area to limit critical exposure and sought to engage in collaborative projects where guidance and support would be available. The creation of an in-house journal, viewed as facilitating a low-risk developmental opportunity, also appears to have played a significant role in encouraging initial written outputs.

The institutional policy similarly enabled participants to decide their own developmental routes for scholarship writing. Since scholarship engagement is a long-term process (Ding & Bruce (2017), a strategic response by some participants was to consciously select manageable initial outputs as steppingstones to more ambitious outputs. An example of this can be seen in the case of Participant 12, who regards an in-house journal article as a developmental process for a later book chapter. This indicates an acknowledgement on the part of the participants of the need to develop self-efficacy and publication-writing skills over a period of time. The flexible scholarship policy accommodated the diverse needs of individual practitioners, allowing them to disseminate their studies of teaching and learning as a staged progression. Practitioners could therefore avoid a direct leap into writing for high-ranking journals that has created anxiety in other contexts (e.g. Thomson, 2012; Turner, 2014).

The transformed institutional environment also raised questions of professional identity for the individual practitioner participants, reflecting the powerful role of context (Barkhuizen, 2017). Engagement with scholarship writing was interpreted by many EAP practitioners as representing a shift from a predominantly teaching identity towards a more academic one (as theorised by Ding & Bruce, 2017). Scholarship written outputs were not only viewed as conferring professional status but were strongly associated with academic research activity in the wider university. The practitioner participants adopted a range of positions regarding academic identity, with the majority of EAP practitioners welcoming the transition from 'teacher' to 'academic'. The absence of an imposed research agenda appeared to allow the space for a gradual reorientation of practitioner identity within the new cultural setting. Reservations expressed by one of the participants regarding the changes do, however, reveal the lack of complete acceptance typical of such a transition.

The practitioner participants' professional identity was also very much framed within understandings of the standards expected of research activity in the wider academy. The dominant perception held by the practitioners was one of non-EAP academics under pressure to deliver high impact publications for institutional research assessment exercises. This resulted in some concern amongst participants about the pressure that they might face at a later stage to deliver similar outputs. It also appeared to constitute a psychological barrier to strong

identification by the EAP practitioners with the research of the wider academy. This practitioner view of written outputs by the wider academy was countered, however, by the belief expressed by two of the participants that a wide range of research practices are represented in the wider academy. The implication of this latter position is that more explicit alignment of EAP practitioner scholarship writing with the scholarship outputs of the wider teaching and learning community would be appropriate. Such a stance validates a broader selection of written scholarship outputs than those associated solely with professional researchers.

6.   Conclusion

There is a lack of empirical research on EAP practitioner scholarship writing despite its significance for the EAP community served by BALEAP and JEAP. This qualitative, interview-based study has explored EAP practitioners' beliefs about scholarship writing in a professional context where a workload allocation for scholarship had recently been granted to the EAP practitioners. As the research consists of a single case study, it makes no claim of generalisability. The limited research sample in the study is also acknowledged. However, the level of detail provided aims to allow the reader to become sufficiently familiar with the case to identify the ways in which the findings may be transferable to other specific settings.

The study indicates that as scholarship activity increased due to the scholarship workload allocation, issues around scholarship writing became increasingly relevant to the practitioners. Particularly noteworthy is the cultural shift identified by practitioners as scholarship writing became normalised in the professional setting. Examples of scholarship writing success and an increased level of scholarship writing activity appeared to contribute to practitioners' positive expectations of scholarship writing and to provide available expertise that could be drawn on. The flexible scholarship policy was also significant in that there was no obligation for practitioners to meet any explicit institutional publication requirements. Furthermore, an inclusive interpretation of valid written scholarship outputs was in place. These factors appeared to create the necessary space for those new to scholarship writing to exercise agency in the development of their scholarship writing.

The research also contributes to our understanding of the implications of the transition into scholarship writing for EAP practitioners' professional identity, including how they position themselves in relation to the wider academy. Scholarship writing is seen to promote a stronger academic identity for the participants, leading to closer alignment with academics in the wider academy. For some practitioners this association potentially implies a challenging external agenda; however, the study suggests that the EAP practitioners' beliefs about the research activity of the wider academy may not reflect the full range of scholarship publication activity in the university. It is therefore specifically with the wider teaching and learning community in university settings that EAP practitioners might most usefully be aligned.

Given that scholarship '[is] the mechanism through which the profession of teaching itself advances' (Hutchings & Shulman, 1999, p. 14), departments responsible for EAP need to create the necessary conditions for such activity to flourish. Looking forwards, a key challenge for

BALEAP and JEAP will also be to provide effective support for the development of this EAP practitioner scholarship and its dissemination.

List of References

Bai, L., & Hudson, P. (2011). Understanding Chinese TEFL academics' capacity for research. *Journal of Further and Higher Education, 35*(3), 391-407.

BALEAP. (2014). TEAP Accreditation Scheme Handbook. Retrieved from https://www.baleap.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/TEAP-Scheme-Handbook-2014.pdf

Barkhuizen, G. (2017). Language teacher identity research: An introduction. In G. Barkhuizen (Ed.), *Reflections on language teacher identity research* (pp. 1-11). Abingon, Oxon: Routledge.

Blaj-Ward, L. (2014). *Researching contexts, practices and pedagogies in English for academic purposes*. Basingstoke, Hamps: Springer.

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. (1992). *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods* (2 ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Borg, S. (2013). *Teacher Research in Language Teaching: A Critical Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Braine, G. J. T. Q. (2005). The challenge of academic publishing: A Hong Kong perspective. *39*(4), 707-716.

Braun, V., Clarke, V., Hayfield, N., & Terry, G. (2018). Thematic analysis. In P. Liamputtong (Ed.), *Handbook of research methods in health social sciences* (pp. 1-18). Singapore: Springer.

Burns, A. (1999). *Collaborative Action Research for English Language Teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cohen, M., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research Methods in Education* (6th ed.). New York: Routledge.

Davis, M. (2019). Publishing research as an EAP practitioner: Opportunities and threats. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 39*, 72-86.

Ding, A., & Bruce, I. (2017). *The English for Academic Purposes practitioner: Operating on the edge of academia*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer.

Fazel, I. (2019). Writing for publication as a native speaker: The experiences of two Anglophone novice scholars. In P. Habibie & K. Hyland (Eds.), *Novice Writers and Scholarly Publication: Authors, Mentors and Gatekeepers* (pp. 79-95). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Flowerdew, J. J. J. o. S. L. W. (1999). Problems in writing for scholarly publication in English: The case of Hong Kong. *8*(3), 243-264.

Gillett, A. (2021). History of BALEAP. Retrieved from http://www.uefap.com/baleap/

Gourlay, L., & Stevenson, J. (2017). Teaching excellence in higher education: critical perspectives. *Teaching in Higher Education, 22*(4), 391-395. doi:10.1080/13562517.2017.1304632

Habibie, P., & Hyland, K. (2019). Introduction: The risks and rewards of scholarly publishing. In P. Habibie & K. Hyland (Eds.), *Novice Writers and Scholarly Publication: Authors, Mentors, Gatekeepers* (pp. 1-10). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Hamp-Lyons, L. (2011). English for Academic Purposes. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning* (pp. 89-105). Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Hamp-Lyons, L. (2015). The future of JEAP and EAP. *JEAP, 20*, A1-A4.

Hamp-Lyons, L. (2018). Why 'Researching EAP Practice'? *JEAP*, *31*, A3-A4

Hamp-Lyons, L., & Hyland, K. (2005). Editorial for 4, 1: Some further thoughts on EAP and JEAP. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 4*(1), 1-4.

Hemmings, B., & Kay, R. (2009). Lecturer self efficacy: Its related dimensions and the influence of gender and qualifications. *Issues in Educational Research, 19*(3), 243-254.

Huang, J. C. (2014). Learning to write for publication in English through genre-based pedagogy: A case in Taiwan. *System, 45*, 175-186. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2014.05.010

Huang, Y., Pang, S.-K., & Yu, S. (2018). Academic identities and university faculty responses to new managerialist reforms: experiences from China. *Studies in Higher Education, 43*(1), 154-172.

Hutchings, P., & Shulman, L. S. (1999). The scholarship of teaching: New elaborations, new developments. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning, 31*(5), 10-15.

Hyland, K. (2016). *Academic Publishing: Issues and Challenges in the Construction of Knowledge*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kamler, B. (2008). Rethinking doctoral publication practices: Writing from and beyond the thesis. *Studies in Higher Education, 33*(3), 283-294.

Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2009). *Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Leathwood, C., & Read, B. (2013). Research policy and academic performativity: Compliance, contestation and complicity. *Studies in Higher Education, 38*(8), 1162-1174.

Lewis, J. (2003). Design Issues. In J. Ritchie & J. Lewis (Eds.), *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. London: SAGE.

Martin, P. (2014). Teachers in transition: The road to EAP. In P. Breen (Ed.), *Cases on Teacher Identity, Diversity, and Cognition in Higher Education* (pp. 287-316). Hershey, PA: IGI Global.

Mullen, C. A. (1999). 'What I needed to know to get published': teaching (frightened) graduate students to write for publication. *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching, 10*(2), 27-52.

Murray, R. (2002). Writing Development for Lecturers Moving from Further to Higher Education: A case study. *Journal of Further and Higher Education, 26*(3), 229-239. doi:10.1080/03098770220149585

Rose, D., & Sullivan, O. (1993). *Introducing Data Analysis for Social Scientists*. Buckingham Open University Press.

Shulman, L. (2001). From Minsk to Pinsk: Why a scholarship of teaching and learning? *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 48-53.

Smith, R. (2015). Teacher research in language teaching: A critical analysis. *ELT Journal, 69*(2), 205-208. doi:10.1093/elt/ccv009 %J ELT Journal

Tang, R. (2012). *Academic writing in a second or foreign language: Issues and challenges facing ESL/EFL academic writers in higher education contexts*: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Tardy, C. M. (2009). *Building genre knowledge*: Parlor Press West Lafayette, IN.

Terry, G., Hayfield, N., Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2017). Thematic analysis. In C. Willig & W. Stainton Rogers (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research in psychology* (pp. 17-37). London.

Thomson, P., & Kamler, B. (2012). *Writing for peer reviewed journals: Strategies for getting published*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Tran, A., Burns, A., & Ollerhead, S. J. S. (2017). ELT lecturers' experiences of a new research policy: Exploring emotion and academic identity. *System, 67*, 65-76.

Turner, R., Brown, T., & Edwards-Jones, A. J. I. J. f. A. D. (2014). 'Writing my first academic article feels like dancing around naked': research development for higher education lecturers working in further education colleges. *International Journal for Academic Development, 19*(2), 87-98.

Tusting, K., McCulloch, S., Bhatt, I., Hamilton, M., & Barton, D. (2019). *Academics writing: the dynamics of knowledge creation*: Routledge.

Wisker, G. (2013). Articulate – academic writing, refereeing editing and publishing our work in learning, teaching and educational development. *Innovations in Education & Teaching International, 50*(4), 344-356.

Xu, F. (2019). Learning the language to write for publication: The nexus between the linguistic approach and the genre approach. In P. Habibie & H. K (Eds.), *Novice writers and scholarly publication* (pp. 117-134). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan

Xu, Y. (2014). Becoming researchers: A narrative study of Chinese university EFL teachers' research practice and their professional identity construction. *18*(2), 242-259. doi:10.1177/1362168813505943

Yin, R. (1994). *Case Study Research*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.