

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR ACADEMIC ENGLISH

Getting the most out of an English speaking environment

Stew Markel: Coordinator, English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

Welcome

- The Center for the Study of Languages and Cultures
 - 329 DeBartolo Hall
 - Web: <http://cslc.nd.edu/>
- English for Academic Purposes (EAP) Program
 - EAP Fellow: Julia Feder & Sarah Baechle
 - Workshops & Blog
 - Tutoring & Consultation Services
 - Web: <http://cslc.nd.edu/eap>

Graduate School Professional Development Activities Checklist

	Department and Discipline	Research	Teaching	Career	Ethics
Early Stage (coursework, pre-doctoral)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Learn about programs and resources <input type="checkbox"/> Sync to the professional development calendar <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a strategic plan with your academic adviser <input type="checkbox"/> Meet with your subject librarian 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Explore resources for internal and external grants and fellowships <input type="checkbox"/> Sign up for COS and register professional profile <input type="checkbox"/> Apply for grants and fellowships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Explore Kanob Center programs and resources <input type="checkbox"/> Attend TA Orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Begin working toward teaching certificate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Explore Career Center programs and resources <input type="checkbox"/> Complete a self-assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Build your campus network <input type="checkbox"/> Build your CV <input type="checkbox"/> Attend job talks in your department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Explore Office of Research, Riley Center, and Center for Ethics and Culture <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training <input type="checkbox"/> Complete the required ethics workshop
Mid Stage (master's research, candidacy exams)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Assess your strategic plan <input type="checkbox"/> Meet departmental milestones <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a network within your department <input type="checkbox"/> Pursue leadership and service efforts <input type="checkbox"/> Join professional organizations and build your external network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in academic writing workshops <input type="checkbox"/> Attend and present at conferences <input type="checkbox"/> Apply for grants and fellowships <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer as a journal reviewer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete a mentored teaching experience <input type="checkbox"/> Take a summer teaching course <input type="checkbox"/> Arrange for teaching observation/consultation <input type="checkbox"/> Start building portfolio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Explore career opportunities for your field <input type="checkbox"/> Identify your transferable skills <input type="checkbox"/> Draft application materials <input type="checkbox"/> Seek internship opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Attend job talks in your department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reflect on the ethical dimensions related to your research <input type="checkbox"/> Attend ethics and compliance lectures
Late Stage (dissertation, job search)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Request references and identify job opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Mentor junior students <input type="checkbox"/> Meet all deadlines <input type="checkbox"/> Write and practice your job talk <input type="checkbox"/> Attend a dissertation defense <input type="checkbox"/> Report placement to Graduate School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Form a dissertation reading/writing group <input type="checkbox"/> Build international and interdisciplinary network <input type="checkbox"/> Publish your research <input type="checkbox"/> Devise a 5-year research plan <input type="checkbox"/> Apply for dissertation fellowships <input type="checkbox"/> Identify funding sources for continued research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Apply for advanced teaching certificate <input type="checkbox"/> Pursue "Instructor of Record" opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Finalize portfolio <input type="checkbox"/> Develop teaching demonstration for academic interview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Finalize job application materials <input type="checkbox"/> Tap into your professional network for job opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Learn how to interview and negotiate <input type="checkbox"/> Attend job talks in your department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in an ethics class <input type="checkbox"/> Serve as a role model for junior graduate students on negotiating ethical issues in your research <input type="checkbox"/> Attend ethics and compliance lectures

http://graduateschool.nd.edu/professional_development/pdcalendar/

Today Monday, September 3 Print Week Month Agenda

Monday, September 3

- 2:00pm Resume Review for Engineers

Tuesday, September 4

- 12:00pm RefWorks
- 12:00pm Academic Job Search Series
- 5:00pm Viewing of "The Insider"
- 6:30pm EAP Classroom Culture: What to Expect as a Student and as a TA

Wednesday, September 5

- 2:00pm Multi-year Funding Opportunities
- 4:00pm Career Fair - Full Time Employment

Thursday, September 6

- 8:30am Smithsonian Diversity Breakfast
- 12:30pm Student Leadership Lunch (invitation Only)
- 12:30pm Ethics Cafe - What Would You Do? A Discussion Based on "The Insider"

Friday, September 7

- 2:00pm Funding International Research and Study Abroad

Monday, September 10

- 4:00pm Dissertation Completion Fellowship Workshop I
- 5:00pm Minority Engineering Dinner
- 7:00pm AME Night
- 7:00pm CHEG Night

Tuesday, September 11

- 12:00pm Academic Job Search Series
- 12:30pm Civil Engineering Lunch

Events shown in time zone: Eastern Time

Google Calendar

The Learning Process

- Describe a skill or aptitude you developed over time. (ex: musical instrument)
- What was the key to mastery?
- What advice would you give to a novice?

- Practicing consistently in meaningful blocks of time each day is better than practicing for several hours just once a week.

World Englishes

- How many different types of English can you think of?
- British English
- American English
- Australian English
- Caribbean English
- Hong Kong English
- Philippine English
- Singapore English
- South African English
- Indian English
- Hip-hop English
- ...

What is Academic English?

- Talk about the last time you had to explain a complex topic or idea.
- How is the language we use in conversation different than the language used to explain or teach something complex.
- Assume the person you are teaching has no prior knowledge or background in the topic?
- **Write down 3-5 features of Academic English.**
- Share them with a partner

Features of Academic English

- Rich detail and description
- Combine and link sentences: paragraph length discourse
- Narrate and describe using major time frames
- Handle challenges presented by complications
- Paraphrasing
- Multiple examples
- Consistent accuracy, clarity, and precision
- Without misrepresentation or confusion
- Can be understood by people unaccustomed to dealing with non-native speakers
- Variety of communicative tasks

For more info see: www.languagetesting.com

Improving Academic Writing By Reading

- “All text represents content, which is what we want to get out of the text, but it also has a structure or organization.”
Joanna Williams, professor of psychology and education, Columbia University.
- **Read for content first, read again for form & structure**

Improving Academic Writing By Reading

- **Read for content first, read again for form & structure**
- Take notes on commonly used structures: descriptive, cause-effect, compare and contrast, etc.
- Look for key vocabulary and transition words/phrases
- Identify what you do not understand or what is confusing
- How does the author connect the central ideas to secondary topics?
- Keep a reading response journal
 - Example

Building Vocabulary

- When do you know a new word or phrase has been added to your vocabulary?
 - Know what it means (Definition)
 - Know how to say it (Pronunciation)
 - Know how to spell it (Spelling)
 - Know when and when not to use it
(Context & Grammar)
 - **You can use the word/phrase with confidence**

Vocabulary Notebooks

- Pay attention to what you hear and read
- Note words and phrases you want to use
- **Write them down in an organized place**
- Look up the definition and usage
- Track how often you use a word or phrase
- Choose **NO MORE** than 3-4 to practice each week
- If you can use it five or more times in a single week move on to a new word/phrase

Spoken Language

- How much time do you spend actually *speaking* English every week?
 - **Not** listening to a lecture or other students
 - **Not** getting explanations in your own language about how the language works
 - **Not** watching TV/Movies or listening to the radio
- How much time do you spend in focused speaking practice?

Strategies: SEAMAP

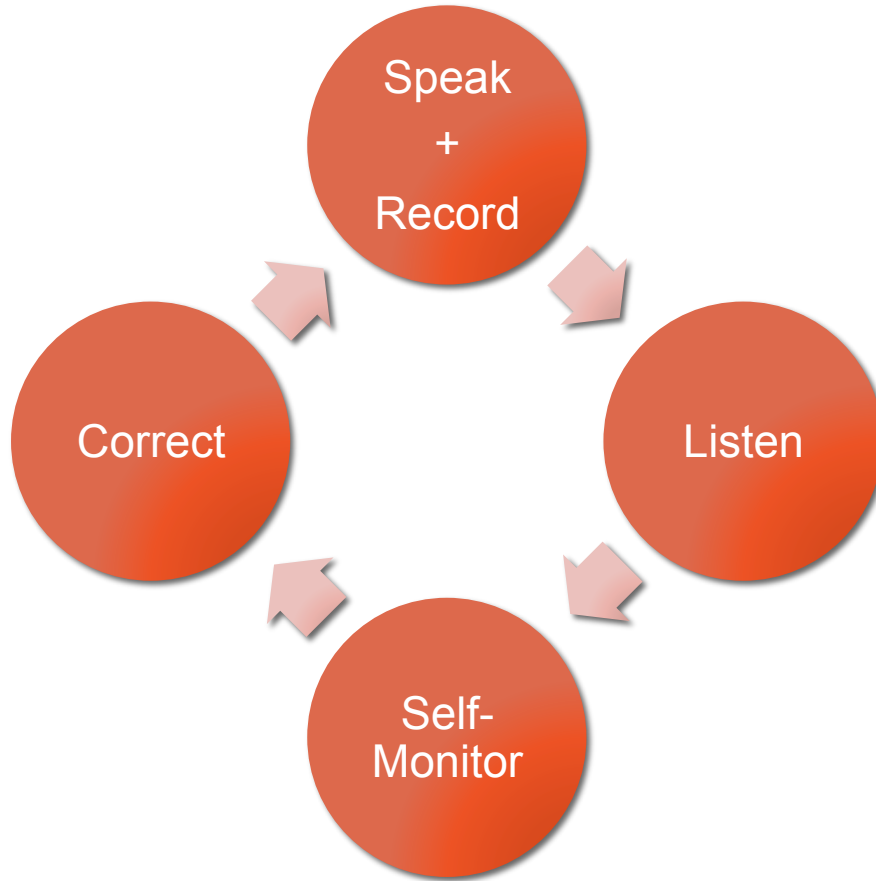


- Speak
- English
- As
- Much
- As
- Possible

Focused Speaking Practice

- **Record Yourself**
 - Talk about academic topics as if you were talking to an expert.
- **Listen immediately and again 24 hours**
 - What do you notice about your own speech?
 - Which sounds do you have difficulty hearing?
 - Where do you pause or hesitate?
 - What vocabulary are you using
- **Favor frequency vs. length**
 - You will improve more quickly if you record yourself 10 minutes per day than if you try to do 2 hours once a week

Self-Monitoring: Speaking



- Take what you need from each and every communication encounter
- Continuously review your progress

Second Language Acquisition

- **“We believe that what the learner does to learn a foreign language is far more important than what the teacher teaches.”**
 - The ABCs of Languages and Linguistics: A Basic Introduction to Language Science" by Curtis Hayes, Jacob Ornstein & William Gage
- What does this quote say to you about building language skills?
- With a partner: Come up with your own statement about language learning

Goals Survey

- What do you hope to accomplish regarding your academic English?
- Why do you want to improve?
- What is clear & effective communication?
- What is your present level? What is your target?
- How much time can you realistically spend practicing your academic English?

Goal Setting Best Practices

- Take into consideration the your personal time commitments and abilities.
- Identify strategies to achieve your goals, create a plan with objectives and execute it.
- Monitor your progress and refine your goals, objectives, strategies and plans as needed.
- The more you put into your langauge the more you will get out of it.

Example Goals

- I want to improve my English pronunciation so I sound just like a native speaker.
- I want to improve my English pronunciation so I can communicate my dissertation topic to people unfamiliar with my accent.

Action Plan

- Make a plan for working on your academic English
 - Set realistic goals
 - Learn about the features of academic English
 - Record and listen to yourself
 - Read for more than just content
 - Build self-monitoring skills
 - Use your new vocabulary in your daily life
 - Gain confidence and comfort

Looking for advice

- *Read the following situation with a partner and discuss possible solutions for Sam.*
- Sam is preparing to give a presentation at an academic conference at the end of the semester. Currently he does the following:
 - He reads various articles on the topic of the presentation for 1-2 hours a week.
 - He writes notes on the topic for 30 minutes once a week.
 - For the remaining hours of the week, he is focused on other things.
 - He usually works individually in the lab, at the library or at home.
 - Sam only talks to his professors and colleagues about a other topics: what is going on in the lab, what classes to take, etc.

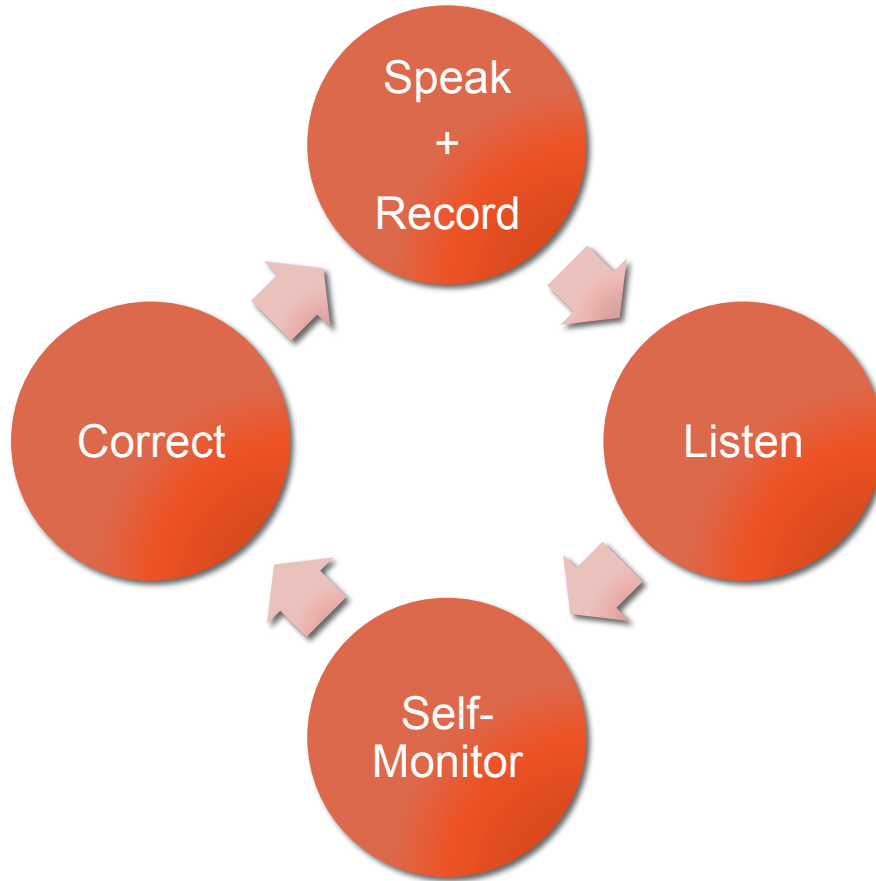
Looking for advice

- *Read the following situation with your partner and discuss possible solutions for Mae.*
- Mae is trying to improve her spoken English. Currently she does the following:
 - She goes to EAP workshops occasionally and has never made an appointment with an EAP tutor.
 - She usually works individually in her lab, at the library or at home.
 - Although she watches English language TV she speaks very little.
 - She only occasionally speaks with her professors outside of class.
 - Most of Mae's friends are from her native country, so when she socializes with friends she usually speaks her native language.

Making Pronunciation a Habit

- Practice **everyday** for 10-20 minutes
- Practice in a quiet environment
- Do a lot of listening
- Self-monitor

Self-Monitoring: Speaking



- Take what you need from each and every communication encounter
- Continuously review your progress

Resources on Campus

- ISSA
 - <http://issa.nd.edu/>
- University Writing Center
 - <http://writingcenter.nd.edu>
- English for Academic Purposes
 - <http://cslc.nd.edu/eap/>

Upcoming EAP Events

- **Starting a Successful Job Search**
 - Co-sponsored with the Career Center
 - TH Sept.12 303 DeBartolo 6:30
- **US Classroom Culture: What to Expect as an International Student and a Teaching Assistants**
 - Co-sponsored with the Kaneb Center for Teaching & Learning
 - TU Sept. 17 303 DeBartolo 6:30
- Sign-up today for a tutoring session
 - <http://cslc.nd.edu/eap/tutoring/>