'I didn't really know what I was doing': Beginnings in EAP research

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Outline

- Why is it challenging for EAP practitioners?
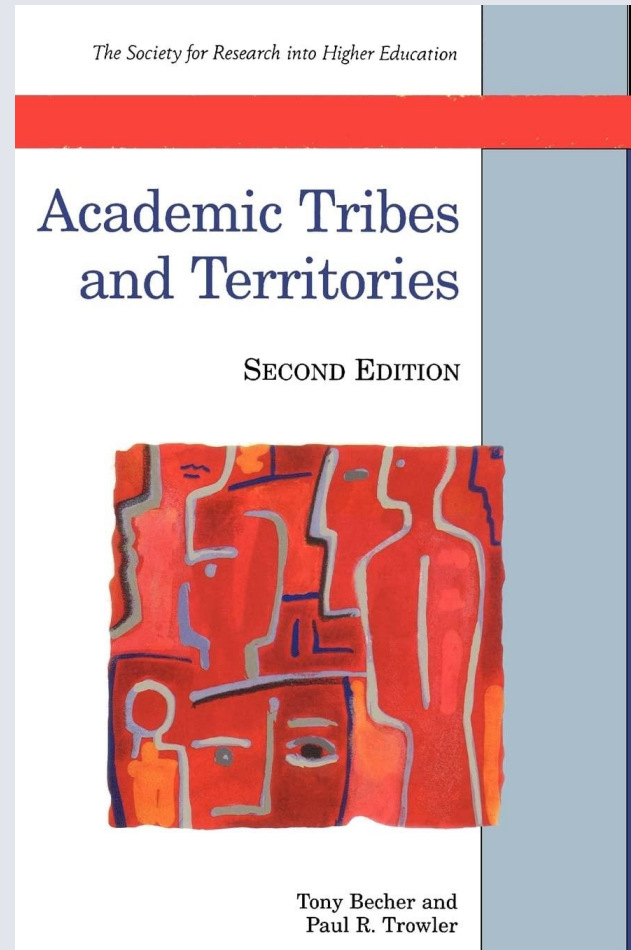
- Insights from a recent research project

- Opportunities and approaches available to EAP practitioners

The research-practice interface

- Who's doing research?
  - Not practitioners (Davis, 2019)

- What are they doing research about?
  - Only 32% classroom-oriented (Rose & McKinley, 2016)

- Who's reading this research?
  - Few language teachers read SSCI journals or attend conferences
  - Mainly from newsletters (Marsden & Kasprowicz, 2017)

Discipline
Service
Gatekeeper
Field Waiter Technician
Handmaiden
Theory-framed
Cinderella Profession
Outsider Peripheral
Butler

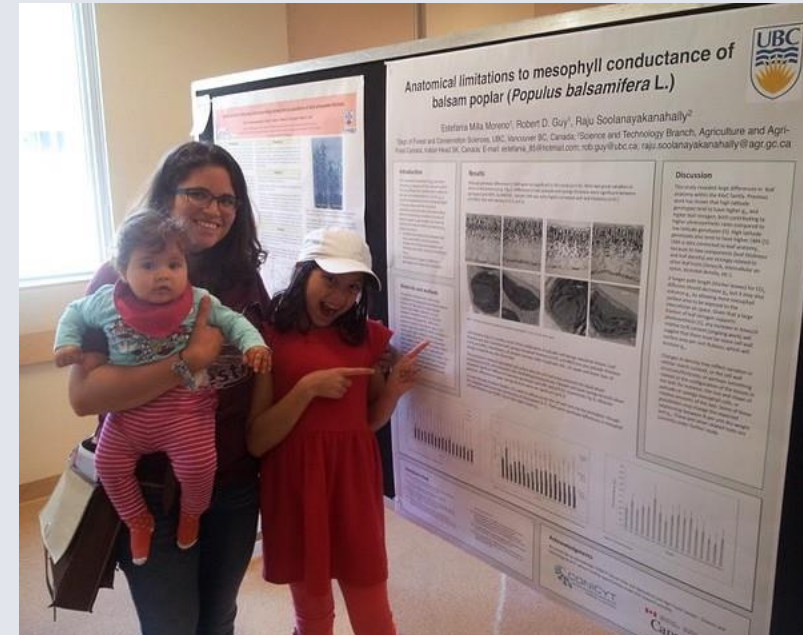Informed by Palanac (2022) and Sizer (2019)

A question of identity

Academic?

Teacher?

Researcher?

Practitioner?

'Pracademic'?

Borg (2010); Posner (2009)

Early-career researcher

Within 8 years of your PhD award?

Within 5 years of your PhD award?

Up to 5 years in 1st academic post?

Research trajectories

Breier et al. (2020)

The study

Interviews with 16 early-career researchers:

8 with doctorates*

5 in process of doing a doctorate

3 without doctorates

*median 3.25 years since award

- Barriers and enablers to scholarly publishing
- What role mentoring played

with
Maria Dolores Iglesias Mora

'Serious' research?

Even though I've been doing research for a number of years I kind of I feel like <u>I played at it</u>.

In my previous institution I did a piece of research for them, but it was …<u>I didn't really know what I was doing</u>
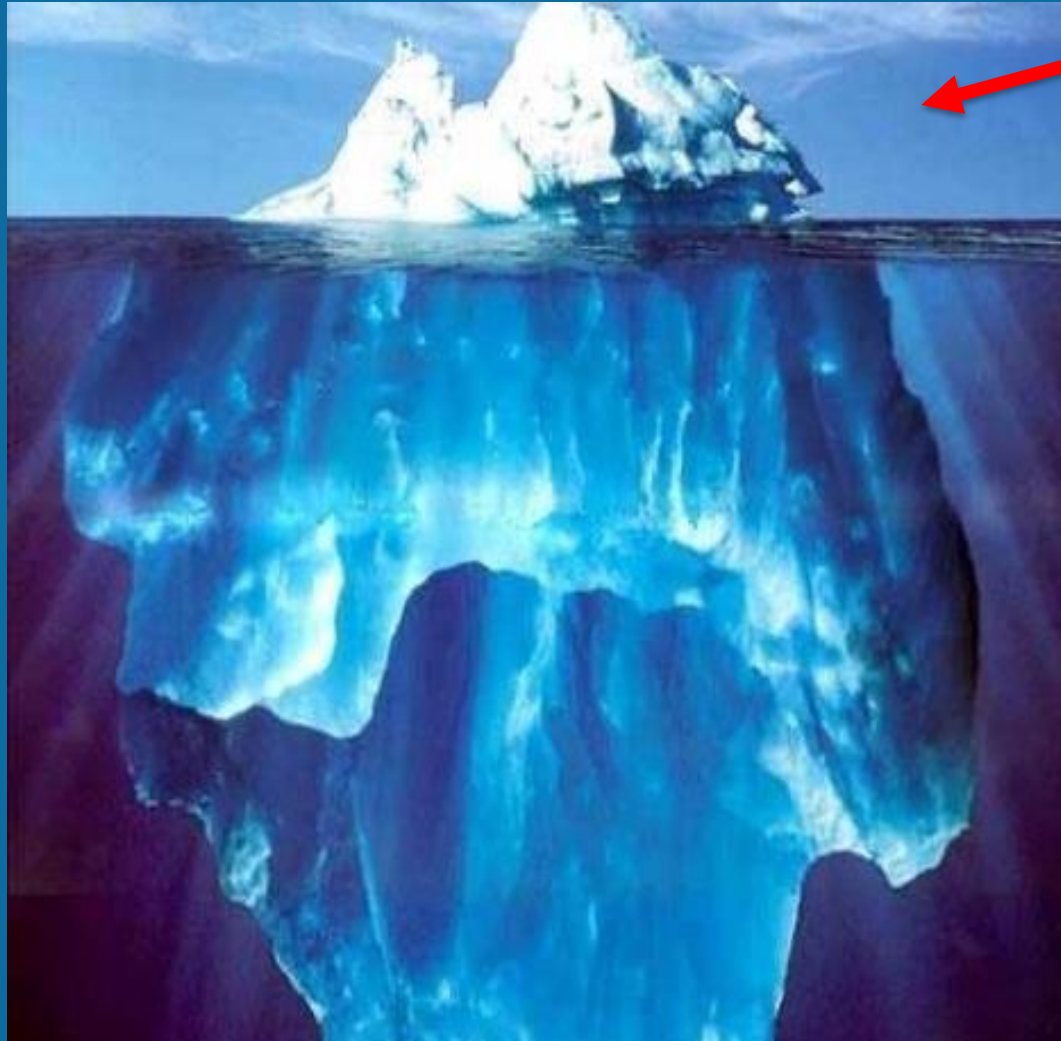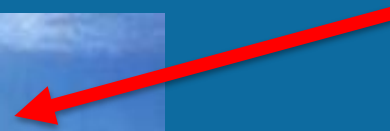
I'm probably a person who <u>dabbles with </u>research without understanding much of research itself

When is a researcher not a researcher?

Who am I? Am I an academic or am I teacher? What do they want me to be?

I'm not a researcher. <u>I don't have anything on my CV</u>. I can't possibly be, so there's a bit of imposter syndrome.

Publication

Reading

Thinking

Applying for funding

Applying for ethics approval

Designing research instruments

Conducting fieldwork

Analysing data

Discussing findings

Writing

Submitting to journals

Revising and re-submitting

'Real' research?

**** = World-leading

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* = Recognized nationally

Teaching-focused universities

Arts and humanities

Qualitative research

Nationally-recognised

Russell Group universities

STEM disciplines

Quantitative research

World-leading

Embracing collectivity

We decided not to go with a with a mentor ... but instead to deliberately not go down that route ... just to prove a point for our project and just to see how peer collaboration could still help us produce something

Creating a safe space

That [working on a co-authored paper with colleagues] was an absolutely fantastic experience ... It felt like a very safe space psychologically to be able to share your weaknesses.

Because you don't have to pretend that you know what everybody is talking about you learn more.

Starting with less formal venues

Everything I know, everything I learned during the publication process, was in exchange with my colleagues, writing in an informal channel

Less formal publication venues

- SIG newsletters (BALEAP, IATEFL)

- EATAW newsletter

- British Council newsletters

- Blogs (LSE Impact blog, Patter, BAICE, etc.)

- Babel magazine

- IATEFL Voices

- The Conversation

Accessible / **practitioner-oriented venues**

- Conference proceedings

- In-house journals, blogs, or newsletters

- Journal of Academic Writing (published by EATAW)

- JLT (Journal of Language Teaching)

- Teacher Development Academic Journal

- The Language Teacher

- TESL-EJ

Possible approaches

- Embrace collectivity

- Start small

- Consider accessibility

- Don't let the discourse intimidate you

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