



# How representative are EAP listening books of real lectures?



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# + Identifying main points is essential

## BALEAP 2013 Can do framework

- L2.1.9 Cope with concurrent note-taking and listening
- L2.1.10 Assimilate information and take full and effective notes
- **L2.1.11 Identify 'big' ideas; dismiss less relevant detail**

# + Identifying main points is essential

Lynch (2004: 12)

- Listener's decision making process
  - Step 1: What is being said.
  - Step 2: What it means.
  - Step 3: **Whether it is important and whether to note it down.**
  - Step 4: How to write it in note form.

# + How can we prepare students?

‘For EAP practitioners, a key issue is how to provide as **accurate** as possible a model of lecture organisation and help their learners to develop the skills to interpret organising signals.’

Thompson, S. E. (2003). Text-structuring metadiscourse, intonation and the signalling of organisation in academic lectures. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* 2(1): p. 6

# + Unfortunately...

Listening material in an ELT classroom is rarely similar to academic lectures.

Alexander, O., Argent, S., & Spencer, J. (2008). *EAP essentials: a teacher's guide to principles and practice*. p. 224



# Books

- Campbell, C., & Smith, J. (2012). *English for academic study: listening*
- Hewings, M. & C. Thaine (2012). *Cambridge Academic English C1 Advanced: an integrated skills course for EAP*
- Kelly, T., et al. (2000). *Listening to lectures*
- Lynch, T. (2004). *Study listening: a course in listening to lectures and note taking*
- Salehzadeh, J. (2006). *Academic listening strategies: a guide to understanding lectures*
- Sarosy, P., & Sherak, K. (2013). *Lecture Ready: strategies for academic listening and speaking*

# + Books using corpora

- Hewings & Thaine (2012). *CAE C1*
  - Cambridge Academic English corpus
- Kelly et al. (2000). *Listening to lectures*
  - British Academic Spoken English (BASE) Corpus
- Salehzadeh (2006). *Academic listening strategies*
  - 'Naturally occurring speech from lecture situations'
  - Some MICASE lectures

# + Books not using lecture corpora

- Campbell & Smith (2012). *English for academic study*
  - 'Many' lecture extracts based on authentic lectures
  - Re-recorded for clarity
  - Kept language & content
  
- Lynch (2004). *Study listening*
  - Lectures organised for listening course
  
- Sarosy & Sherak (2013). *Lecture Ready*
  - 'Realistic' lectures



# + Research-informed materials

- Research on corpus (language use)
  - Hewings & Thaine (2012). *CAE C1*
  - Kelly et al. (2000). *Listening to lectures*
  
- Listening research
  - Lynch (2004). *Study listening*
  - Salehzadeh (2006). *Academic listening strategies*



# Current materials

- No info about source of signpost phrases
- Not often (obviously) informed by listening /lecture research



How representative are those signposts of real lectures?

# + Putting it to the test: importance markers

- Lexicogrammatical devices
- marking the importance of
- verbal or visual discourse
  - ✓ **the most important thing** to bear in mind throughout the lecture really is pest is a human definition
  - ✓ so **we're interested in** the gradient here at two-seven-three
  - ✗ mass warfare which is obviously such **an important thing** in the nineteenth century

# + Analysis of materials

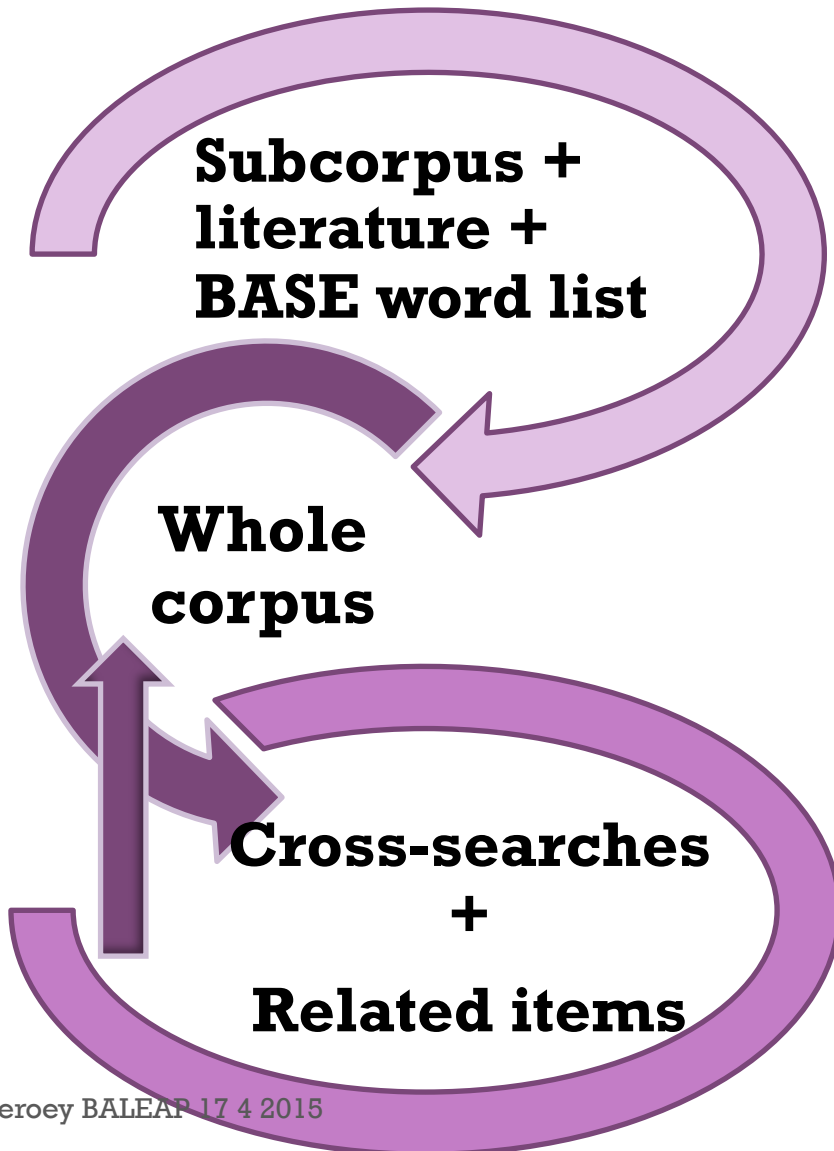
- Manual analysis
- Language in boxes & exercises
- Student's & teacher's book (where available)

# + Analysis of lecture corpus

- British Academic Spoken English (BASE) Corpus
- 160 lectures
- Arts & Humanities; Physical Sciences, Life & Medical Sciences, Social Studies
- Sketch Engine
- See Deroey & Taverniers (2012)



## Retrieving the markers



- 40 lectures (manual)
- Markers other studies
- $\geq 50$  BASE
  
- 160 lectures (Sketch Engine)
  
- Concordance co-text
- Synonyms/derivations



## Importance markers: types

Pattern	Example	(N=782)
Adjective	it's <b>important</b> to note this is further subdivided	7%
Noun	<b>the point is</b> that people can't do that	± 36%
Verb	i want to <b>stress</b> this point	± 54%
Adverb	<b>significantly</b> this is made out of virtually one block of Carrara marble	± 2%
Exam-related expressions	it's something we can sort of ask <b>exam</b> questions on	1%

# + Main words

- Adjective: *important*
- Noun: *point*
- Verb: *remember*



# + Main markers

- V n/closure

± 34%; ± 63% of verb patterns

and **remember** that most developing countries are small

- MN v-link

± 21%; ± 58% of noun patterns

**the point is** that people can't do that

**the point** i'm making there **is** that you can get what might appear to be complex behaviour from simple rules

**the one thing** you have to remember in the kidney **is** that it's arranged like this

# + Other markers (common in books)

- I s pers pron V n/clause

± 9%

i want to **stress** this point

- adj MN v-link

± 8%

**the key point is** they do not give up those natural rights

- it v-link ADJ clause

± 4%

it's **important** to note this is further subdivided



# Surprised?

- Markers with adjective only c. 1/5 of all markers
  - that's the key point** here
  - the key point is** they do not give up those natural rights
  - it's important** to say that it's actually quite rare



# Surprised?

- Multifunctional, formulaic markers predominate
  - ✓ **the point is** that people can't do that
  - ✓ **the thing you have to remember is** there's no such thing as the heritability
  - ✗ **the point is** for you to develop your own scholarship
  - ? **the thing is** that the one of them is not good

# + Books not using lecture corpora

- Sarosy & Sherak (2013). *Lecture Ready*
- Campbell & Smith (2012). *English for academic study*
- Lynch (2004). *Study listening*



# Across levels

## Sarosy & Sherak *Lecture Ready: 1*

### ■ Adjective patterns

- This is **important**
- It's **important** to note that
- It is **important** to write these in your notes

### ■ Noun patterns

- Here is a **key question**

### ■ Verb patterns

- I want to **point out**
- I'll **say** that **again**
- Let me **repeat** that
- You **should write** this down

### ■ Adverbs:-

### ■ Exam references: -

# + *Lecture Ready: 2*

## ■ Adjective patterns

- This is important
- It's important to note that

## ■ Noun patterns

- **One important point is**
- **The point I want to stress is**
- **The bottom line is**
- **Here's the bottom line**

MN

v-

link

## ■ Verb patterns

V n/clause

- **Listen to this**
- **Pay attention to this**
- **Write this down**
- **I want you to notice that**
- **I want to stress that**
- You should write this down
- Let me repeat that
- I'll say that again
- I want to point out that

# + *Lecture Ready: 2*

■ Adverbs:-

■ Exam references

- **This will be on the test**

✓ MN v-link

✓ V n/closure

x Mainly patterns with pronouns & adjectives

x Unambiguous examples



# + *Lecture Ready: 3*

Listen for expressions that signal repetition to help you identify important points and avoid writing the same idea twice.

## Expressions That Signal Repetition for Clarification or Emphasis

- In other words, . . .
- That is, . . .
- What I mean is . . .
- As I said, . . .
- So, what I'm saying is . . .
- Let me say that another way: . . .



# Campbell & Smith

## *English for academic study: listening*

### ■ Adjective patterns

- Just as important

### ■ Noun patterns

- Another point to remember is
- This brings me to my last point, which is to emphasize that

### ■ Verb patterns

- You will need to bear in mind

### ■ Adverbs

- Firstly; secondly; finally

### ■ Exam references: -

# + Lynch

## *Study listening*

### ■ Adjective patterns

- It's important to bear in mind that
- It's worth(while) ...ing that

### ■ Noun patterns

- The central problem is that
- A basic point
- Another key issue
- My point is

### ■ Verb patterns

- Remember that
- Don't forget that
- You shouldn't lose sight of the fact that
- I want to stress/emphasise/underline
- What I'm getting at is

### ■ Adverbs:-

### ■ Exam references: -


# + Books not using lecture corpora

- Do not reflect variety of patterns attested
- Main BASE patterns underrepresented
- Fairly explicit examples (evaluation, intention, directive)


# + Books using lecture corpora

- Firth, M. (2012). *Cambridge Academic English: an integrated skills course for EAP*. Lecture skills video worksheet.
- Firth, M., et al. (2012). *Cambridge Academic English C1 Advanced: an integrated skills course for EAP*. Teacher's book.
- Hewings, M. & C. Thaine (2012). *Cambridge Academic English C1 Advanced: an integrated skills course for EAP*. Student's book.
- Kelly, T., et al. (2000). *Listening to lectures*.
- Salehzadeh, J. (2006). *Academic listening strategies: a guide to understanding lectures*.

# + Cambridge Academic English C1

1.1a Ask students to brainstorm ways in which they can identify *questions that introduce ideas or topics* – e.g. rising tone or question words, and *key points* – e.g. repetition of words or lecturer emphasis. Provide the students with a very brief overview of what *ECT* means – i.e. treatment for psychiatric disorders which uses electric shocks. Then play  **D.6**. Students take notes appropriately.

**No markers**

 Watch another ten minutes of the lecture that you have chosen. Pay attention to any strategies the lecturer employs to highlight any particularly important points. Note down the key points, and compare your ideas with a partner.

# + Salehzadeh

## *Academic listening strategies*

### ■ Adjective patterns:-

### ■ Noun patterns

- The **important thing** here is
- Here's the **tricky part** now

### ■ Verb patterns

- What you **don't** want to **forget**
- **Be careful** about

### ■ Adverbs:-

### ■ Exam references: -

# + Kelly, Revell, & Nesi

## *Listening to lectures*

### ■ Adjective patterns

- What's **crucial** is

### ■ Noun patterns

- The **key point** is
- One of the most **important points** is
- An **important point** is
- The **main point** is

- A **point** worth noting is

- That's the **main point** here
- The **big question** is

### ■ Verb patterns:-

### ■ Adverbs:-

### ■ Exam references:-



# + Books using lecture corpora

- Few (or no) importance markers
- Not always clear if markers are from corpus (Salehzadeh)
- Not representative of variety of patterns
- Patterns with adjectives overrepresented

# + How materials are *not* helping students

- Identifying key points is essential but not always reflected in treatment of signposts
- Markers with explicit evaluation, intention and direction overrepresented
- Multifunctional, predominant markers underrepresented
- Exercises limited to identifying key points and markers; no training on multifunctional markers
- Students possibly not prepared for variety of (less explicit) signposts

# + How we could help students

- Draw signposts from real lectures
- Draw on lecture and listening research
- Include a variety of signposts
- Avoid overrepresenting explicit but rarer signposts
- Provide training on recognising common multifunctional/less explicit signposts
- Raise awareness of possible mismatch between real lectures and materials

# + How lecturers signal important points

- Deroey, K. L. B., & Taverniers, M. (2012). 'Just remember this': Lexicogrammatical relevance markers in lectures. *English for Specific Purposes*, 31(4), 221-233.
- Deroey, K. L. B. (2015). Marking importance in lectures: Interactive and textual orientation. *Applied Linguistics*, 36(1), 51-72.
- Academia edu
- ResearchGate

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