

## TAIKOMOJI KALBOTYRA/ APPLIED LINGUISTICS

### The Value of a Systemic Functional Approach to ESP or Rather LSP

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**Abstract.** This paper argues that a systemic functional linguistics (SFL) approach to Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) is worth considering as a useful means of enhancing target language use. The universal aspects of SFL for this purpose and within this context will be highlighted thus revealing links among language, culture and thought. English will be used as an example, in other words: ESP, and the term ESP will also be discussed. References will be made to language in use from both reader and writer perspectives through examining a study based on one UK government initiative.

At present the UK government is encouraging a range of initiatives to attract students from non-traditional backgrounds into the university with issues about language being regarded as high priority. The underlying nature of these issues will be discussed in order to draw out the often-unappreciated complexity of what constitutes as language drawing on examples taken from the study.

This will lead to pedagogical considerations of the role of DT in language development and, hopefully, to stimulate discussion about how SFL might be helpful in LSP. Spoken text will not be considered in this presentation.

#### Introduction

Briefly, the intention of this paper is to bring together key concepts about Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) and Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) in relation to the pedagogy of language development. I am going to do this in two ways: firstly theoretically and then by drawing on a specific context of learning. I hope that the points I raise will lead to further discussion about the nature of language learning and development.

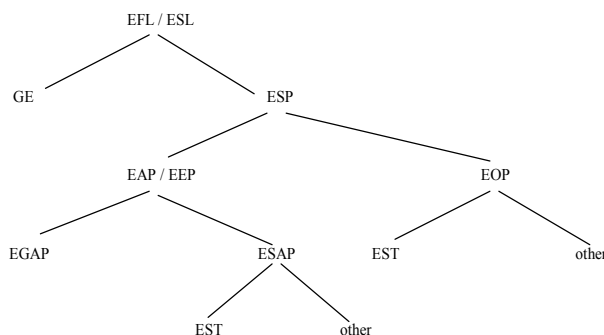
I am using English for Specific Purposes (ESP), as an example of LSP, for discussing the specific context of learning, and for the reason that it has been developed and debated in some depth as a concept over a long period of time: at least the last four decades.

SFL is the study of language as a system based on the belief that language is the most important tool of communication, of expression of thoughts and feelings, and of getting things done. The system is a functional grammar based on a universal conception of language in use. Hence it can be applied to every language in any situation, whether the participants are native or non-native speakers. Here, English is used as an example since the context under discussion is within the UK.

Digital Technology (DT), too, is also a tool of communication and of getting things done. As far as pedagogy is concerned, it has already proved itself to have a great deal of potential in permitting access to information and communication on a global scale. By the end of this paper, I hope that questions can be raised about what it can do and how far it can be utilised pedagogically as a teaching tool within the framework of SFL / LSP.

#### Section 1: The Positioning of ESP Within the Pedagogical Context

The contexts of teaching and learning within which students develop their use of English as a second of foreign language have been classified in various ways. For example, Hutchinson and Walters (1987) distinguish General English (GE) from English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Robinson (1991) categorises ESP into English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) and English for Academic or Educational Purposes (EAP / EEP) with English for Science and Technology (EST) in both camps. Jordan (1997) classifies EAP into two branches: English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) and English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP). ESAP is concerned with the discourse genres of specific subjects and the task skills specific to the subject while EGAP covers general academic skills (e.g. listening and note-taking, academic writing, reference skills, seminar and discussion skills), general academic English register and style, and proficiency in language use (Jordan, 1997:3). These categories into different branches can be represented diagrammatically as in Figure 1 below:



**Figure 1.** A classification of the different branches of EFL / ESL (English as a Foreign or Second Language).

As Figure 1 shows, EFL and ESL are subdivided in the same way: into General English (GE) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). ESP is usually subdivided into English for Academic or Educational Purposes (EAP / EEP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). EAP / EEP can be subdivided into English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) and English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP). Both ESAP and EOP can be further subdivided into different branches of different fields of academic study or occupation – EST (English for Science and Technology) and others (e.g. Law, Business Management) – even further subdivided into more specific categories within these fields.

Some of the earliest, most exciting, developments in ESP course and materials design, were pioneered by MacEldowney, Swales, Dudley-Evans, Widdowson and others during the nineteen-seventies. Their common aim was to focus on the lexico-grammar of the field and to maximise the learning of key study skills (e.g. note-taking at lectures, seminar participation, using references, organising assignments) through carefully selected technical vocabulary and linguistic structures which characterised the discourse genres of specific subjects at the appropriate level of academic difficulty. Language skills were classified according to mode: listening, speaking, reading, writing. By concentrating only on areas which were thought to be of immediate relevance to students' needs, thereby avoiding redundancy, course materials were developed which attempted to encourage learners to become competent in managing their academic studies much more speedily than they might in following a GE, language-graded, development programme. The materials varied in the degree to which they prioritised topic or skills and in how specific the topic should be within the subject.

A great deal was learnt about the genres of ESP texts from these bold experiments. For example, it was realised that materials at the appropriate degree of specificity of topic and selection of genre that would at the same time benefit all students were found to be extremely difficult to select; for example, in EAP the study skills that were taught did not necessarily transfer smoothly to the mainstream academic context; and frequently, there was a mismatch among the perceptions of the materials' developers, the teacher and the students about the students' needs.

Lea and Street (1998) criticise a study skills approach for being 'student deficit' because the students are expected to learn a set of atomised skills, isolated from their contexts of learning. They claim that 'the focus is on attempts to 'fix' problems with student learning, which are treated as a kind of pathology' (p. xxi). Hence the students do not get the opportunity to develop a holistic understanding of the target academic context and how they relate to it. Swales (1990) expresses a similar concern, arguing that each class group has a unique cultural ethos defined by the 'personal and often idiosyncratic ways' of the ESAP teacher (p. 218). He also emphasises the need to help students to adapt to different learning contexts.

Another approach criticised by Lea and Street (1998) is what they term 'academic socialisation', which implies that students need to be enculturated into the academic community. In line with developments in the communicative

approach within GE and EGAP, a number of models have been developed where two cultural contexts are considered relevant in second language development, one being the natural living environment and the other the classroom where second language learning is to take place. Some, like Schumann's Acculturation Model (1978), take account of two types of students: those who wish to be fully assimilated into the target culture and those who do not. The extent and quality of second language development are affected by the degree of need and motivation to belong to a group, on the one hand, and the degree of feeling of comfort about a task that has to be performed in the second language, on the other. Others, like Gardner's Socio-Educational Model (1979), are based on the principle that second language learning in the classroom entails 'acquiring symbolic elements of a different ethnolinguistic community' (p. 193) as well as learning new information. Language aptitude and intelligence, in addition to motivation and situational anxiety, are considered to be variables determining language development. Such models have had a very positive influence on a student-centred approach to pedagogy. Lea and Street (1998) do not dispute this but argue that they stop short of addressing the 'deep language, literacy and discourse issues involved in the institutional production and representation of meaning' (1998), highlighting particularly the complexities of academic writing. Lea and Street claim that these models tend to assume that students need to be socialised into the dominant culture of the institution, which is perceived as homogeneous and where writing is perceived 'as a transparent medium of representation' (1998), strongly arguing that this is not the case. Their ethnographic views concern native and non-native speakers from diverse cultural backgrounds and emphasise the importance of recognising the existence of an underlying cultural context, which shapes the discourse that is used.

This resonates with Gee's distinction between 'Discourse' and 'discourse' (Gee, 1990) and it is worth briefly pausing to consider this for a moment in order to reinforce the points made above. Gee presents a complex perception of discourse. He affirms that 'discourse' (small 'd'), which refers to the language that is used to convey meaning, is distinct from 'Discourse' (capital 'D'), which includes 'much more than language' (1990:viii): rather the whole context within which the communication takes place – the nonverbal as well as the verbal – as already signalled by Firth (1957) much earlier. Gee explains that only by understanding the 'Discourse' of the community is it possible to understand the 'discourse', thus emphasising the inadequacy of linguistic communication alone to convey meaning.

Returning to ESAP, i.e. ESP within the academic context, the problems previously described have often been attributed to a so-called 'gap', which is perceived to exist between the EAP context and the mainstream academic context (Brookes & Grundy, 1988). Despite extensive research to date in the field of EAP, linked closely to practice, it is now often argued that the very process of working within the EAP context can perpetuate a distinctive, separate culture of its own, which can act as a barrier to operating in the mainstream learning context. This point was forcibly emphasised by Swales (1990) and

has been debated at length. Swales perceived a need to create a closer relationship between ESP pedagogy and anthropological factors. He proposed 'a genre-based approach' with three key concepts: that of *discourse community*, *genre* and *task*. He defined discourse communities as 'socio-rhetorical networks that form in order to work towards a set of common goals'; genres as 'classes of communicative events' which are 'properties of discourse communities' and 'genre-type communicative events' as 'processing procedures which can be viewed as *tasks*' (Swales' italics, 1990:9). These concepts have been influential in encouraging a more holistic approach to teaching and learning.

Lea and Street (1998) suggest that each field of study has a distinctive discourse community with its own 'literacy practices' and expectations. They further suggest that 'student writing and learning as issues at the level of epistemology and identities' need to be highlighted. Their stance presents a radical perspective on how student-centredness might be interpreted in second language development. Drawing on their research and from her experience of entering the UK system of Higher Education, Hermerschmidt (1999) argues that students need to be valued as original thinkers with their own identities, views, expertise, ways of learning, knowing and communicating. But, according to Turner (1999), in some UK universities this does not appear to happen. Turner further argues that the institutional expectations made of international students for whom English is a second language can undermine an understanding of their needs.

Such views, which ignore a clear-cut distinction between native speaker and non-native speaker users, are far removed from the nineteen-seventies' starting point of LSP through ESP where the focus was purely on language rather than on the context within which language is used.

Up to this point we have skimmed through an approach that began with a concentration on linguistic features and moved towards the broader and deeper considerations of the context of language use. In the following two sections, we turn our attention to a route that was triggered by an anthropological approach and led to considerations of language, from the broadest to 'the most delicate level' (Halliday, 1994). This was developed by Halliday (1973; 1978) and came to be known as Systemic Functional Linguistics or Hallidayan linguistics.

## Section 2: The Importance of Culture and Situation

The anthropologist, Malinowski, made a significant contribution to the study of language during the 1930's, when he discovered that the two contexts of culture and situation play an essential role in the use of language and, consequently, in the understanding of language in use. Taking an ethnographic perspective, Hymes (1986) unpacked this notion, claiming that the language of a speech community can be described in terms of a list of components: *the speech act*, where the form and content of the message are central; *the situation*, comprising the physical and psychological circumstances (called 'setting' and 'scene' respectively); *the participants*, who comprise the addressor and addressee, where the addressor is the speaker (or sender) and the addressee is the hearer (or receiver

or audience) and whose relationship is culture bound; *the purpose* where the ends are outcomes and goals; *the key* (tone, manner or spirit corresponding roughly to modality); *the channel* (medium of transmission) and form (code, register); *the norms of interaction and interpretation*; *the genre* (formal characteristics that describe a specific convention) (pp 59-65).

In other words, it can be argued that language is always used for a specific purpose, whether it is to entertain, argue, ask the time, summarise the proceedings of a meeting, etc. However, the language used for any specific purpose has, at its foundation, certain basic rules of grammar that apply generally and each language has its own set of rules. These make up the form of that specific language. However, they do not tell us anything about the use of that language in the sense that Hymes was suggesting.

Like Hymes, Halliday (1978) followed the anthropological stance taken by Malinowski and argues that language in use should be the focus of interest because the purpose of language is that it is a tool for communication. Thus he emphasises that the form and the function of the language are complementary to one another and laid the firm foundations for systemic functional grammar.

## Section 3: A Functional Grammar System

Halliday (1994) describes language as 'a complex semiotic system composed of multiple LEVELS, or STRATA' (1994:15, capitals as in the original): context, semantics, lexico-grammar and phonology, with grammar as central. Thus he developed a complex system of grammar so that each stratum could be understood within its cultural and situational context.

To begin with he describes the nature of language use as 'meaning potential' according to three semantic components: the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual in terms of their ability to explain both spoken and written language as a tool of communication. The ideational is a mental representation of what the producer intends to communicate and it is within this component that the relationship between language and thought is explored in considerable detail; the interpersonal describes how meaning is exchanged through the selection of language reflecting the relationship between the participants: the addressor and the addressee; the textual is the message that is actually produced through the channel and mode demanded by the situation. It is through these three meta-functions that Halliday emphasises the essentially ontogenetic nature of language use. There is a constant interaction between the mind and society, where society provides the linguistic clues as to how meaning making can be achieved and the mind selects from these accordingly. The three metafunctions are activated by three contextual components – 'field', 'tenor' and 'mode' – which combine to describe the whole context. 'Field' refers to the 'text-generating activity' and activates the ideational. 'Tenor' refers to the 'role relationships of the participants' and activates the interpersonal. 'Mode' refers to 'the rhetorical modes' being adopted by the participants and activates the textual.

The ideational function has two types: the logical and the experiential. The logical function is the 'relations' which

constitute the logic of the natural language using parataxis and hypotaxis as in reported speech, coordination, apposition or condition. The experiential is the 'content' function of the language: 'it is language as the expression of the processes and other phenomena of the external world, including the speaker's own consciousness.' (Halliday, 1978:49) and is arguably the most complex part of the metafunctions. His framework for the experiential function is a 'transitivity system', which 'construes the world of experience into a manageable set of PROCESS TYPES' (Halliday, 1994:106): the mental, which describes inner experience – the world of consciousness; the material, which describes outer experience – the physical world; the relational, which describes the world of abstract relations; the behavioural – which describes behaviour; the verbal – which describes what is said; the existential – which describes the sense of being. In other words, the transitivity system has the potential to explain language in use as process within the cognitive field of the producer (Matthiesson, Slade and Macken, 1992). These functions are particularly useful to notice at the level of clause as representation because, structurally, the process is realised by the verb.

The interpersonal function is to express 'relations among participants in the situation and the speaker's own intrusion into it' (Halliday, 1978:46). It is partly realised by language choices made according to register: the level of formality used in the attempt to achieve successful communication. For example, in situations where most contextual features other than mode are similar, it can be said that, generally, spoken communication is likely to use a more informal register than written communication. As a speech system, the interpersonal function is partly realised through attitudinal meaning that is described by prosodic patterns of an intonation network. As a written system, it is partly realised through formatting, layout and punctuation features.

The textual function is to create relevance to context. It is the realisation of the meaning in the message that is available to the recipient. Therefore the key concept is the thematic structure because this reveals how the message is related to the situation in which it appears. At the level of text it is classified in terms of macro-Theme and hyper-Theme (Martin, 1992). At the level of clause it is classified in terms of the Theme, which is 'the point of departure of the message' (Halliday, 1994:37), and the Rheme, which is 'the remainder of the message within the clause' (Halliday, 1994:37). The textual function is particularly useful in a pedagogical context and we shall pick up this point later.

#### **Section 4: Widening Participation in the UK – One Setting for Examining the Application of a Functional Approach**

The government Department for Education and Skills in the UK (Clarke, 2003) is concerned that access to Higher Education (HE) should become more evenly spread across social classes.

'Those from the top three social classes are almost three times as likely to enter higher education as those from the bottom three. ... Young people from professional backgrounds are

over five times more likely to enter higher education than those from unskilled backgrounds' (p. 17).

Indeed, it seems that the gap has increased since 1990 (Dearing, 1997).

In 1997 the government introduced a Widening Participation policy as a result of national survey chaired by Dearing (1997) to encourage a fairer representation of the lower socio-economic groups in Higher Education. Many university colleges, particularly in London, have responded with a variety of initiatives.

One project is a direct response to the needs of relatively disadvantaged students as they prepare for and commence their degree studies in the allied health professions (AHP) and vocational health sciences (e.g. physiotherapy, pharmacy, biomedical sciences, environmental health, nutrition, radiography, chiropody etc). These students follow non-traditional routes into HE and have been identified by the government as needing encouragement and support. The group includes students:

- moving from Further Education to Higher Education,
- for whom English is an additional language,
- who may have received their schooling in another country,
- living in relatively deprived areas in the UK where HE participation rates are known to be low,
- wishing to return to practice in the health and caring professions.

This links in with a significant problem for many National Health Service (NHS) Trusts, particularly in London. It is that education and training participation rates to prepare local people for healthcare employment are known to be low in many deprived London boroughs. The key issues are about methods of attracting and retaining students who have the potential to succeed but who lack the self-confidence and opportunity to demonstrate their ability. Recent research has demonstrated that many mature students feel ill-equipped to cope with the intellectual demands of Higher Education and the stress arising from the competing pressures on their time (Bowl, 2000). It has been suggested that four problems impact significantly on their retention and success. They are:

- A lack of familiarity with the learning and assessment culture of HE;
- A lack of academic writing skills;
- A lack of DT skills appropriate to HE;
- A lack of access to a computer at home.

#### **Section 5: The Relevance of ESP and SFL to Addressing these Problems**

Bearing in mind the points discussed in Sections 2 and 3, it is clear that links can be drawn among the four problems listed at the end of Section 4. To summarise, they have been addressed by holding workshops about academic writing and computing, where both areas are framed within a context that mirrors a snapshot of the learning and assessment culture of HE at first-year undergraduate level. In addition, a system for borrowing laptop computers for a

given period has been implemented. The workshop activities are extended through related computer-based activities.

Underlying the activities relating to academic writing are the following core principles inspired by SFL theory:

- a) There is an intrinsic communicative relationship among thinking, reading and writing that is unique to the individual.
- b) Reading academic-related texts can help subconscious improvement in academic writing of a similar genre.
- c) A text needs to be understood within its cultural framework.
- d) Information and knowledge is disseminated through three key features: the content, the organisation of the content and the language used to express the organised content.
- e) These three features need to be considered by both reader and writer in the order of first content, then organisation and then language.
- f) The main content features to take account of are relevance and argument.
- g) The main organisation features to take account of are order of ideas and of the language used to convey the ideas.
- h) The main language feature to take account of is clarity of meaning.

In terms of SFL, the context of culture is specifically described by an academic written text that is produced within the field of study and for a certain purpose. This also incorporates the features of the LSP, or rather ESP. The three meta-functions of language in use: ideational, interpersonal and textual, are realised through examining the content, organisation and language of the text. With regard to Point b) above, the textual function, as an instrument of analysing text, has proved extremely useful in workshop and DT-based activities and can be illustrated by the example given in Appendix 1.

A published article about Diabetes is used as the focus of one workshop and DT-based work. It was chosen for its relevance to the participants' chosen fields of study and for the appropriateness of the linguistic choices made to convey the information. The workshop comprises activities of a holistic nature such as predicting the content and organisation of the article from knowing the title (as the macro-Theme) and then examining the introduction and the final discussion in order to identify the hyper-Themes in the text. In a more analytic activity the participants are required to scrutinise the thematic organisation of one paragraph so as to develop an appreciation for how the distribution of Theme and Rheme within such a text contributes to thematic linking and thematic development. Both the paragraph and a table showing its thematic organisation are given in Appendix 1. The more detailed parts of the article, the method and results of the research, with a series of accompanying tasks and suggested answers, are made available to the participants on the college website in power-point presentation. An example of one such task is given in Appendix 2.

So far, the limited amount of questionnaire data has shown the following:

- Both the workshops and follow-up activities on the website are very popular with most users.
- Most participants find the workshops helpful for understanding the culture of HE, for enhancing their confidence and for developing a critical stance to their own and others' written texts.
- A minority of users find the pace of working on some of the website activities too pedantic and boring.

However, the crucial question, of whether the activities have a lasting effect with evidence of real progress remains unanswered. This clearly needs to be investigated over time. At this early stage, the project has only scratched the surface.

## Conclusions

In this paper, much attention has been given to the theoretical underpinning of the pedagogy employed in an ESP context of learning. Two strands of development have been described which have taken opposite directions. ESP emerged from a communicative approach to second or foreign language learning whereas SFL evolved from an anthropological view of society and culture.

The lessons learnt from the directions advanced in ESP were subsumed within the much broader framework that gave rise to SFL and its universal approach to language in use. However, SFL has also proved how complex a system of grammar has to be in order to describe language in use. One fundamental reason is that, in contrast to descriptions of traditional grammatical structure, it shows how language is a dynamic rather than static construct because it is embedded in the genesis of learning and society. In other words, as global changes occur at increasingly faster speeds, particularly through the influence of DT, so language adapts to represent those changes textually.

Indeed, DT as a medium seems to encourage increasingly rapid changes in the representation of information. This is of great interest to SFL since it has the tools to analyse how meaning is being construed through multi-modal means (Kress, 2000; Matthiessen, 1999). Questions arise about how far DT is influencing the nature of learning, including language development, how far it is able to nurture learner autonomy, and how far this represents progress.

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### **Specialiosios anglų kalbos ar tiksliau specialiosios kalbos įvertinimas sisteminiu funkcinio požiūriu**

#### **Santrauka**

Šiame straipsnyje teigiama, kad specialiąją kalbą yra verta nagrinėti sisteminiu funkcinio lingvistiniu (SFL) požiūriu kaip efektyvia priemone sustiprinančia tikslinės kalbos vartojimą. Dėl to šiame kontekste bus akcentuoti universalūs SFL aspektai, parodantys sąsajas tarp kalbos, kultūros ir mąstymo. Straipsnyje kaip pavyzdys bus analizuojama specialioji anglų kalba, o taip pat bus aptariamas ir pats terminas. Analizuojant Jungtinės karalystės (JK) valdžios iniciatyva parengtą studiją iš skaitytojo ir rašytojo perspektyvų bus nagrinėjami vartojamos kalbos pavyzdžiai.

Šiuo metu JK vyriausybė skatina įvairias studentų iš netradicinės aplinkos pritraukimo į universitetus iniciatyvas; kalbos studijos yra laikomos dideliu prioritetu. Tai straipsnyje aptariama norint įvertinti kompleksiskumą, atsispindintį studijos kalbos pavyzdžiuose. Šnekamosios kalbos tekstai šiame darbe nebus nagrinėjami.

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## APPENDIXES

### APPENDIX 1

#### Workshop – Question 6

Question 6 below requires the participant to examine the text for its thematic organisation. The Theme is described as ‘given information’ and the Rheme as ‘new information’. The title of the article is:

Ensuring the quality of diabetes care: Use of the QUAD-CAT model and Alphabet Strategy in clinical practice

EXTRACT 3 is the first paragraph of the introduction but the references have been replaced by the word ‘ref.’ and each sentence has been numbered. For example, the first sentence is S1 and the second sentence is S2. This is because we are going to consider two key ways in which the text makes sense to the reader. The two ways are to do with: the relevance of the information and the language used to convey the information. We will examine these ways sentence by sentence.

#### EXTRACT 3 for Question 6

##### *The First Paragraph of the Introduction*

(S1) There is a wealth of evidence for improving diabetes care and showing that such improvements are worthwhile. (S2) It has been shown that it is possible to reduce complications in type 1 diabetes by good glycaemic control (ref.). (S3) In people with type 2 diabetes, good glycaemic and tight blood pressure control have also been shown to reduce complications. (S4) Eye-screening programmes (ref.) have been shown to be successful in preventing blindness and are also cost-effective (ref.). (S5) Cardiovascular outcomes can be improved by using lipid-lowering drugs, ACE inhibitors and aspirin (ref.). (S6) In addition there are now established treatments for microalbuminuria and nephropathy in type 2 diabetes that may delay or prevent the need for dialysis (ref.).

#### End of Extract 3

First we will examine relevance. In a well-written text, each sentence needs to contain given information and new information. The given information is taken from the information that has been introduced previously in the text. The new information should link in with the given information so that the text develops.

For example, S1 is the first sentence of the text. The given information links in with the title, ‘Ensuring the quality of diabetes care.’ The given information is represented by the words ‘improving diabetes care’ and ‘improvements are worthwhile’. The new information is represented by the words ‘a wealth of evidence’. Now examine the rest of the paragraph, sentence by sentence, to identify the given and the new information.

#### Suggested Answer To Question 6:

S	Given information	from	New information
1	‘improving diabetes care’ ‘improvements are worthwhile’	Title Title	‘a wealth of evidence’
2	‘shown’	S1	‘possible to reduce complications in type 1 diabetes by good glycaemic control’
3	‘diabetes’ ‘good glycaemic control’ ‘shown’ ‘reduce complications’	S2 S2 S1 S2	‘type 2’ ‘tight blood pressure control’
4	‘shown’ ‘preventing’	S1 S2	‘Eye-screening programmes’ ‘blindness’ ‘cost-effective’
5	‘improved’	S1	‘Cardiovascular outcomes’ ‘lipid-lowering drugs, ACE inhibitors and aspirin’
6	‘treatments’ ‘type 2 diabetes’ ‘delay or prevent’	S1,4, 5 S3 S1	‘established’ ‘microalbuminuria and nephropathy’ ‘the need for dialysis’

### APPENDIX 2

The following three slides show an example of a typical task presented in power-point on the website programme. The introduction to the programme advises users to think carefully about each task before they move on to the suggested answer.

Slide number	Power-point presentation
50	<b>TASK 21</b> Sentence length and punctuation Examine the first sentence of EXTRACT 6 again on the next slide. This is a very long sentence but is that a problem? Give reasons for your answer.
51	<b>EXTRACT 6</b> The key measures include whether measurements of HbA <sub>1C</sub> , blood pressure, lipids and urinary microalbumin have been performed yearly; whether the patients received yearly eye examination, yearly foot examination, dietetic advice and self-management education; and whether the patients have ever been given smoking cessation advice and blood glucose monitoring education.
52	<b>ANSWER TO TASK 21</b> No, it is not a problem because the information is well-distributed. The given information ‘The key measures’ leads into three measures all listed under the conditional conjunctive ‘whether’. The three measures are quite complicated pieces of information but can be read as a list. The punctuation is helpful because, instead of commas (,) to separate the three measures, semi-colons (;) have been used. This is particularly important because commas are used for listing within the first two measures: ‘HbA <sub>1C</sub> , blood pressure, lipids and urinary microalbumin’ and ‘yearly eye examination, yearly foot examination, dietetic advice and self-management education’.





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