In a recent discussion of English as a Lingua Franca / Academic (ELF/A), Jenkins (2014) proposes that EAP writing instruction can be classified into two broad sets and makes the following comments:

... the first of these is made up of conforming approaches. Coming from my ELF/A perspective, I see the approaches in this group as ‘conforming’ in that they conform by default to native academic English. (Jenkins, 2014: 48–9, emphasis in the original)... while the second, and from Jenkins’ perspective, the superior set: ... consists of challenging approaches. These are ‘challenging’ in the sense of questioning in various ways what lies behind the linguistic conformity involved in the previous category. The challenging category comprises Critical EAP, Contrastive Rhetoric and Academic Literacies, all of which share, to an extent, some of ELF(A)’s socio-ideological concerns. (Jenkins op.cit.: 49)

I have discussed what I consider to be flaws in Jenkins’ argument elsewhere (Tribble, in press), in particular her contention that there is such a thing as "native academic English". In this paper I will present some preliminary findings from a study which uses corpus and text analysis along with social research methods to build a fuller understanding of how researchers in natural sciences, social sciences and the humanities use English in the development of disciplinary knowledge. In conducting this research I will use corpus data drawn from recently published research journal articles in tropical medicine, cognitive sciences, and cultural and literary studies to investigate current literacy practices in written academic communication. Findings from the corpus study will then be re-grounded in the results of a survey of the authors of the articles in the research corpus, and close analysis of introduction sections from selected articles in the corpus. It is hoped that this mixed methods analysis will build a fuller account than is currently available of how academic writing practices are developing in international scientific communities and practitioners’ perceptions and evaluations of the role of English in their professional lives. While this is work in progress, by the time of the seminar it will be possible to share preliminary results from all aspects of the study and to discuss issues in corpus development and analysis.

REFERENCES
Tribble, C. in press. Writing academic English further along the road. What is happening now in EAP writing instruction? English Language Teaching Journal