Paths to CBLP

How did English teachers develop their **corpus-based language pedagogy**: a case study

Dr. MA, Qing (Angel)
The Education University of Hong Kong

Background

Corpus linguistics and corpus technology:

Positive learning outcomes in learner language (various language skills) (Boutlon & Cobb, 2017)

Marginal influence in classroom pedagogy:

Teachers hold positive attitude towards the use of corpus technology after receiving corpus training (Chen et al., 2019; Ebrahimi & Faghih, 2017; Latif, 2021)

But they rarely apply corpora into their classroom teaching after the training
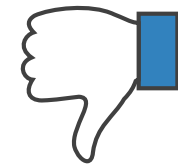
Corpus technology: too technically challenging? Or lacking the necessary pedagogical knowledge in teaching with corpora?

What is corpus-based language pedagogy (CBLP)? (Ma et al., 2022)

Corpus linguistics   **CBLP**   Language pedagogy

CBLP:

❑ "ability to integrate corpus technology into classroom language pedagogy to facilitate language teaching" (Ma et al., 2021, p. 2)

❑ a language-specific pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) (Shulman, 1987)

A PCK approach for examining CBLP

Comprehension ⟵┈┈┈> Understanding of subject knowledge (e.g., CL and English language) and teaching purposes

Transformation ⟵┈┈┈> Transferring comprehended ideas to design of teaching activities

Instruction ⟵┈┈┈> Conducting the teaching and sequencing/managing student learning

Evaluation ⟵┈┈┈> Self-evaluating the teaching practice/outcome

Reflection ⟵┈┈┈> Reflecting on the teaching practice (self-criticism)

Adapted from **Model of Pedagogical Reasoning and Action** for PCK (Shulman, 1987, p. 15)

Research questions

RQ 1: How did the two teachers develop their CBLP in their classroom teaching?

RQ2: What **factors** influenced their development of CBLP?

Significance of the study:

➤ yield empirical evidence to support the **pedagogical suitability/feasibility** of implementing CBLP in classroom teaching

➤ add evidence for examining **teacher-directed authentic CBLP teaching**

Research context & participants

- Workshop training for language teachers (April to May, 2020)

- Teachers designed a CBLP lesson addressing their students' needs: sharing and revision

- Invitation to implement the CBLP lesson in real classroom teaching

- Two university English teachers prepared and conducted CBLP teaching (July to October, 2020)

Participants

Name (pseudonym)	Level of teaching	Teaching experience	Target students	Teaching focus	Familiarity with corpora
Tim *A functional linguist and lover of corpus*	University	10 years	Final year Science students	Academic writing; grammar	Proficient
May *A curriculum reformer and experimenter of pedagogy*	University	15 years	Second year English majors	Critical reading, Features of speech text	Nil knowledge of corpora

Methods

Approach: case study and qualitative approach

Data sources: (1) CBLP lesson materials; (2) pre-interview (before classroom teaching); (3) lesson observations (during the teaching); (4) post-interview (after classroom teaching)

Analytical framework: *comprehension, transformation, instruction, evaluation and reflection* (Shulman, 1987)

Data analysis:
1. Coding & themes
2. Analytical memo
3. Cross-case comparison (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019)
4. Validation through member checking

Results

5 Stages	Similarities	Differences	
		Tim	May
Stage 1: Comprehension	• Good understanding of students • Clear and relevant teaching objectives • Corpus is used to enhance student self-learning and develop learner autonomy	• Students weak in English skills (grammar) • Less-motivated	• Students influenced by exam-oriented learning • lack of strategies for independent learning
Stage 2: Transformation	• Designed activities aligned with the teaching objectives • Professional knowledge in language pedagogy	• COCA • Informed by a genre-based pedagogy(GBP) (Martin & Rothery, 1986) • Activities demonstrating Tim's good knowledge of corpus	• AntConc with self-compiled reference corpus • Informed by educational dialogues (Burbules, 1993), • Started with no knowledge of corpus but enjoying new challenges

10

Results

5 Stages	Similarities	Differences and CBLP features	
		Tim	May
Stage 3: Instruction	• Good use of corpus tools • Clear demonstration of corpus search functions	• Encountering some technical problems regarding COCA (license issue); • Issues in online teaching	• No technical problems • Face to face teaching • A student-centered and interactive teaching

Results

5 Stages	Similarities	Differences and CBLP features	
		Tim	May
Stage 4: Evaluation	• Convinced that corpora tools are useful tools for language teaching	• Scoring the whole lesson 6-7/10 • Disappointed by student lack of enthusiasm and inadequate class participation	• Encouraged by positive evaluations from students • Confidence in developing students' inductive learning
Stage 5: Reflection	• Gaining knowledge on CBLP lesson design and implementation • Positive feedback: participating in our project facilitates teachers' professional development	• Developed interest in conducting research on corpus-based teaching • Technical difficulties to be solved	• Combining teaching with research (curriculum reform) • The challenge to select the appropriate corpus/tools for specific teaching objectives

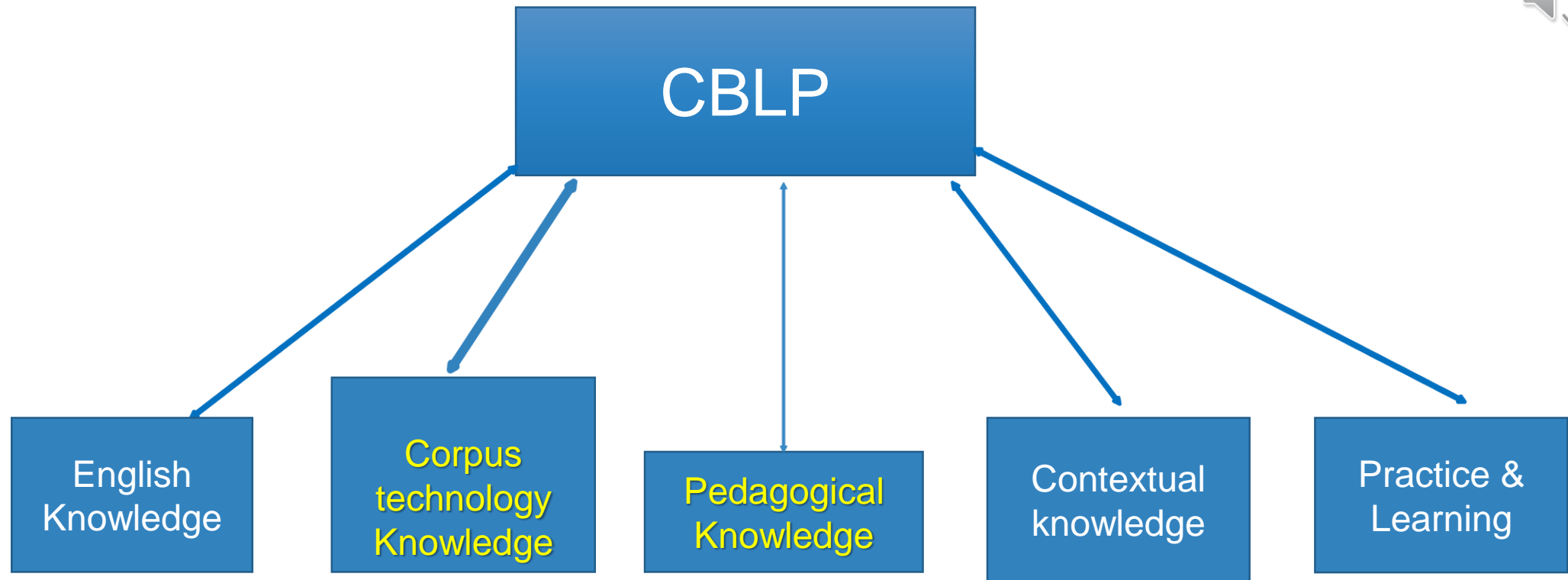# Discussion: Tim's paths to CBLP

Figure 1: Tim's route to CBLP
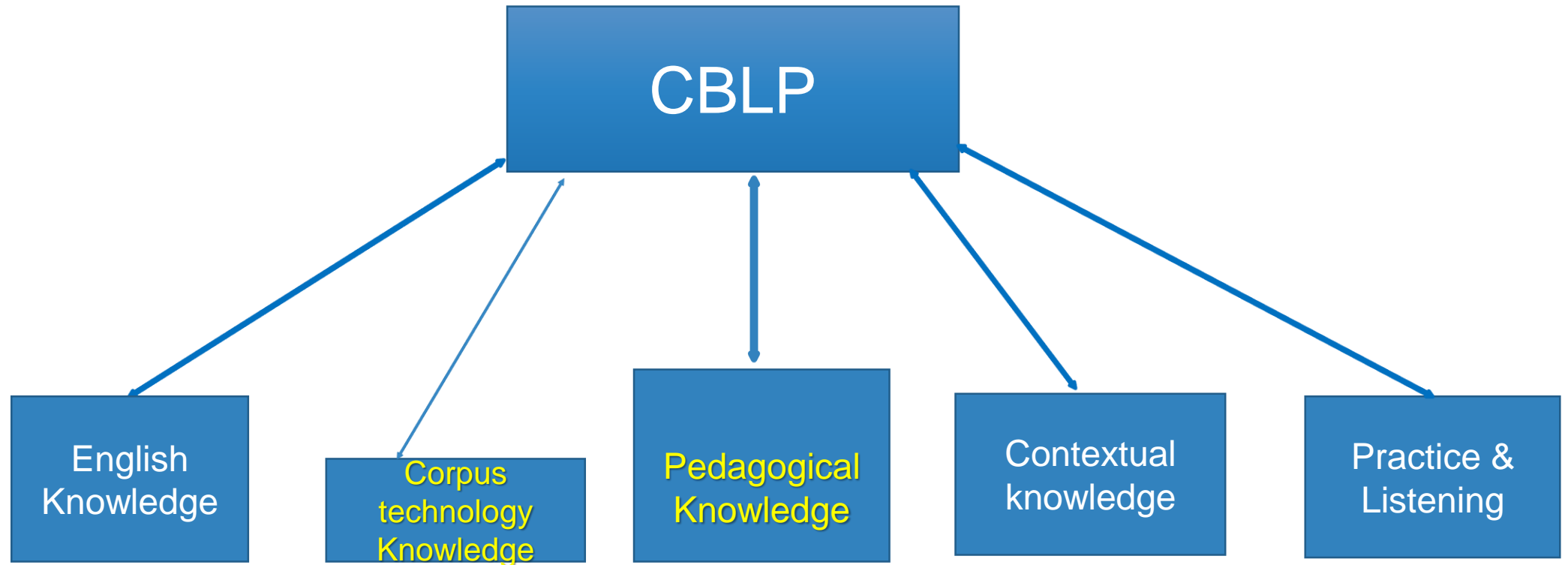
Discussion: May's paths to CBLP

Figure 2: May's route to CBLP

Discussion: factors influencing CBLP development

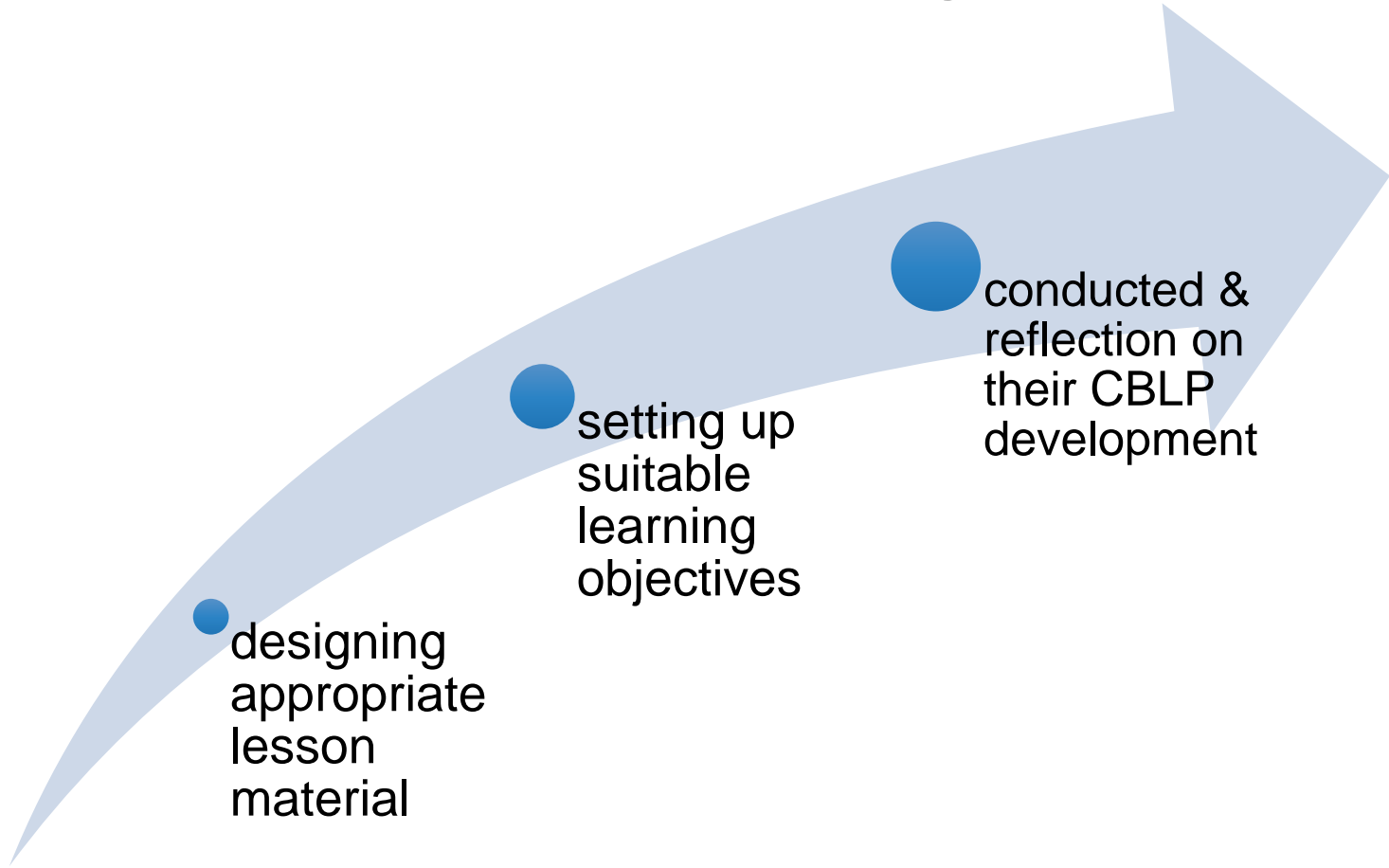| Components	Factors	Tim *A functional linguist and lover of corpus*	May *A curriculum reformer and experimenter of pedagogy*
Corpus technology knowledge	• **Overcoming technical difficulty in corpora use** • **Free access to corpora**	Being an experienced corpus user, failed to consider possible technical problems his students might encounter	Experiencing using the corpus tool as a learner, fully aware of possible technical problems the students could encounter
Pedagogical knowledge	• **Integrating topic-specific theories in CBLP design** • **Adoption of interactive and student-centred activities in CBLP teaching**	• A genre-based writing pedagogy • Disappointed by the passive classroom participation and students' lack of enthusiasm (due to lecture-dominated approach)	• Educational dialogues • Encouraged by the interactive learning with student full participation

Discussion: factors influencing CBLP development

Components	Factors	Tim	May
Contextual knowledge	• **Understanding student needs** • **Using strategies to motivate student corpus learning**	Fully consider students' language proficiency, learning strategies/habits, and weakness and difficulties. Final year (Demotivated 'veterans') vs. Year 2 (fresh)	
Practice and learning	• **Self-learning and peer support aiding CBLP development** • **Linking CBLP training to teacher professional development as a motivator**	• Enhanced the learning of CBLP through peer support • Expand their teaching resources/ideas through collaborative learning	

Conclusion

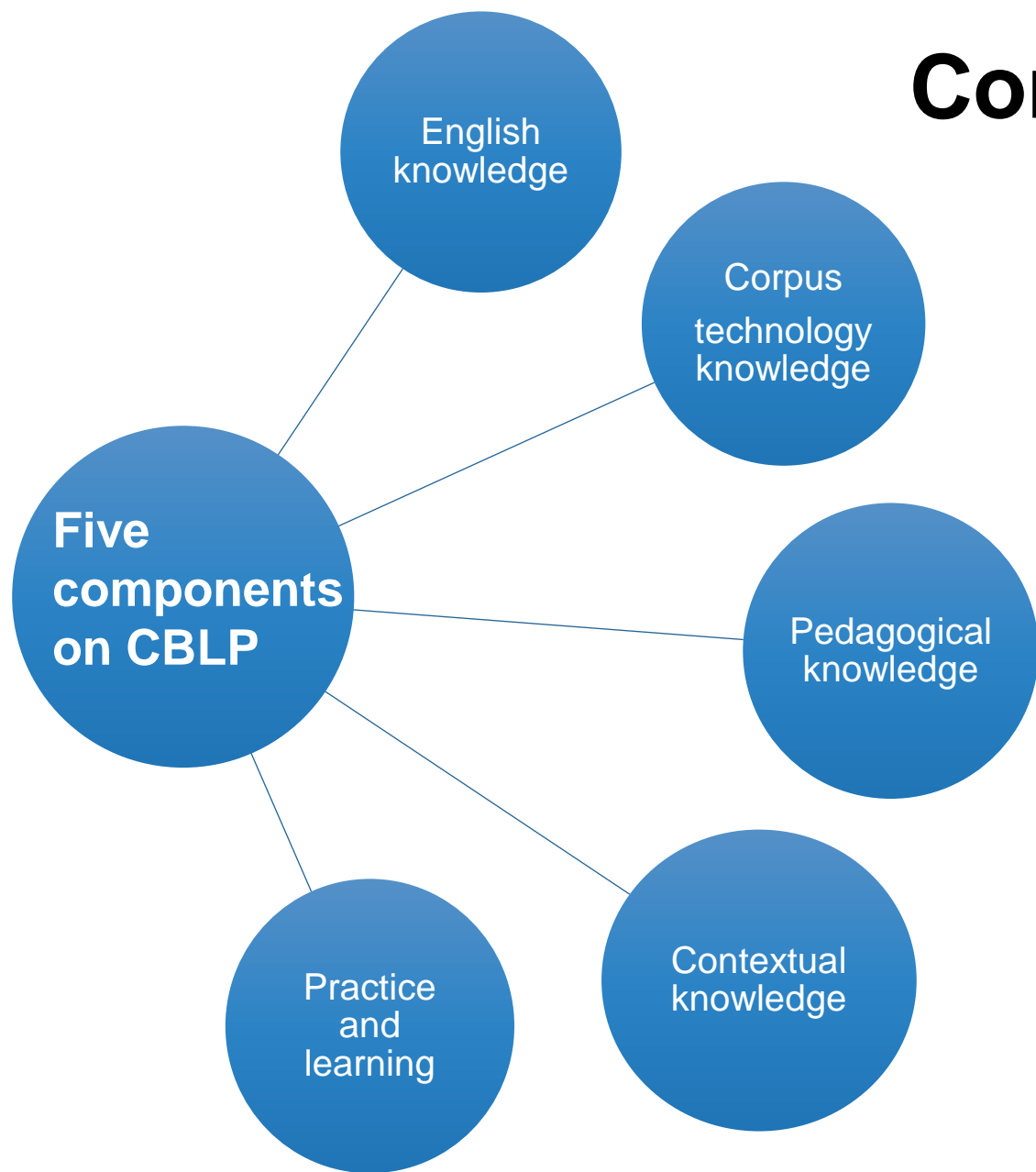designing appropriate lesson material

setting up suitable learning objectives

conducted & reflection on their CBLP development

A PCK approach for examining CBLP is useful☺

| Comprehension | Transformation | Instruction | Evaluation | Reflection |

Conclusion

English knowledge

Corpus technology knowledge

Five components on CBLP

Pedagogical knowledge

Practice and learning

Contextual knowledge

Providing useful theoretical guidance for future teacher research on CBLP

	Tim	May
Target language skills	Writing	Reading
Teaching focus	Grammar	Discourse analysis
Student backgrounds	Science (Year 4)	English (Year 2)
Teaching mode	Online	Classroom
Corpus tools	COCA	AntConc

Future direction

The current research: focused on university teachers (with research orientation).

Future research: investigate teachers from different school settings.

Issues & Challenges

1.How to solve the technical issues regarding corpora use?

2.How to motivate teachers to try out a seemingly complicated new pedagogy (CBLP) ?

References

Boulton, A., & Cobb, T. (2017). Corpus use in language learning: A meta-analysis. *Language Learning*, *67*(2), 348–393.

Burbules, N. C. (1993). *Dialogue in teaching: Theory and practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Chen, M., Flowerdew, J., & Anthony, L. (2019). Introducing in-service English language teachers to data-driven learning for academic writing. *System*, *87*, 102148.

Ebrahimi, A., & Faghih, E. (2017). Integrating corpus linguistics into online language teacher education programs. *ReCALL: the Journal of EUROCALL*, *29*(1), 120.

Latif, M. M. A. (2021). Corpus literacy instruction in language teacher education: Investigating Arab EFL student teachers' immediate beliefs and long-term practices. *ReCALL*, *33*(1), 34–48.

Ma, Q., Tang, J., & Lin, S. (2021). The development of corpus-based language pedagogy for TESOL teachers: A two-step training approach facilitated by online collaboration. *Computer Assisted Language Learning.*

Martin, J. R., & Rothery, J. (1986). What a functional approach to the writing task can show teachers about 'good writing'. *Functional approaches to writing: Research perspectives*, 241–265.

Shulman, L. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, *57*(1), 1–23.

Thank you!
Q & A