

# Cross-synergy: promoting peer teaching and learning between BEd(English Language) and BA(Language Studies) students in a linguistics course through a Wikibook project

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# ***Background of the Project***

- ❖ Since 2010, non-education programmes have been established in HKIEd
- ❖ Since the establishment of the BA(Language Studies) programme in 2010, the importance of cross-synergy between the BEd(English Language) and the BA(Language Studies) programmes has been emphasized.



# ***Project title and duration***

- ❖ Cross-synergy: promoting peer teaching and learning between BEd(English Language) and BA(Language Studies) students in a linguistics course through a Wikibook project
- ❖ Duration: July 2012 to February 2013



# ***Project Aims***

- ❖ To promote cross-synergy and cross-fertilization between the BEd(EL) and BA(Language Studies) programmes at course level through peer teaching and learning.
- ❖ To establish peer teaching and learning between BEd(EL) and BA(Language Studies) students in the course 'Introduction to Linguistics' through a Wikibook project.



# ***The students***

- ❖ Year One 5-yr BEd(EL) and 4-yr BA(Language Studies) students
- ❖ Three experimental tutorial classes were set up
- ❖ In each class (around 40 students), half are from BEd(EL), half from BA(Language Studies)
- ❖ Time: Sem 1 of 2012-13 academic year
- ❖ Course: Introduction to Linguistics



# ***Learning strategies***

- ❖ Peer learning
- ❖ Peer teaching
- ❖ Peer assessment
- ❖ Collaborative learning



# *Project Activities*

- ❖ The Wikibook projects were set up on Google Sites (<http://sites.google.com>).
- ❖ Students in each of the 3 classes were divided into groups of 4 students from both programmes.
- ❖ Each group of students wrote a chapter for an academic book titled 'Introduction to Linguistics', based on the content of the course, and each student contributed around 1000 words to the chapter (**collaborative learning**).





# *Project Activities*

- ❖ Every week one group of students writing a Wikibook chapter posted a draft of their chapter online by a deadline.
- ❖ Other students in the same tutorial class read the chapter (**peer learning**), left online comments on the draft on the corresponding Wikibook website and rated their peer's work (**peer assessment**).





# ***Project Activities***

- ❖ After receiving the comments, the group of students who wrote the chapter then prepared a 20-minute session in the form of a lecture based on their Wikibook chapter content, and delivered the lecture at the beginning of a tutorial class (**peer teaching**). Other students were invited to comment on the lecture.
- ❖ The students' peer teaching performance were video-recorded and formally assessed by the lecturer.



# ***Project Activities***

- ❖ After the peer teaching session, the students who gave the lecture were given two more weeks to **finalize** their Wikibook chapter, which was then submitted to the lecturer via turnitin for grading.
- ❖ During the draft-revising process, students had to **peer edit** each other's sections in the chapter, so as to ensure the overall coherence and cohesion of the chapter, and the consistency of the writing style.



# *A Sample Wikibook*

❖ <https://sites.google.com/site/d2012introlinguistics1/>



# ***Data Collection***

- ❖ Questionnaire survey in the first tutorial session
- ❖ Questionnaire survey in the last tutorial session  
(Both aim to find out students' perceptions on peer teaching and learning, and their views on cross-synergy and cross-fertilization between the BEd(EL) and BA(Language Studies) programmes.)
- ❖ Follow-up Interviews at the end of the course



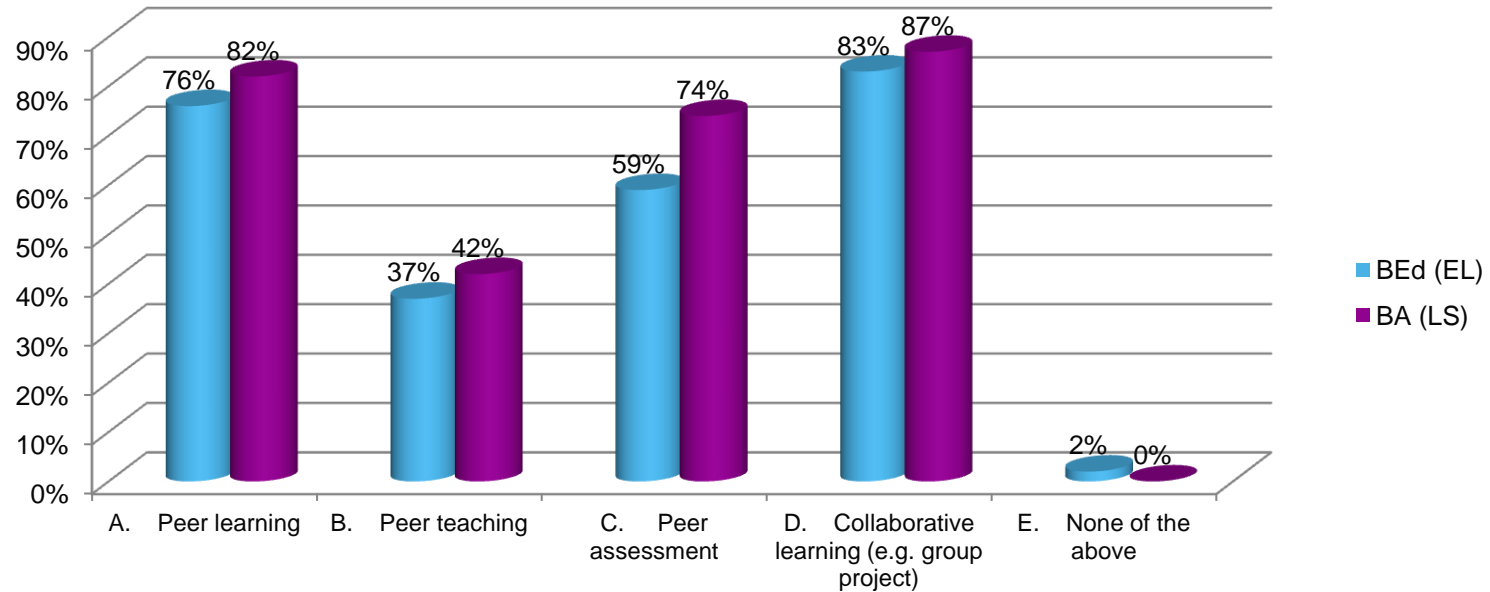
# ***Pre-course Questionnaire Survey***

- ❖ Conducted in the first tutorial session
- ❖ 92 copies of questionnaire were collected and analyzed



# Findings in Pre-course Questionnaire Survey

Chart 1: Students' learning experiences in the past

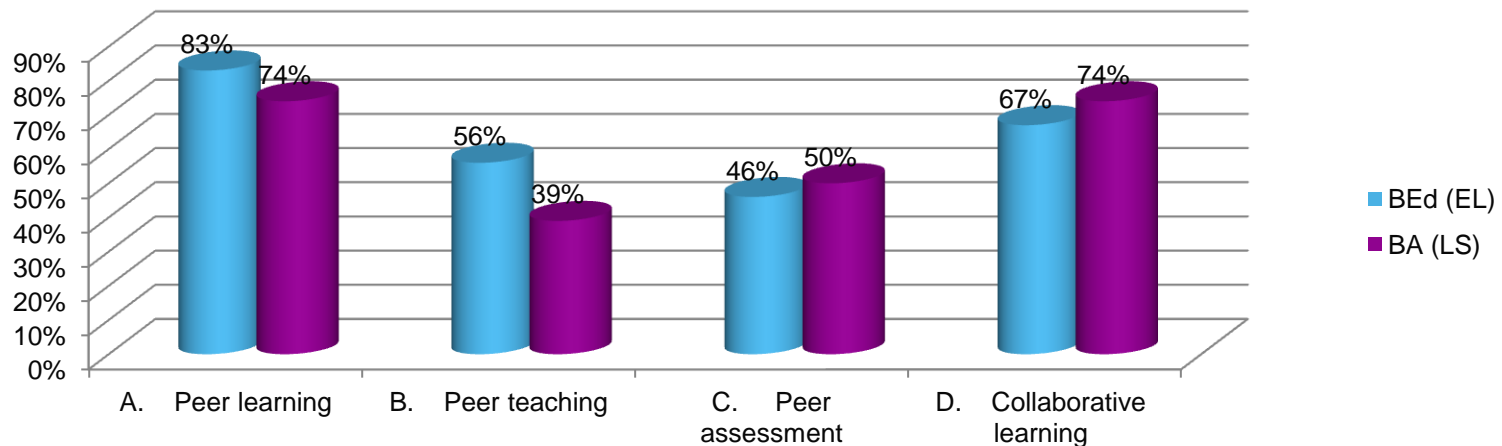


- ❖ Students had all the teaching and learning experiences except one BEd(EL) student. They had more experiences in collaborative learning.
- ❖ Fewer students experienced peer teaching.



# Findings in Pre-course Questionnaire Survey

## Chart 2: Students' expected learning experiences in the course



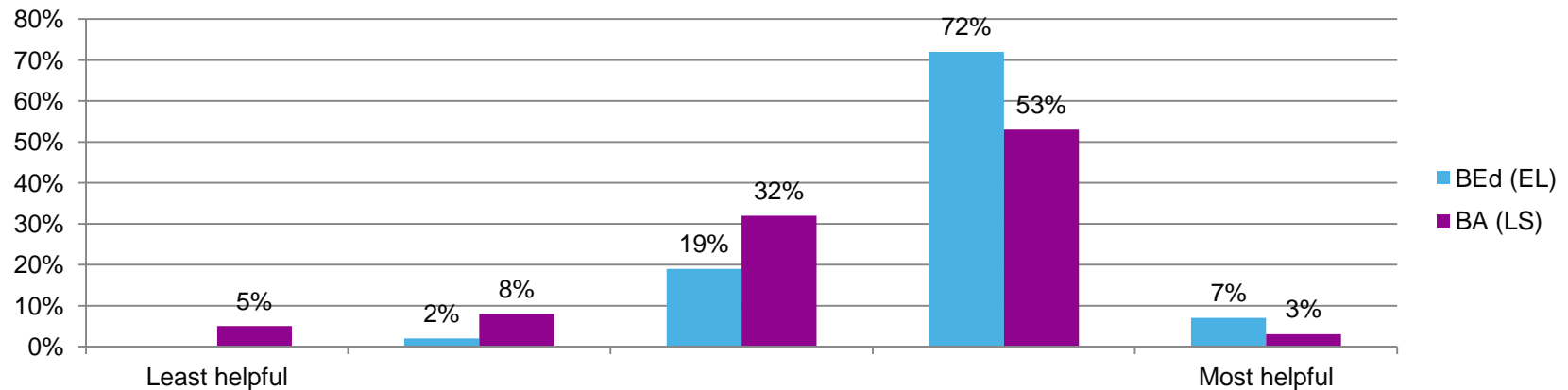
- ❖ Most students expected to experience peer learning and collaborative learning.
- ❖ Fewer BA(Language Studies) students expected to experience peer teaching.





# Findings in Pre-course Questionnaire Survey

Chart 3: Students' expected helpfulness of working with students from another programme



- ❖ BEd(EL) students were more optimistic.
- ❖ BEd(EL) students mean score: 3.85  
BA(Language Studies) students mean score: 3.39
- ❖ The opinions of BEd(EL) students were more in consensus because their standard deviation (0.56) is smaller than that of the BA(LS) students (0.87).



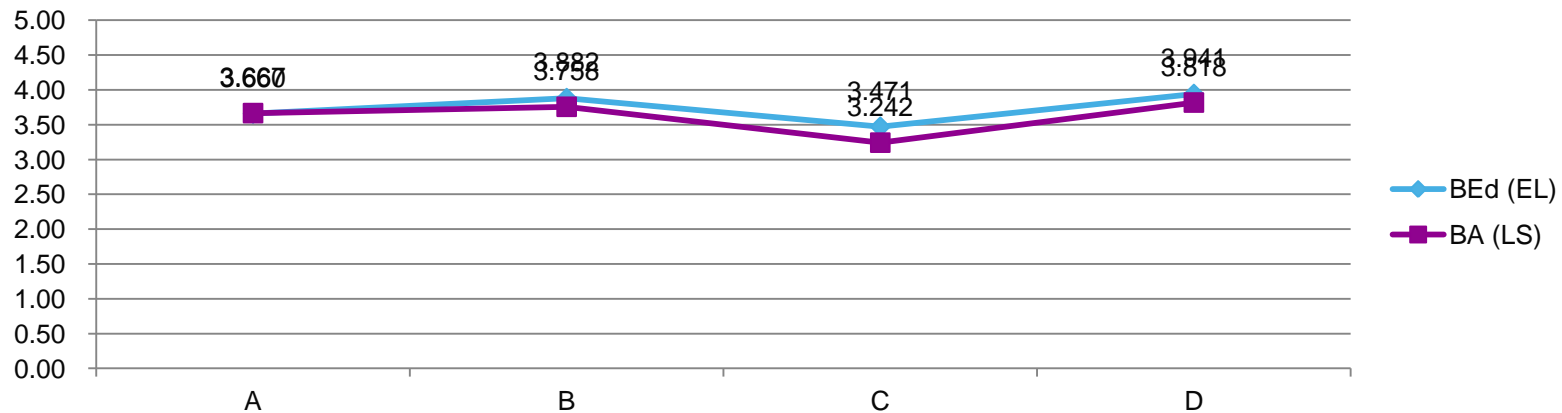
# ***Post-course Questionnaire Survey***

- ❖ Conducted in the last tutorial session
- ❖ 85 copies of questionnaire were received and analyzed



# Findings in Post-course Questionnaire Survey

Chart 4: Mean Scores of helpfulness of the peer teaching & learning strategies

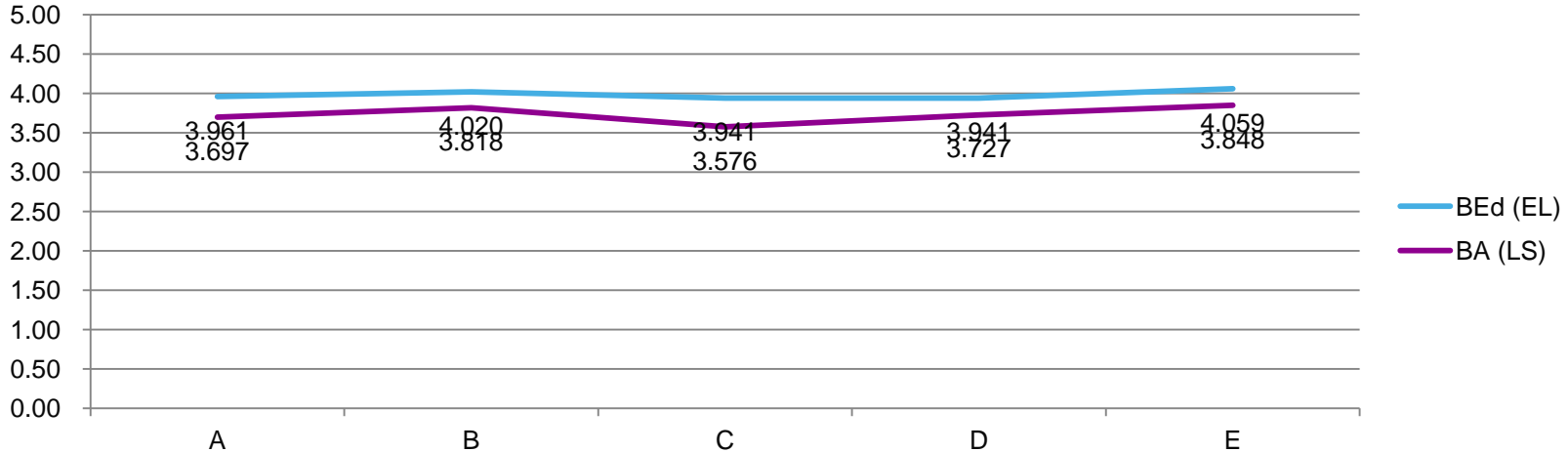


- ❖ A=peer learning
- ❖ B=peer teaching
- ❖ C=peer assessment
- ❖ D=collaborative learning



# Findings in Post-course Questionnaire Survey

Chart 5: Mean scores of perception of the course

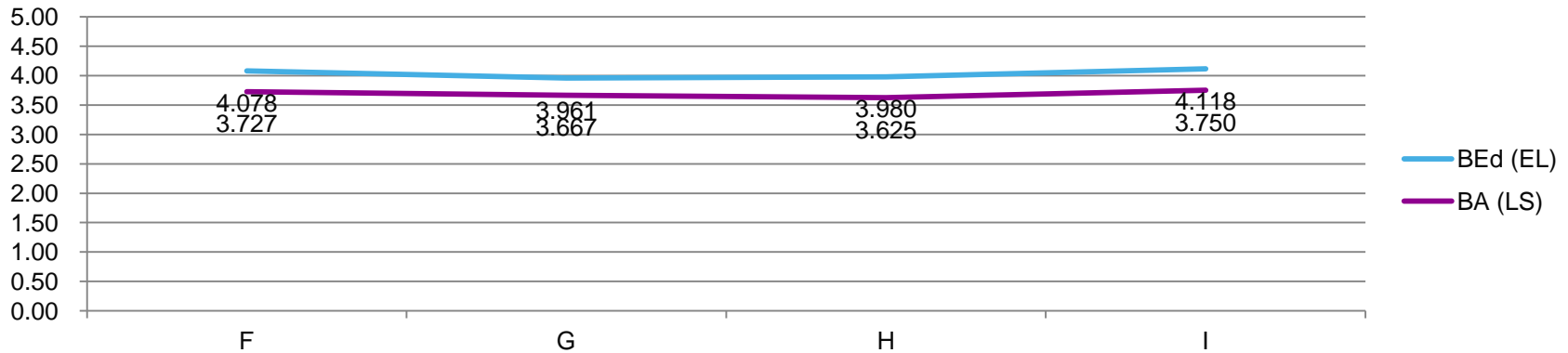


- ❖ A: We were able to play a more active role in the learning process.
- ❖ B: we built up a cooperative relationship with our peers.
- ❖ C: There were more interactions among students.
- ❖ D: I was more motivated to learn in this course.
- ❖ E: The teaching and learning was more student centered.



# Findings in Post-course Questionnaire Survey

**Chart 6: Mean of students' acceptance of working with students from the other programme**



- ❖ F: I felt comfortable working with students from the other programme.
- ❖ G: Interacting with students from the other programme is beneficial.
- ❖ H: I benefited from the work produced by students from the other programme.
- ❖ I: I welcome opportunities of working with students from the other programme [BEd(EL)/BA(LS)] in the future.



# ***Concluding Remarks of two Questionnaire Surveys***

- ❖ Students from both BEd(EL) and BA(LS) welcomed the opportunities of working together
- ❖ They were positive towards the peer teaching and learning approaches, which were perceived as student centred. The majority agreed that they were able to play a more active role in the learning process, build up a cooperative relationship with their peers, and there were more interactions among students
- ❖ Overall, feedback from BEd(EL) students are slightly more positive than that from BA(LS) students.



# ***Follow-up Interviews***

- ❖ Three groups of follow-up interviews were carried out in early January 2013.
- ❖ Interviewees were 6 volunteers from each experimental tutorial class.
- ❖ Finally a total of 15 students participated in the interviews, 8 from BEd(EL) programme and 7 from BA(LS)programme.
- ❖ Aim to further clarify the students' answers given in the questionnaire survey.





# *Findings: peer interaction*



To facilitate communications and share materials among group members, technological devices were used.



# ***Findings: peer learning***

- ❖ Students' views on **peer learning** (reading each other's wikibook chapters online)
  - Read the first few chapters carefully
  - Could learn basic concepts of the topics, especially when illustrated with interesting examples/pictures etc.
  - One BEd(EL) student claimed, "**Yes, because there are many advantages. Because you don't know that chapter and after you read all those works from other groups and then you know more about the chapter.** But then I consider this very time-consuming because you need to read word by word and make comments. But this is beneficial."



# ***Findings: peer teaching***

- ❖ **Students' views on peer teaching (group presentations)**
  - As presenters: anxious, but confident that their peers could learn from their presentations.
  - As audience: they strongly agreed that they could learn from their peer's presentations as the presenters were very familiar with the concepts and information of the chapters. They were impressed by the new ideas introduced, which were not covered by the textbook and the lectures.
  - One BA(LS) student stated, "I think it helps consolidate what we have learnt from the lecture and it is like a second lecture after the first one and you can learn more, especially the topic they are talking about."



# ***Findings: peer assessment***

## ❖ **Students' views on peer assessment (online commenting and grading)**

- Online commenting is beneficial to some extent
- Most comments focused on the spelling & grammatical mistakes, the formatting, the pictures, the links, the tables and the organization etc. but less on the content.
- Students would refer to their peer's comments when finalizing their chapters.
- Some students thought the grading might not always be fair as they tended to give higher marks to their peers.
- One BEd(EL) student said, **“Making comments is useful because we may forget some parts if we don't make this kind of comment every week. When we make the comments, at least we will remember this and that and we can review what we have learnt.”**



# ***Findings: collaborative learning***

- ❖ Students' views on **collaborative learning** (working as a group on the wikibook chapters)
  - Students enjoyed working as a group, especially with members from another programme, on the wikibook chapters.
  - They could explore most of the linguistic knowledge by themselves when working as a group on the wikibook chapters.
  - Group members were helpful, responsible, cooperative and friendly, and hence they built up a close relationship with their classmates, facilitating their learning.
  - One BA(LS) student said happily, “Yes, because we go to different classes, sometimes we can learn from the other students as well, such as they can share with us what they have learnt in class, something that we don't know about. So we can experience after all.”



# ***Conclusions***

- ❖ Students from one programme felt comfortable working with students from the other programme.
- ❖ Interacting with students from the other programme was beneficial to their learning.
- ❖ Students benefitted from the work produced by students from the other programme.
- ❖ Students welcome opportunities of working with students from the other programme in the future.
- ❖ Through the process of collaborative learning, students learnt how to negotiate, cooperate and discuss with group members on one hand; and developed mutual respect and joint responsibility on the other.



# *Conclusions*

- ❖ As students have to take the initiatives and assume social control of the learning process in the Wikibook project, they have become autonomous learners.
- ❖ The Wikibook project provides students with opportunities to experience social and experiential learning, in which they learn to respect and tolerate their group members and finally they have personal development in self-confidence and self-assertion.
- ❖ More peer teaching and learning should be promoted.





**Thank You !**

