

BALEAP PIM

26 FEBRUARY 2000

*New Kinds of Writing in the Academy:
ESAP in the Humanities, Performing Arts and Social Sciences*

DESIGN AND DESIGNATION IN THE CREATIVE ARTS: THE LANGUAGE OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Fiona J. Doloughan

**Institute of Education
University of London**

There has been increasing recognition of the fact that the conventions and practices of written English as applied in the academy tend to vary in accordance with genres, discipline and indeed institutional culture (see among others, Kress, 1989; Swales, 1990; Prior, 1991 and Johns, 1997). What has perhaps been less well documented to date is the challenge posed to strict constructionist views of academic discourse by writing in the creative disciplines. This challenge is both timely and inevitable given the competing interests at stake: the demands of rational argumentation and sequenced presentation of ideas on the one hand and the desire for cognitive and stylistic flexibility and freedom from constraint on the other.

For the practising, studio-based artist working within a research culture, there are, therefore, likely to be difficulties meeting academic expectations which require the articulation of artistic practice and production within a conceptual and analytic framework which may appear to constrain or distort rather than to facilitate or enable successful realization of a creative project. At the same time, the tension between discursive practices and preferred modes and media of communication and expression (cf. Kress, 2000) can be seen to be positive insofar as it highlights differences in culture and may lead to eventual reconceptualizations of what constitutes acceptable forms of writing within the academy.

Taking as a point of departure conversations with research students at the RCA enrolled on Masters programmes involving research by thesis or by project as well as analysis of and commentary on a sample of written products, I wish to argue that context and purpose in relation to the nature and scope of the actual research project rather than imposed or implied norms of usage in the academy should guide the construction of text. The kind of language used to articulate reflections on practice and knowledge in action (cf. Schön, 1995) will need to be flexible and fluid enough to translate and mediate the dynamics of creative production. While such a language is likely to be more metaphorical and analogic than that traditionally encouraged by or valued in the academy, it need not be seen as thereby losing incisiveness and definition. On the contrary it could be argued that failure to respond to the contextual specificity and problematics of design and designation in the creative arts is tantamount to a refusal to engage in an important contemporary critical and intellectual debate.

LETTERS HOME

Harriet Edwards and Janis Jefferies

Goldsmiths College, London

This presentation takes the form of a dialogue between Harriet Edwards (English Language Unit) and Janis Jefferies (Director of Postgraduate Studies in Textiles) who are involved in tutoring students from a wide range of cultural experiences. Together they will focus on extracts from four pieces of written work which connect to the individual students visual practices and research interests. In each instance, the voice, tone and style of writing unfolds according to the diversity of cultural experience and the location of the 'I' in a cut and mix of creative expression via storytelling in fictional, aural and textual forms. The implications for future work has resulted in closer collaboration between staff who seek to empower and value the diversity of difference through language study and creative practice.

ESP OR EAP? WHAT ON EARTH DO WE DO ON IN-SESSIONAL COURSES?

Fiona English

ELU, SOAS, London

The debate about subject specific versus generalist programmes rumbles on. But perhaps this is a false divide in that it implies that they have different aims and different functions. What the divide seems to revolve around is what is often called the 'content' orientation of an ESP programme as opposed to a 'lack of content' (?) on an EAP programme. Although we may sometimes feel Jacks (or Jills) of all trades, we must not forget that our specialism is language and that it is our understanding of how language can be made to work that best serves our students. In-sessional students are already 'field' specialists to some extent or are enrolled on degree programmes that will help them become specialists so the subject specific input for these students comes from somewhere other than the in-sessional course. Our job is to help navigate their way through their own subject needs by providing them with a context in which the different issues can be explored. We can show students ways of analysing texts, including their own, so that they can become more aware of how texts work from an ideational, interpersonal and textual (Halliday) point of view, in other words, 'making transparent what is secret' (Lillis 1999). Once students begin to understand how texts are constructed, how ideas are positioned and how linguistic choices influence how a text can be interpreted, they can then begin to develop both as readers and writers in their own field.

This session will run as a workshop where we can look at specific texts to see what Students (and teachers) can learn from taking an analytical approach.

SUBJECT/LANGUAGE INTEGRATION: RESEARCH INTO THE TEACHING CYCLE AT IFCOS

David Fisher and Anne Lattul

Ifcos, SOAS

A distinguishing feature of the foundation courses and non- foundation flexible academic study programme run by IFCOS, a department of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), is the integration of academic subject teaching and English language support. This indivisibility of subject and language is manifested by the so-called teaching cycle of reading class, lecture, lecture review, seminar, and writing class, and involves subject lecturers and EAP support teachers working in close co-operation. Research was recently carried out into the teaching cycle of the Foundation Diploma for Postgraduate Studies with the aim of seeing how the cycle works in practice; in other words, how individual components of the cycle link together, how consistent the cycle is across subjects, and to what extent there is subject/language demarcation between lecturers and EAP teachers. The findings revealed a number of inconsistencies across subjects, including the components of the cycle itself, the perceived role of subject lecturer and EAP teacher, and the nature of the resources offered to students.

NATURAL SCIENCE AND SOCIAL SCIENCE: SOME ISSUES FOR ESAP.

Steve Issitt

Imperial College, London

This paper considers the teaching of academic writing to postgraduate natural scientists and describes how materials developed for humanities ESAP can be adapted in a different context. The emphasis will be practical and there will be reference to language features and pedagogic issues.

CREATIVE WRITING /ACADEMIC WRITING

Jenny Palmer

(King's College & Westminster University)

Genres are involved in both academic writing and creative writing. In academic writing, the genres are the discursive essay, the lab report, the dissertation, the research article etc. In creative writing they are lyrical poems, dramatic monologues, thrillers, saga sagas, kitchen sink dramas etc. Are there parallels to be drawn between literary genres and academic genres? This paper suggests that genre analysis as developed

inlinguistics (Swales 1990, Bhatia 1993) can be a useful tool for analysing the genres both in creative and academic writing, if we define a genre as a communicative event within a particular discourse community (Tribble, forthcoming). Genre analysis is concerned with both context and language. In academic contexts, students have to adhere to conventions both in terms of the approach to the subject matter and the formal and linguistic conventions. Creative writing, on the other hand, is not hidebound by conventions (Goldberg, 1986). It is more concerned with images and the imagination and identity. The writer is allowed to be more visible, and is encouraged to break away from conventions and invent new ways of expressing themselves. They can flout linguistic conventions and develop their own style. In other words, they have a wider range of possibilities for expression both in the subject matter and in the means of its expression. How can the academy learn from creative writing and does it necessarily mean that the "generic terrains" (Rosen, 1998) will be destabilised?" This workshop will discuss the above issues and provide some practical exercises to highlight them.

'THE COMMUNICATIVE AUTHENTICITY OF CRITICAL WRITING TASKS ON MODERN DRAMA'

Stella Smyth

**School of Modern Languages
Leicester**

This presentation outlines opportunities for setting more creative and communicative assessments within the context of a 10 credit modular course in English Language and Literary Studies, devised for international, Erasmus students at Leicester University. The talk will analyse elements of critical writing tasks on literature, and will provide some practical ideas for creating and staging writing activities aimed at encouraging a more reflective response to David Mamet's play, 'Oleanna.' The principles of these tasks could be applied to other plays.

Points will be illustrated with references drawn from students' texts and a newspaper article on political correctness.

SLOW METHODS AND HYPED DISCUSSIONS: WRITING FOR PUBLICATION IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

John M. Swales

**English Institute,
Aarhus Business School, Denmark**

Social Psychology is a somewhat conflicted field. It has an established experimental tradition, orchestrated through the APA Publications Manual, with its stronghold in the United States, and an alternative school of "discursive" Social Psychology primarily associated with the United Kingdom. In this presentation, I offer some discursal findings on the leading American journal, that of Personality and Social Psychology, which stress the occurrence of extremely detailed and highly justificatory methodological descriptions, and extensive valorizations of the results in the closing discussions. I show how the latter in particular were

problematic for Asian Ph.D students attending a special EAP course for social, cross-cultural and organizational psychologists. The presentation closes with some observations about the strictures of the APA Publications Manual and how these can, on occasion, be subverted by research psychologists.