She's a good writer, so she should do fine at university, right?

Diane Schmitt
Nottingham Trent University

A story to start…

- 120 students (home and international) are enrolled on a course titled "Exploring Research in Business"
- This is a second-year course which prepares students to write their third (and final) year dissertation
- The students are required to write a 2500 word (roughly 10 pages) research proposal
  - abstract, introduction, literature review, methodology, research design, challenges and limitations
- ¼ of the students fail outright

Any thoughts on what went wrong?

The story explained

- The failing students got stuck in the literature review.
- Instead of reviewing literature in their area with the aim of identifying a gap in the research…
- the students wrote a standard essay describing what they had read.
- The students were also able to write essays about qualitative and quantitative research and their philosophical rationale, but…
- they did not make links between their literature reviews and their research design.

Another story…

- A cohort of 19 students studying for a Master's Degree in Human Resource Management
- External accrediting body requires that core modules are assessed by exams
- Two of these are based on case studies
- 13 students fail the first exam
- 11 students fail all three exams
- The students only read the case studies and lecture notes. They did not read other texts from the reading list.

Lecturer's voice

Don't students know they are supposed to read for a degree?

(Derek Watling, Programme Leader: MSc HRM, Nottingham Trent University)

'Reading for a degree'?

- Student: We know our assignment type... ...we haven't been given the exact topic... ...we start reading now or would... ...te of time? Should we wait un... ...pic?

- Diane: Of c... ...d start now. Do you unders... ...ecturers give you r... ...logue from me)

You have got to read widely to write well. (Deane in Tribble, 2010)

Another student voice

- ☐ When I heard about the plagiarism software, I freaked out. How do I express the specialized language? I spent 12 hours a day for two weeks and I got a 7% match.

Why do students struggle?

- University policies and practices
- Genre awareness
- Academic writing is also a reading activity
  - A narrow focus on writing as opposed to academic literacy

University Policies and Practices

- Lea and Street (1999) examined writing guides and marking criteria made available to students and feedback forms used in assessing writing.

- These types of texts tend to exist at three different levels
  - institutional
  - departmental
  - individual

- The aim of the texts is to guide students in both the writing process and in the final product – to make transparent the rules and ways of writing.

On-line guide to Academic Writing provided by the library

W3 Writing Reports

Contents (Table of Contents)

The contents page should list the different chapters and/or headings together with the page numbers. Your contents page should be presented in such a way that the reader can quickly scan the list of headings and locate a particular part of the report. You may want to number chapter headings and subheadings in addition to providing page references. Whatever numbering system you use, be sure that it is clear and consistent throughout.

Introduction

The introduction sets the scene for the main body of the report. The aims and objectives of the report should be explained in detail. Any problems or limitations in the scope of the report should be identified, and a description of research methods, the parameters of the research and any necessary background history should be included.

*In some reports, particularly in science subjects, separate headings for **METHODS** and **RESULTS** are used prior to the main body (**DISCUSSION**) of the report as described below.*

Methods

Information under this heading may include: a list of equipment used; explanations of procedures followed; relevant information on materials used, including sources of materials and details of any necessary preparation; reference to any problems encountered and subsequent changes in procedure.

Results

This section should include a summary of the results of the investigation or experiment together with any necessary diagrams, graphs or tables of gathered data that support your results. Present your results in a logical order without comment. Discussion of your results should take place in the main body (**DISCUSSION**) of the report.

Discussion

The main body of the report is where you discuss your material. The facts and evidence you have gathered should be analysed and discussed with specific reference to the problem or issue. If your discussion section is lengthy you might divide it into section headings. Your points should be grouped and arranged in an order that is logical and easy to follow. Use headings and subheadings to create a clear structure for your material. Use bullet points to present a series of points in an easy-to-follow list. As with the whole report, all sources used should be acknowledged and correctly referenced. For further guidance check your departmental handbook.

Conclusion

In the conclusion you should show the overall significance of what has been covered. You may want to remind the reader of the most important points that have been made in the report or highlight what you consider to be the most central issues or findings. However, no new material should be introduced in the conclusion.

Common Sense

- Documents that explain "how to write" present their guidance as common sense. Even though what may normal practice in one discipline may not be so in another.

Lea and Street (1999) cont'd

Understanding assignment requirements

- Lea and Street conclude that information about writing is presented as uncontestable truths despite the fact that the truths espoused by one discipline may contradict those of another.

- They propose that each of these types of institutional text can be seen as a set of genre in their own right and thus may need to be unpacked.

Grade-based assessment

- Assessment practice at NTU uses grades. A key benefit of grade-based assessment (GBA) is that grades and associated descriptors help you to track your development on each module as well as monitor overall progress on the journey to your award.

Grade-based assessment

			Student Feedback Form (Postgraduate Courses)		
Course:	MSc Management		Student ID:		
Module Name:	Managing People, Information and Knowledge (MPiK)				
Module code:	BUSI48020		Grade:		
Assessment type:	Essay – Assessment 1		Graded by: 1st Assessor		
			2nd Assessor *delete if not applicable		
Assessment Date:	07 November 2014		Date Graded		
Module learning outcomes assessed: a)					
NB: Final grade determined holistically in reference to how the criteria have been met overall and not the sum of the individual aspects of the work.					

Grade / Assessment Criteria	Fail	Marginal Fail	Pass	Commendation	Distinction	Distinction
	Low | Mid		Pass | Mid | High	Commendation | Mid | High	Distinction | Mid | High	Exceptional
Terms of Reference (answering the question set)	Fails to grasp the aims of the assignment or to address the question set.	Some understanding of the brief but this is not fully developed or addressed.	Broadly understands the aims of the assignment. An acceptable coverage and an attempt to address the brief.	A ==sound understanding== of the aims of the assignment and fully addresses the brief.	Considerable clarity in understanding of the assignment and comprehensively addresses the brief.	Outstanding effort and considerable clarity in the understanding of the assignment and comprehensively addresses the brief.
Identification of appropriate models, theories or concepts to analyse.	Insufficient or inappropriate identification of theories, models, or concepts. Descriptive, with little/ no attempt made to incorporate or apply academic work.	Minimal identification of appropriate theories, models or concepts. Relevance of theories questionable and/ or justification of relevance weak.	Clear identification of appropriate theories, models or concepts which are adequately defined. Some satisfactory attempts are made to explain their relevance however this may be subjective or limited.	==Clear identification== of appropriate theories, models or concepts which are explained well, justified and provide a base for critical analysis.	The rationale for selecting theories, models or concepts is ==carefully explained==, well justified and well-articulated in order to provide a base for a critical analysis.	The rationale for selecting theories, models or concepts is sound, explained and justified skillfully and well-articulated in order to provide a sound base for a critical analysis.

Grade-based assessment

Grade / Assessment Criteria	Low Fail Low | Mid	Marginal Fail	Pass Pass | Mid | High	Commendation Commendation | Mid | High	Distinction Distinction | Mid | High	Distinction Exceptional
Analysis of the case study	Little or no analysis of case information. What is provided is descriptive or repetitious.	Inadequate/ insufficient analysis of case information. Case study material is high level, descriptive or inferred.	An adequate analysis of case information. Evidence is interpreted appropriately.	A clear and logical analysis of the case information. Evidence is interpreted effectively.	A confident and logical demonstration of an ability to analyse relevant information in the case. Evidence is selected and interpreted effectively.	A confident and logical demonstration of an outstanding ability to critically analyse relevant information. Evidence is selected and interpreted effectively.
Conclusion	Conclusions are not clear and it is difficult to see how they emerge from the preceding discussion.	Conclusions are weak and/or not clearly articulated and do not flow logically from the preceding discussion.	Conclusions drawn reflect the preceding discussion and consider some of the implications of the issues analyzed.	Conclusions succinctly pull together key issues from the preceding discussion and consider their implications.	Conclusions are skillfully drawn and provide good consideration of the implications of the preceding discussion.	Conclusions are skillfully drawn and provide an outstanding consideration of the implications of the preceding discussion.
Presentation, Style & Referencing	Presentation throughout is unstructured, unclear and it is difficult to read or follow. Referencing is incomplete and/or inaccurate.	Presentation in places is unstructured, unclear and it is difficult to read or follow. Minor errors in referencing.	Presentation is reasonably clear. It has an adequate structure and is written in a manner that is suitable for the purpose. Referencing is generally accurate.	Presentation is clear. There is a logical structure and it is well written. Referencing is complete and accurate.	Presentation is concise and clear and the essay is logically structured. Language is used effectively for its intended purpose and audience. Referencing is complete and accurate.	Presentation is concise and clear and the essay is logically structured. Language is used creatively for its intended purpose and audience. Referencing is complete and accurate.

Comments:

Language in the Academy (Turner, 2011)

- Western academic values were shaped by the European Enlightenment
  - Search for truth and knowledge
- Knowledge should be 'clear and distinct'
  - Language is a conduit for knowledge
  - Knowledge should not be distorted by everyday language
- Content and language dichotomy
  - Language is subordinate to content
  - We only notice the language when it is flawed in some way

Rhetorical values (Turner, 2011)

- Clarity
- Brevity
- Conciseness
- Transparency
  - Tacit
  - Autonomous
  - Taken for granted

"I just read through the language…"

Communicate

- We need to communicate clearly – and in the correct format
- Do you write little and often?
- Do you enjoy your writing?
- Do you know the difference between an essay & a report?

University policies and practices

Support the separation of content and language
- ◻ Writing Centres
- ◻ Language Centres
- ◻ Study Skills Support

Plagiarism Policy - University of Essex

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence but more often than not it results from misunderstanding rather than a deliberate intention to cheat. Many students simply do not understand what plagiarism is exactly.

Although confusion is understandable especially at the beginning of your study, ignorance will not be accepted as an excuse or as a defence against an accusation of plagiarism.   You must therefore make sure that you understand what plagiarism is and how you can avoid it.

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Understanding assignment requirements

- Students come to the task of writing at university with their own ideas about what writing is
- Lack of acknowledgement of this means many university policies do not attempt to bridge gaps where understandings are not shared.
- Students' difficulties with writing may not be about any deficit on their part
- Instead, the "reification of an autonomous model of literacy" makes it difficult for students to make sense of the variety of literacy practices they encounter at university.

Lea and Street (1999)

Why do students struggle?

- Genre Awareness
  - School or exam genres
  - Wide variety of genres
  - Labelling of genres
  - Limited opportunity to practice and gain mastery

Border Crossings in Writing

Secondary School ➡ University Writing

EFL Exams ➡ EAP Writing

EAP Writing ➡ Disciplinary Writing

Freshman Composition ➡ Disciplinary Writing

Graduation Writing Exams ➡ Disciplinary Exams

A problem of genre awareness

- British Academic Writing in English (BAWE) Corpus
- 2,761 assignments – 1,039 contributors
- 30+ disciplines
- 4 levels of study
- **13 genre families**

See http://www.coventry.ac.uk/bawe

Thirteen genre families

- Essay
- Methodology, Recount
- Critique
- Case study
- Exercise
- Design Specs

- Proposal
- Narrative Recount
- Research Report
- Problem Question
- Literature Survey
- Empathy Writing

(Gardner, 2010)

A sample genre family

9. Methodology Recount

to demonstrate/develop familiarity with disciplinary procedures, methods, and conventions for recording experimental findings	•computer analysis
	•data analysis report
	•experimental report
	•field report
describes procedures undertaken by writer and may include Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion sections, or these functions may be realised iteratively	•forensic report
	•lab report
	•materials selection report
	•(program) development report
may correspond to a section within a research report or research paper	

(Gardner, 2010)

A sample genre family

Variation in Methodology Recounts across Disciplines

Biological Science	Computer Science	Engineering	Food Science	Physics	Psychology
(Abstract) (32/52)	(Abstract) (16/64)	(Abstract) (44/83)	---	(Abstract) (15/18)	(Abstract) (5/10)
Introduction	1. Introduction	Introduction	Objective	1. Introduction	Introduction
---	2. Theory	Theory	Introduction	---	---
Materials and Method	3. Design	Apparatus and Methods	Method	2. Experimental Details	Method
Results	4. Implementation	Observations and Results	Results	3. Results	Results
Discussion	5. Results and Analysis	Analysis of Results	Calculation	4. Discussion	Discussion
(Conclusion)	6. Conclusion	Discussion	Discussion		
(Future Work)		Conclusion			
(References) (22/52)	(References) (29/64)	(References) (63/83)	(References) (53/69)	(References) (15/18)	(References) (8/10)

(Gardner, 2010)

Where does the essay fit in?

by Disciplinary Group and Level
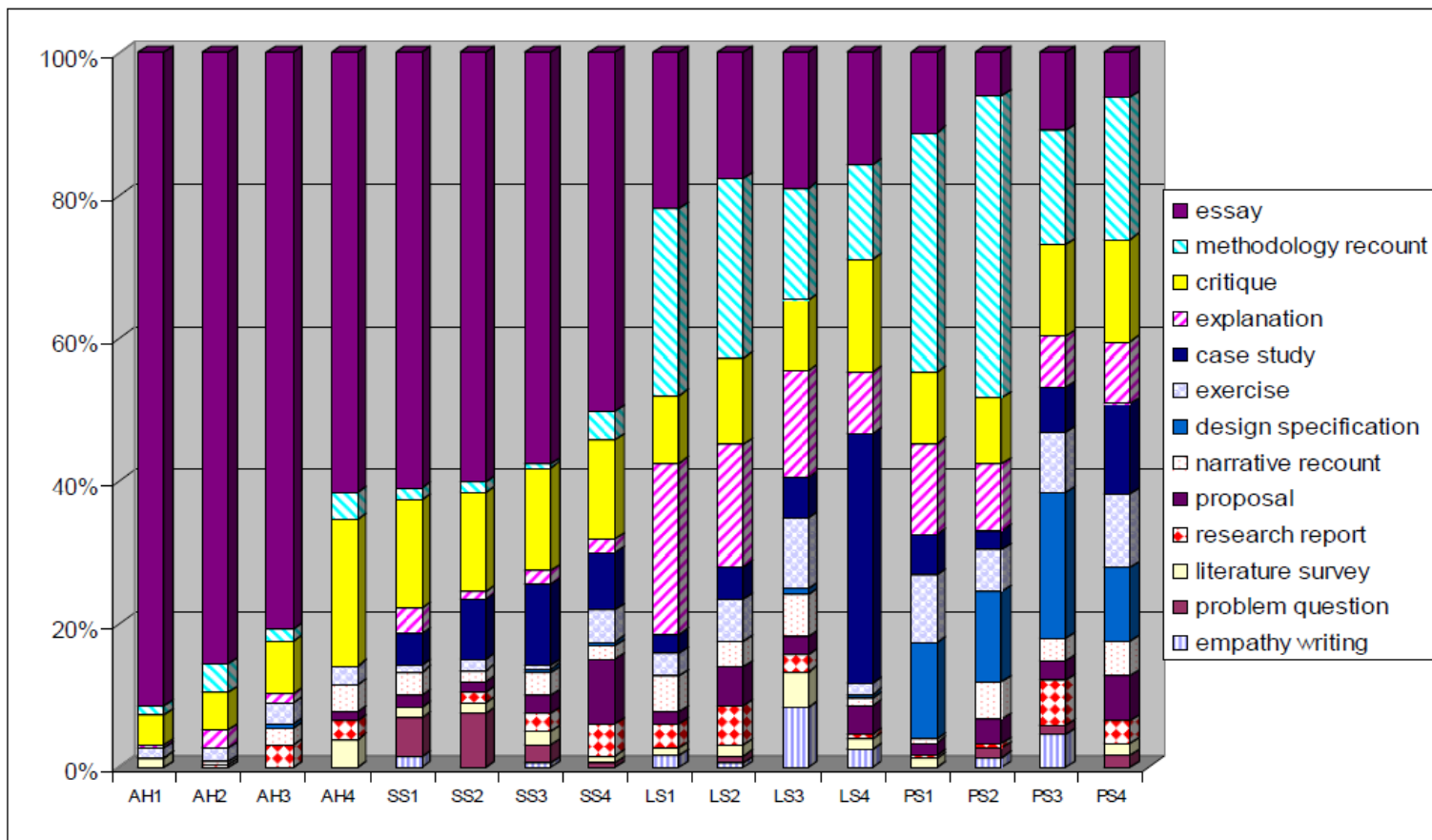
(Gardner, 2010)

Where does the essay fit in?

- Protest and Reform in the USA.doc (p. 8)

- Haematology Essay.doc (p. 11)

Understanding assignment requirements

- ◻ Understanding the question

- ◻ Understanding the assignment brief

- ◻ What are students actually being asked to do?

- ◻ Global Journalism.doc (p. 13)

What about other disciplines?

- ❑ Masters Degrees in Business

    - ■ Applied Consultancy Module Document.doc (p. 16)

Not all lecturers and professors write good assignment briefs

- Awareness of the Conceptual Requirements of Assessment Tasks
  - the level of abstraction required
  - the number of activities or operations involved
  - the guidance provided by the prompt,
  - the amount of text to be assimilated
  - the expected genre, and the student's prior knowledge'

  (Currie, 1993:112)

Accounting & Finance Degree

Do early assignments prepare students for later assignments?

Especially long assignments like dissertations or research projects?

Module	Assignment Type	Word Count
Level One		
Economics and Financial Markets	Essay	1250
	Essay	1250
Financial Reporting	Sage Coursework	
	Group Report	
	Exam	
Management Accounting	Spreadsheet	
	Exam	
Data Research and Analysis	Coursework	500
	Data Analysis+Summary	
	Examination	
Foundations of Law	Coursework	1500
	Problem Questions	
Total		**4500**
Level Two		
Financial Reporting & Governance	Essay	2000
	Exam	3 hours
Management Accounting	Group Spreadsheet	
	Exam	
Business Finance		
	Exam	3 hours
	Essay	2000
Organisation Behaviour & Analysis		
	Essay	2500
	Group Organizational Analysis	4000
Level Two Options - Choose One		
Taxation and Auditing	Exam	3 hours
Accounting for Info Systems	Case Study Essay/Report	2000
	Database Design/Report	2000
Finance in the Public Sector	Report	3000
Business Law	Exam	2 hours
	Problem Sets	1500
Total		**4500/8500**
Level Three/Four		
Accounting and Accountability	Exam	3 hours
Strategic Management & Decision Making	Report	2500
	Case study exam - Open book	3 hours
Independent Learning Project	Group Literature Review & Presentation	8000
	Individual Research Report	8000
Level Three Options - Choose One		
as for Level Two		
Total		**10500/14500**

Drivers of Change

- Employability Agenda
  - Transferable skills
  - Personal Development Portfolios – reflective essays
  - Hybrid assignment types
    - Theory + practice

- Materials Development Assignment.doc (p. 21)

Why do students struggle?

- Academic writing is also a reading activity
  - Student mobility –educational systems take different approaches to sources of knowledge
  - Little experience of reading to learn in English
  - Pedagogical approaches to reading

Influences on reading instruction

- "The overriding attention paid to careful reading in the theoretical literature has meant that, in Britain at least, we have ignored expeditious reading behaviours such as skimming, search reading, and scanning in both L1 and L2 teaching of reading." (Urquhart and Weir, 1998: 101)

Expeditious reading

- **Skimming:** Reading for gist.
- **Search reading:** Locating information on predetermined topics.
- **Scanning:** Reading selectively, to achieve very specific reading goals.

Defining characteristics

- **Skimming:** Reading for gist.
  - The reading is selective, with sections of the text either omitted or given very little attention
- **Search reading:** Locating information on predetermined topics.
  - It differs from skimming in that the search for information is guided by predetermined topics so the reader does not necessarily have to establish a macropropositional structure for the whole of the text.
- **Scanning:** Reading selectively, to achieve very specific reading goals.
  - The main feature of scanning is that any part of the text which does not include the preselected samples is dismissed.

Defining characteristics

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  - The main feature of scanning is that any part of the **text** which does not include the preselected samples **is dismissed**.

Transfer of strategies

Q: I am still using the same methods which I have learnt du

J: What are the methods? I never sat IELTS. Would you like

LL: Laugh.

Q: This is very complicated.

Y: Try to locate the point in the text to which the question

Q: I did not follow that set of methods strictly. I also have

J: You still find it very effective now?

Q: Yes. Before I started to prepare for IELTS … none of my
preparing for IELTS, I learnt a lot. That's why I still use the s
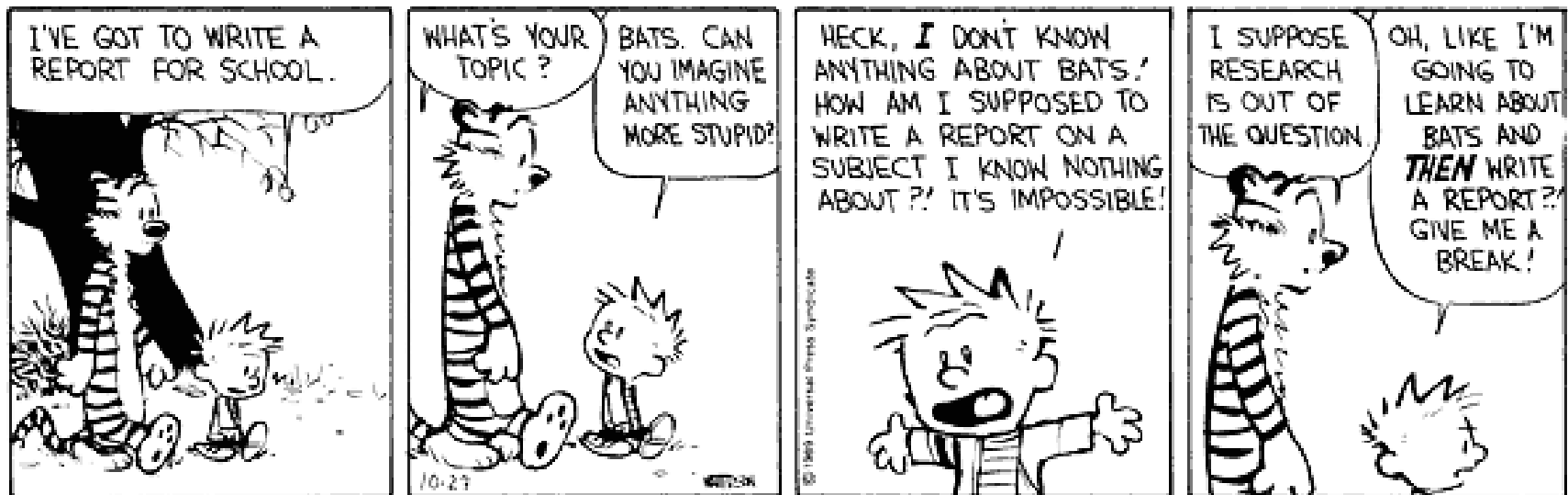
(Liu, 2015)

Reading in writing instruction

- Reading is normally carried out in the service of writing a single essay
- Write to support your opinion
  - What about reading to learn?

Writing is a process

- Assessed Writing in the Disciplines requires students to:
  - derive content knowledge from their disciplinary reading and listening and apply it to a written prompt,
  - recognize and use the appropriate disciplinary moves and steps required for applying ideas and information
  - use language that is appropriate to the discipline and the task

Aims of Undergraduate Study

- Conceptual understanding that enables the

Writing tasks are driven by disciplinary content knowledge.

knowledge

- the ability to manage their own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (for example, refereed

Critical thinking & writing tasks depend on being informed.

to:

- apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding, and to initiate and carry out projects
- critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgements, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution - or identify a range of solutions - to a problem

(QAA, 2008)

Deriving content from reading

Reading Constructs
- ❑ Reading for basic comprehension
  - ▪ recall
  - ▪ summarization
  - ▪ text-based multiple choice questions
- ❑ Reading to learn – connecting new information with background knowledge
  - ▪ recognition of text structure
  - ▪ create a representation of content knowledge
- ❑ Reading to integrate
  - ▪ link texts with regard to their individual text structure
  - ▪ link content knowledge from a single text with that from one or more texts

  (Trites and McGroarty, *Language Testing*, 2005)

Findings from talks at a BALEAP PIM on Reading held at Reading in March

- Critical reading came in the 2nd or 3rd term
- Strategic reading is truncated reading – only read what I need for my assignment
- Early reading is purposeless – only later assignment based reading is purposeful
- Even at the end of an MA students do not develop an awareness of themselves as readers
- Students expect to get knowledge from their lecturers/Lecturers expect students to build knowledge and understanding
- Reading is a means to learning about a range of perspectives
- Mapping the field is a precursor to more specific reading tasks

Reading Experiences of International MA/MSc Students

- Understanding the gist is not enough to fully engage in PG classes.
- Students may be forced to rely on background knowledge and familiar topics to complete their PG assignments instead of broadening their knowledge.
- Lack of automaticity hinders the activation of known vocabulary in other modalities.
- Reading speed bumps up against library loan periods.
- Slow reading speed also leads to truncated reading.

Reading Experiences of International MA/MSc Students

- Lack of vocabulary leads to difficulty in expressing complex ideas
- Vocabulary gain and loss – when vocabulary is not consolidated there is little or no overall growth.
- Danger of inadvertent plagiarism.
- Overall missed opportunities and scaled back goals.

(based on Banerjee, 2003)

What promotes success in academic writing? (Leki, 2007)

- Reading
- Knowledge of genre
- Clear guidance on expectations
- Practice
- Feedback
  - substantive – content, language
  - dialogic

Pre- and in-sessional Courses

- Intensive study prior to joining degree
- On-going language support during degree
- Regular interaction between subject-specific staff and language teachers
- Teacher-produced materials

Can Do Statements (BALEAP Working Party)

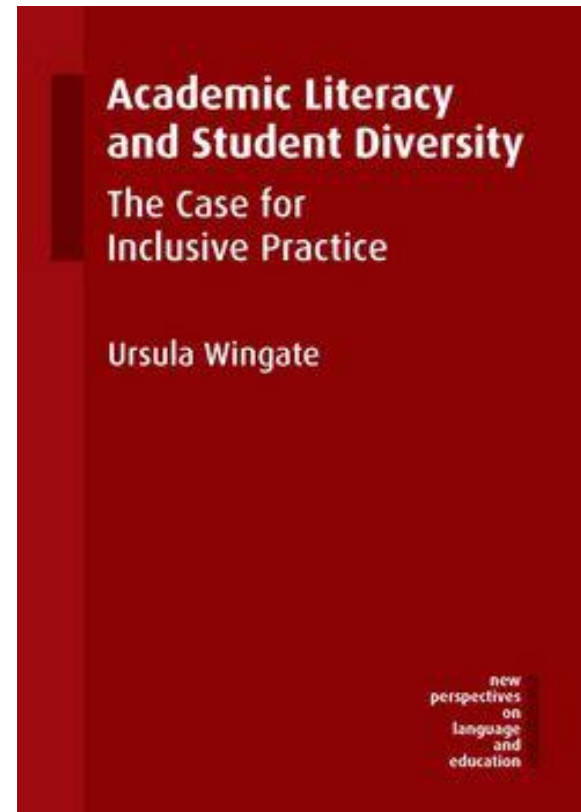| Academic discourse relates to language knowledge and a student's ability to mobilise appropriate language in response to the demands of a specific academic context.	General		
	• Analyse assignment tasks and respond appropriately • Identify where a critical or analytical response is required rather than a descriptive response * • Organise written texts * • Produce a critical or analytical response * • Build and depart from model/sample structure (e.g. essay templates) • Plan written tasks effectively, especially essays • Connect content fluently • Understand complexity and express this in writing • Communicate subject content • Communicate relevant information concisely • Incorporate relevant literature to create and support argument • Comment on sources • Apply appropriate style and language register • Avoid plagiarism • Develop own voice/Establish individual voice • Write a bibliography*		

An Approach to Academic Literacy Instruction

- ❏ Inclusive
- ❏ Integrated with the curriculum in students' own disciplines
- ❏ Take a wider view of literacy beyond the task of writing

Academic Literacy and Student Diversity
The Case for Inclusive Practice

Ursula Wingate

new perspectives on language and education

Existing models of academic writing instruction

- ❏ ESP/Sydney School (genre/linguistic) ⇨ explicit teaching of genre features; scaffolding

- ❏ Writing across the Curriculum (WAC), Writing in the Disciplines (WiD) ⇨ embedding writing instruction into subject curriculum; collaboration writing – subject experts

- ❏ Academic Literacies⇨ focus on practices surrounding writing (identities, power relations); developing students' critical awareness

Towards an inclusive approach: An intervention study

Drawing on 'best features' of existing models:

1. Involvement of subject tutors - collaboration (WAC/WiD)
2. Genre-based ⇨ creating discipline-specific resources, using student genres (ESP)
3. Scaffolded learning (Sydney School) ⇨workshops
4. Opportunities to discuss 'practices' (AcLits) ⇨workshops

Location, materials, methodology

- ❏ Working directly within departments
- ❏ Developing materials specific to genres students will meet on their courses
- ❏ Working with student texts as models
- ❏ Explicitly integrating language and content as the focus of instruction

Example of move analysis (Pharmacy)

Optimisation of suspension of zinc oxide [75]	Optimisation of High Dose Paracetamol Tablets by Direct Compression [52]	

1   Introduction
2   Materials
3   Method
  3.1 Formulation of stock solution of SDS (wetting agent)
  3.2 Formulation of stock solution of methylcellulose (suspending agent)
  3.3 Formulation of stock solution of sodium citrate (electrolytes)
  3.4 Formulation of suspensions by factorial design:
  3.5 Quality assessment by sedimentation volume
  3.6 Quality assessment by ease of redispersability
  3.7 Quality assessment by uniformity of dose by turbidity assay
  3.8 Simplex method to find optimal formulation of suspension
4   Results
  4.1 Sedimentation volume test
  4.2 Ease of redispersability test
  4.3 Uniformity of dose by turbidity assay
  4.4 Nelder –Mead Simplex Graph
5   Discussion
  5.1 Sedimentation volume
  5.2 Ease of redispersability
  5.3 Uniformity of dose by turbidity assay
6   Conclusion
7   References
	1 Introduction
	2 Materials
	3 Methods
	  3.1 Experiment 1): Choosing Excipients for Formulation of Paracetamol DC Tablets.
	  3.2 Experiment 2): Experimental Design – To Identify the Independent Variables.
	  3.3 Experiment 3): Paracetamol DC UV Assay.
	  3.4 Experiment 4): Review of the Excipients of Paracetamol Tablets.
	  3.5 Experiment 5): Factorial Design of Formulation.
	  3.6 Experiment 6): Mixing Tablets Powder (API and Excipients) for manufacturing.
	  3.7 Experiment 7): Manufacturing of Paracetamol Tablets by Direct Compression.
	  3.8 Experiment 8): Assessment of the Manufactured Paracetamol Tablets Quality - Uniformity of Weight. 2
	  3.9 Experiment 9): Assessment of the Manufactured Paracetamol Tablets Quality – Friability. 3
	  3.10 Experiment 10): Assessment of the Manufactured Paracetamol Tablets Quality – Hardness (Tensile strength).
	  3.11 Experiment 11): Assessment of the Manufactured Paracetamol Tablets Quality -Disintegration Time.
	  3.12 Experiment 12): Model-Dependent Methods (Regression Analysis) for Deciding the Optimum Formulation.
	  3.13 Experiment 13): Model-Independent Methods (Nelder Mead Simplex Optimisation) for Choosing the Optimum Formulation.
	4 RESULTS
	  4.1 Experiment 3): Paracetamol DC UV Assay.
		4.5 Experiment 9): Assessment of the Manufactured Paracetamol Tablets Quality - Friability.
		  4.6 Experiment 11): Assessment of the Manufactured Paracetamol Tablets Quality -Disintegration Time.
		  4.7 Experiment 12): Model-Dependent Methods (Regression Analysis) for Deciding the Optimum Formulation.
		  4.8 Tablet Friability
		  4.9 Model-Independent Methods (Nelder Mead Simplex Optimisation) for Choosing the Optimum Formulation
		5 Discussion
		  5.1 Uniformity of Weight
		  5.2 Friability
		  5.3 Tensile strength
		  5.4 Disintegration Time
		  5.5 Nelder Mead Simplex Optimisation for Choosing the Optimum Formulation
		  5.6 The two optimisation methods used
		6 Conclusion
		7 References

Example of move analysis (Applied Linguistics)

INTRODUCTIONS in high scoring assignments

TASK 1

- Review the analyses for the first three introductions in high scoring assignments.
- Complete your own analysis of Example 4.
- Summarise what would appear to be the desirable features of assignment introductions

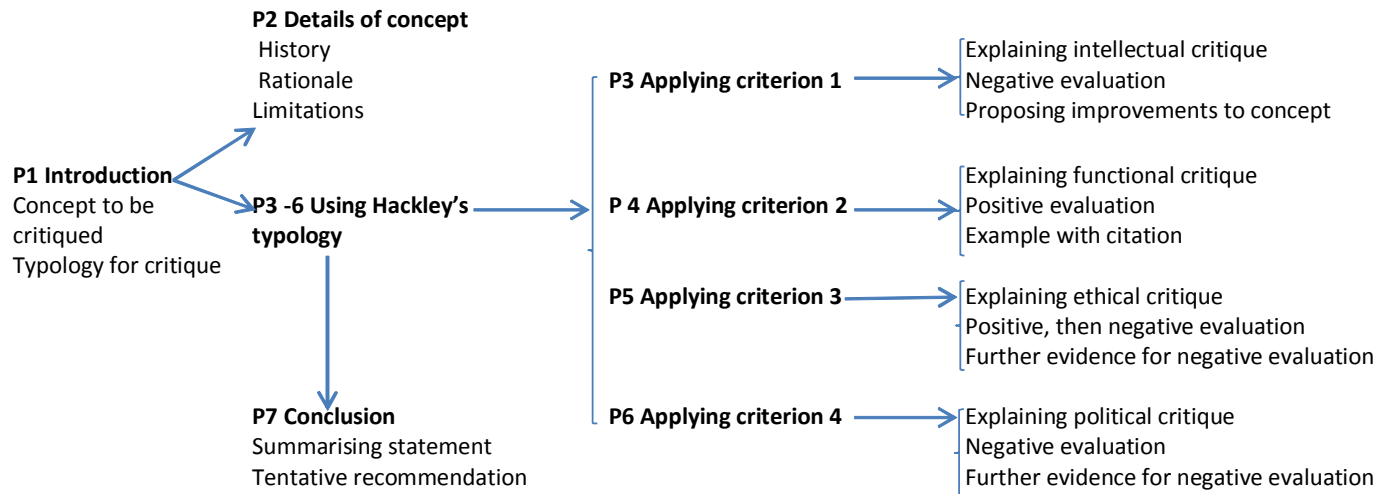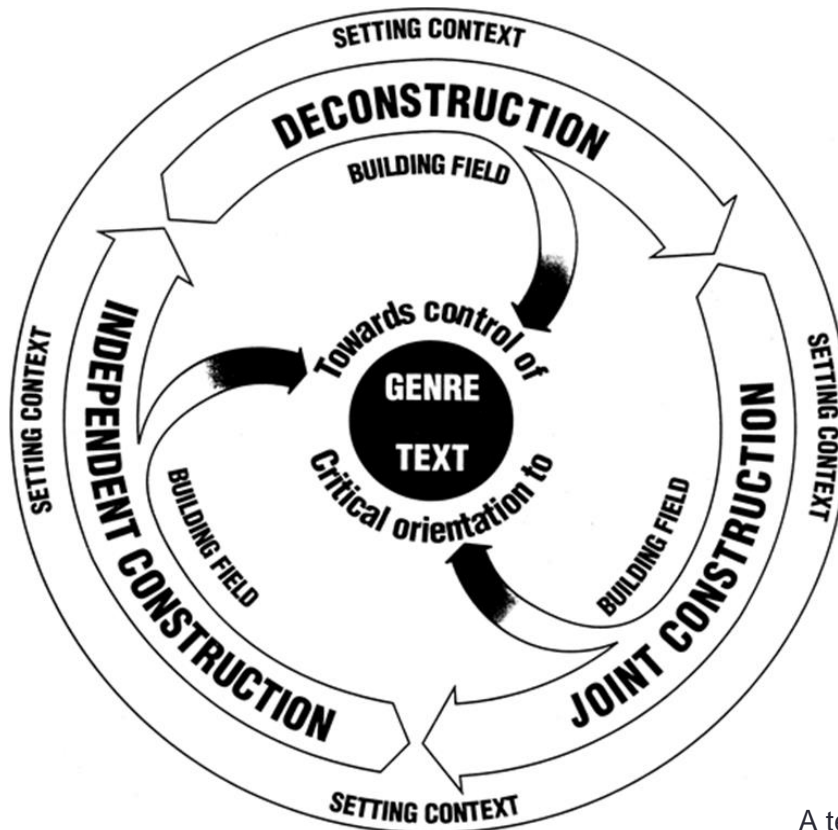|	
EXAMPLE A. *Assignment title: What counts as validity in formative assessment?*	
Introduction	
The role of assessment in language teaching and learning is complex and often politically-charged. In recent years, many researchers have promoted a more socially and democratically equitable conception of assessment (i.e. Shohamy 2001, Lynch 2001), that is non-psychometric and non-standardised. This has led to the promotion, endorsement and implementation of various classroom-based alternatives, many of which have shared characteristics and concerns (cf. Leung 2005, p. 870 for a brief overview). [1] Despite this change in tide, however, a number of old questions rightly persist. In particular the issues of validity and reliability, which Leung (2005) refers to as "the quality and soundness" of the assessment approach, are still prevalent (p. 869). Interestingly, these questions are posed by those spearheading this new movement in an attempt to ensure theoretical, empirical and epistemological robustness (i.e. Leung 2004). [2] In this discussion I shall address the issue of validity in regard to Formative Assessment (FA). In the first section, I shall define, examine and then problematise the central tenets of FA; this problematisation will raise three key questions in regard to validity in FA. In the second section, I will begin by briefly delineating some of the underlying assumptions of validity in conventional assessment practice. Following this, I shall return to the three crucial and interrelated questions previously identified, through which I argue for a reconceptualised understanding of validity in FA that acknowledges its complex and contingent nature. In my conclusion I shall argue that subscription to this viewpoint will enable FA to attain a more prominent position in educational assessment. [3]	[1] This section establishes the intellectual context and refer to relevant authorities. [2] Refers to the issue or problem that is going to be the focus of the assignment. [3] Provides a map / set of signposts which guide the reader through the rest of the assignment

Synoptic view of paragraph relations (Management)

P2 Details of concept
History
Rationale
Limitations

P1 Introduction
Concept to be critiqued
Typology for critique

P3 -6 Using Hackley's typology

P7 Conclusion
Summarising statement
Tentative recommendation

P3 Applying criterion 1
Explaining intellectual critique
Negative evaluation
Proposing improvements to concept

P 4 Applying criterion 2
Explaining functional critique
Positive evaluation
Example with citation

P5 Applying criterion 3
Explaining ethical critique
Positive, then negative evaluation
Further evidence for negative evaluation

P6 Applying criterion 4
Explaining political critique
Negative evaluation
Further evidence for negative evaluation

3. Scaffolded learning/workshops

The teaching / learning cycle

A teaching/learning cycle for secondary school (from Rothery and Stenglin 1994:8) cited in Martin, 2000: 119)

Take home message

- Prepare your students
  - for unpredictability
  - to talk about writing
  - to be flexible
  - to apply what they know about writing purposefully

- Expect to have to do a lot more leg work to find out what kind of writing is required in your own institution

- Recognize that assignment types are dynamic

- Published writing materials haven't kept up with these changes so teachers need to be prepared to make more of your own materials

Preparing ourselves to be literacy specialists

Summary of competency statements

Academic practice	an EAP teacher will –
Academic contexts	have a reasonable knowledge of the organizational, educational and communicative policies, practices, values and conventions of universities.
Disciplinary differences	be able to recognize and explore disciplinary differences and how they influence the way knowledge is expanded and communicated.
Academic discourse	have a high level of systemic language knowledge including knowledge of discourse analysis.
Personal learning, development and autonomy	recognize the importance of applying to his or her own practice the standards expected of students and other academic staff.
EAP students	**an EAP teacher will understand –**
Student needs	the requirements of the target context that students wish to enter as well as the needs of students in relation to their prior learning experiences and how these might influence their current educational expectations.
Student critical thinking	the role of critical thinking in academic contexts and will employ tasks, processes and interactions that require students to demonstrate critical thinking skills.
Student autonomy	the importance of student autonomy in academic contexts and will employ tasks, processes and interactions that require students to work effectively in groups or independently as appropriate.

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	appropriate.
Curriculum development	**an EAP teacher will understand –**
Syllabus and programme development	the main types of language syllabus and will be able to transform a syllabus into a programme that addresses students' needs in the academic context within which the EAP course is located.
Text processing and text production	approaches to text classification and discourse analysis and will be able to organize courses, units and tasks around whole texts or text segments in ways that develop students' processing and production of spoken and written texts.
Programme implementation	**an EAP teacher will be –**
Teaching practices	familiar with the methods, practices and techniques of communicative language teaching and be able to locate these within an academic context and relate them to teaching the language and skills required by academic tasks and processes.
Assessment practices	able to assess academic language and skills tasks using formative and summative assessment.

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Competencies relating to academic practice

1. Academic Contexts

An EAP teacher will have a reasonable knowledge of the organizational, educational and communicative policies, practices, values and conventions of universities.

Knowledge & understanding of –	Ability to –	Possible indicators –
norms and conventions of universities in relation to • course structure • teaching and learning • staff/student communication • assessment	work with materials and tasks from different subject areas and engage with the ideas they present	relate EAP course objectives, content and skills to the contexts and requirements of university courses
modes of knowledge communication and publication including • print media • electronic media • oral genres (e.g., lectures, seminars, conference presentations)	help students find their way into the writing and speaking practices of their disciplines and institutions	require outcome tasks to be presented in print, oral and electronic modes in line with the cultural practices of the university
university policies relating to • ethical practices • respect for intellectual property • disciplinary procedures • student support	help students to understand university policies and procedures and the reasons behind them	use appropriate citation and referencing in learning activities and prepared assessed tasks

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2. Disciplinary Differences

An EAP teacher will be able to recognize and explore disciplinary differences and how they
influence the way knowledge is expanded and communicated.

Knowledge & understanding of –	Ability to –	Possible indicators –
discourse communities and how membership and full participation is achieved	work with subject specialists and take account of their different perspectives with regard to knowledge communication	provide students with frameworks to investigate disciplinary differences and values, particularly in relation to the communication of knowledge
audience within discourse communities	raise students' awareness of discourse features of texts in their disciplines	guide students to investigate the genres and expert practitioners of their specific discourse communities
the importance of evidence-based reasoning in knowledge creation	train students to investigate the practices of their disciplines (e.g., the use and citation of sources as evidence)	

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9. Text processing and text production

An EAP teacher will understand approaches to text classification and discourse analysis and will be able to organize courses, units and tasks around whole texts or text segments in ways that develop students' processing and production of spoken and written texts.

Knowledge & understanding of –	Ability to –	Possible indicators –
approaches to text classification and analysis such as those used in genre research, including the functional and rhetorical features of texts disciplinary differences evident in academic genres text processing skills and strategies text production skills and strategies	identify and analyse academic genres and the functional and rhe-torical features of academic texts and train students to do the same incorporate explicit analysis of spoken and written texts into sequences of teaching and learn-ing activities stage and scaffold the teaching of reading and listening for study purposes use a text-based approach for teach-ing writing and speaking skills	design a programme that • uses whole texts or text segments • integrates text processing and text production • uses cycles of analysis and synthesis of processes, skills and tasks

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Effecting Change

- An institution-wide academic literacy approach
- Includes:
  - Discipline specialists
  - Language/writing/study skills tutors

- Transform ourselves to literacy specialists

References

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- Lea, M. and Street, B. (1999). Writing as academic literacies: Understanding textual practices in higher education. In C. Candlin and K. Hyland (eds). *Writing: Texts, processes and practices*. pp. 62-81. London: Longman.

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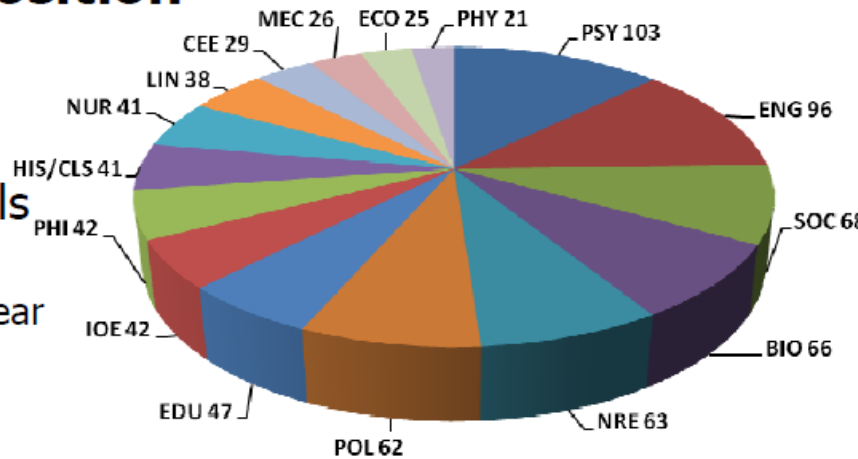
diane.schmitt@ntu.ac.uk

Bonus slides

Other resources

□ http://micusp.elicorpora.info/teachers

● **Corpus composition**

- Papers from 16 disciplines
- Students at 4 levels of study (senior undergraduate to 3rd year graduate)
- Native and non-native speaker contributions

Pie chart labels: MEC 26, ECO 25, PHY 21, PSY 103, CEE 29, ENG 96, LIN 38, NUR 41, HIS/CLS 41, SOC 68, PHI 42, IOE 42, BIO 66, EDU 47, NRE 63, POL 62

Student Level	Papers	Tokens
3rd yr grad.	73	302471
2nd yr grad.	112	405948
1st yr grad.	198	665096
Senior undergrad.	427	964754

Sex	Papers	Tokens
Male	310	880528
Female	500	1457741

Nativeness	Papers	Tokens
NS	649	1886525
NNS	161	451744

Department	Papers	Tokens
Biology	66	156490
Civil & Environmental Eng.	29	72898
Economics	25	66893
Education	47	143432
English	96	260898
History & Classical Studies	41	184377
Industrial & Operations Eng.	42	101255
Linguistics	38	108117
Mechanical Engineering	26	66891
Natural Resources	63	169075
Nursing	41	156890
Philosophy	42	105442
Physics	21	38695
Politics	62	190507
Psychology	103	316200
Sociology	68	192521
	810	2338269

*Figures are based on a pre-release version of MICUSP (May 2009)*

3. Paper classification

The goal of the MICUSP paper classification is to enable corpus users to browse for and search in papers of a particular type, e.g. research proposals or reports.

● **Determination of paper categories**

- Review of existing academic text types and classifications used in the EAP literature
- **Data-driven** development of a classification system: random sets of papers pulled from MICUSP were classified by a group of linguists, EAP teachers & grad students
- An initial set of categories and definitions was redefined several times based on MICUSP evidence
- Resulting list of **7 paper categories**:
  1. Report
  2. Critique/Evaluation
  3. Research Paper
  4. Research Proposal
  5. Argumentative Essay
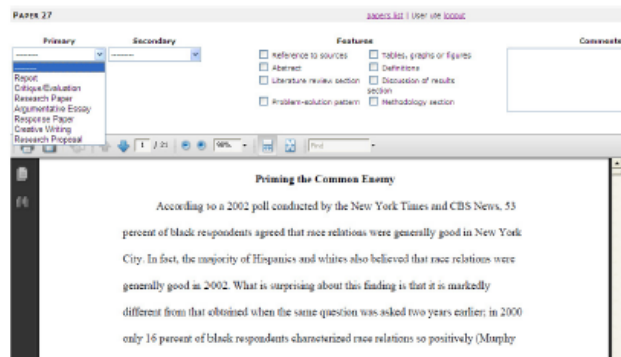 6. Response Paper (see example)
  7. Creative Writing
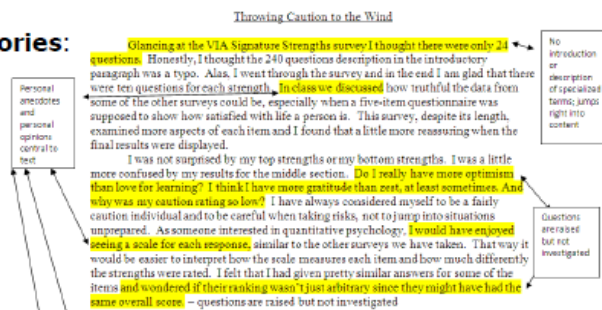
● **Supplementary features for EAP teachers**

- Inspired by meetings with university EAP instructors and testing specialists, we developed a set of text features that are important in EAP/ESP teaching contexts
- Resulting list of 8 'teachers features': 1. Methodology section; 2. Discussion or results section; 3. Literature review section; 4. Abstract; 5. Tables, graphs or figures; 6. Reference list or bibliography; 7. Definitions; 8. Problem-solution pattern

● **Classification procedure**

- Each paper is coded by 2 coders through an online interface (see figure)
- 2 additional coders perform random checks
- Double-blind coding procedure (no coder may see other's choices)
- Each paper receives an obligatory primary label and an optional secondary label

7 paper categories:

1. Report
2. Critique/Evaluation
3. Research Paper
4. Research Proposal
5. Argumentative Essay
6. Response Paper (see example)
7. Creative Writing

A student and staff challenge

An Example:

- For example we often talk about criticality, and in the induction period we introduce what criticality is and try to reinforce the importance of it for, and throughout, our modules. However the reality is that for most of the non-quantitative modules, we inevitably are disappointed in the students' ability to demonstrate the elusive skill in assessments. The feedback that we provide year after year is singularly consistent in plaintive requests for evidence of the students' ability to be 'critical', when they are merely descriptive.

Adrian Castell, Course Leader
MSc Management, Nottingham Business School

- Firstly, our students are typically fresh graduates and few of them have any serious work experience. In addition, many of them have yet to wrestle with the concept of criticality and have been engaged in undergraduate studies which privilege recall and application over debate and questioning. Therefore the reservoir of experience upon which they can draw to ask questions is necessarily limited.

Adrian Castell, Course Leader
MSc Management, Nottingham Business School

- Our experience is that the students need to be able to understand what it is in a text that they are comparing, before they compare that text with another meaningfully, and more importantly they can only develop that understanding as they read more texts. Hence the students, in comparing and contrasting *more* texts develop a better personal understanding of what (at least this part of) criticality is about.

- Secondly, in the absence of direct personal experience, our students need to be able to recognise and use other people's ideas about how to be critical, and we assume that they can gain this skill by reading about how *others* have been critical. However, if the most basic components of a critical approach are to be able to 'compare' and to 'contrast' then are we sure that we can we simply teach this ability?