

From stories and poems to academic writing: transforming the writing experience

Cathy Faulkner



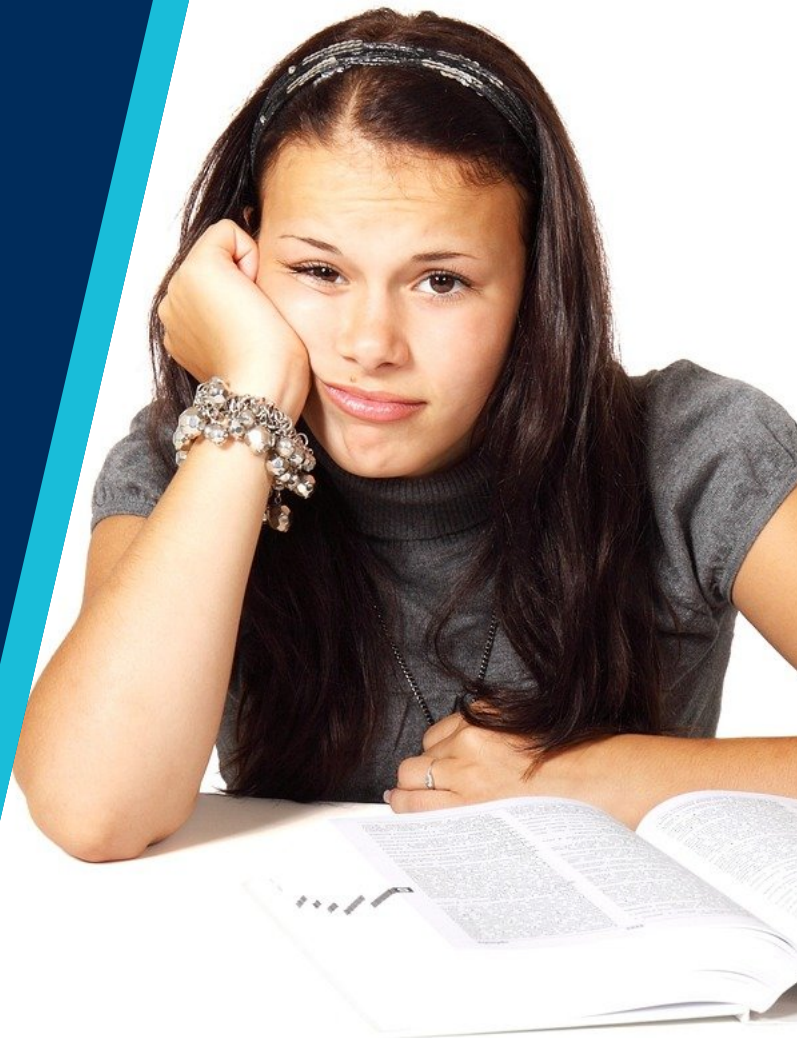
About me

- PGT In-sessional Coordinator
- Previously worked on IFP
- Writer of historical fiction for children



“Why can’t we just write a story or a poem for once?”

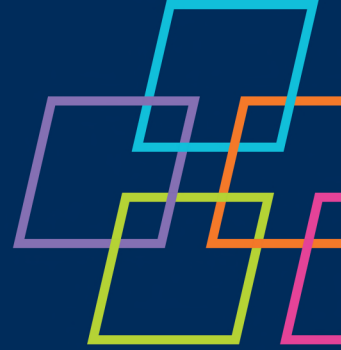
“But that’s not what you’ll be doing in your undergraduate studies”



Methodology

- **auto** - 'self' as subject,
- **ethno** - cultural experience the researcher seeks to understand
- **graphy** - description and systematic analysis

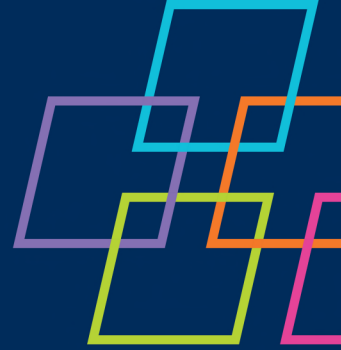
(Ellis, 2004)



Autoethnography

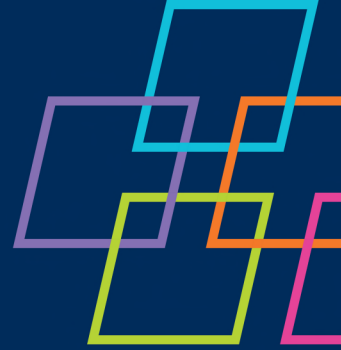
'Who would make a better subject than a researcher consumed by wanting to figure it all out?'

(Ellis, 1991, pp.29-30)



Research Questions

1. How has creative writing (CW) HE helped develop my own academic writing (AW)?
2. How could CW fit within EAP pedagogies commonly used in UK HE?
3. How might CW practices be used within UK HE English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) provision?



Tibbetts
and
Chapman,
2023

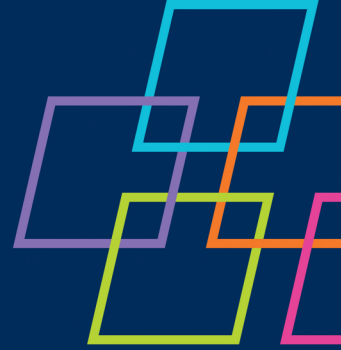
EAP Pedagogies

The six pillars of EAP



The Six Pillars of EAP

- Genre Analysis
- Corpus Linguistics
- Legitimation Code Theory
- Systemic Functional Linguistics
- Academic Literacies
- Critical EAP



Principled eclecticism

Larson-Freeman (2000)

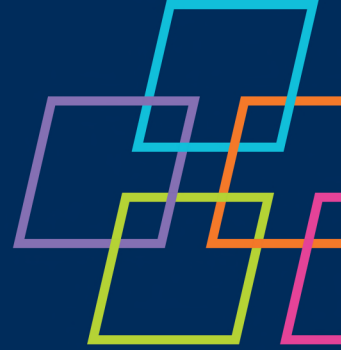


Data collection / Analysis

- Reflective notes written over a period of two months
- Reflective journal entries
- Personal correspondence
- Conference presentation notes
- Responses to author interviews

- 38 datasets
- Over 12,500 words

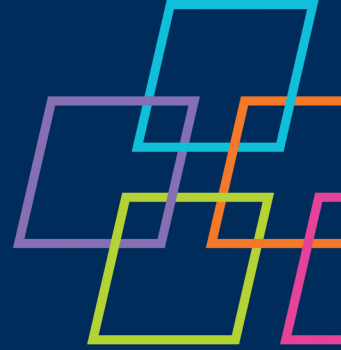
- Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)



Paradigm

- Postmodernist paradigm
 - Acknowledges a plurality of perspectives, meanings and ways of knowing (Hlynka & Yeaman, 1992)
 - Ontologically there are multiple realities
 - Epistemologically there is no one truth.

The data I have generated and selected only represents *my* reality and *my* truth.



Results

Evocative / Analytical autoethnography

- The Listening Guide (Gilligan et al., 2006)
- Poetic Methods (Helme, 2024)

energy,
ng,
g,
ge.

the path ahead
been trodden before—
probably countless times.
and the words of others
when considered with care)
serve to **familiarise**,
prepare
and **inspire**.

And when climbing higher
up that mountain of Blooms,
considering the words of others

Results / Implications for EAP:

Genre Analysis

- Familiarisation, preparation, inspiration, evaluation and extensive reading
- Accessing a wider range of genres
- Seeing language as choice (Halliday, 1964)
- Comparing fictional and academic texts
- Reading extensively to develop reading rates (Beglar, Hunt & Kite, 2012) and increase vocabulary (Mason, 2004)
- Building a sense of community (Baverstock, 2020)



Results / Implications for EAP:

Corpus Linguistics

- Authenticity of voice
- Investigating authentic language by means of a corpus



Results / Implications for EAP:

Legitimation Code Theory

- Semantic gravity waving (Tilakaratna et al., n.d.)
- Analysing engaging creative texts which move between general and specific
- Plotting sentences at appropriate points on a Cartesian graph
- Creating passages which demonstrate waving between the general and the specific



Results / Implications for EAP: Systemic Functional Linguistics



- Language as choice
- Developing a unique voice, being innovative and expressing beliefs
- Deconstructing sample CW texts and reconstructing their own in a similar genre.
- Critiquing of CW as an enjoyable and accessible introduction to peer review
- Re-genreing texts (either into a different CW genre or an AW one)

Results / Implications for EAP:

Academic Literacies

- Developing the confidence to switch between genre practices (Lea and Street, 1998)
- Developing a sense of belonging
- Transforming the writer
- Writing breeding writing
- Writing process over product
- Engaging in regular free writing
- Completing specific briefs in different genres
- Publishing texts (Maley, 2015)



Results / Implications for EAP:

Critical EAP

- Experimenting, pushing boundaries and taking risks
- Involving the writer 'making epistemological, ethical, and aesthetic choices' (Pennycook, 1997, p.179) rather than accepting the status quo (Allison 1996)
- Writing something 'ambitious, overblown, magnificent and absurd' (Solli and Muir, 2021, p.14)
- Presenting an argument or a set of results in a creative form and then re-genreing
- Reflecting on what was learned as a writer



Summary

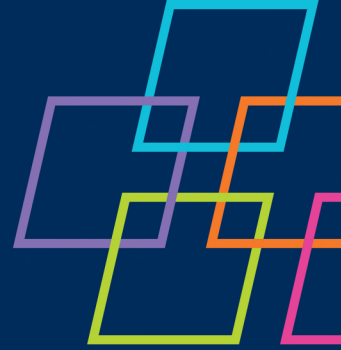
CW could be used within EGAP to:

- act as an accessible and engaging bridge
- develop vocabulary and reading rates
- raise awareness of genre
- raise writer confidence
- encourage experimentation and boundary pushing
- Provide transformative student experiences



Next Steps

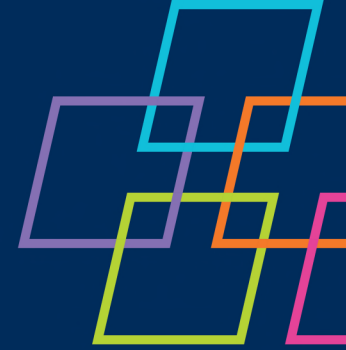
- Action research project:
Reader, it changed me: pre-Masters students' perceptions of the value of engaging in creative writing alongside a pre-sessional course



Next steps

1. Does engaging regularly with creative writing alongside a pre-sessional course have any perceivable effect on the academic writing development of prospective Masters students from their point of view?
2. In what ways, if any, might engaging regularly with creative writing alongside a pre-sessional course be a transformative experience?





Thank you

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