Overview

- LCT's Semantic Gravity: brief background

- Application to my EAP practice   <mark>(activity)</mark>

- Reflections on my practice <mark>(activity)</mark>

- Developing the Pyramid Approach to Research

- Application to your practice? <mark>(discussion)</mark>

Teaching Semantic Gravity as textual analysis

- Semantic Gravity: a framework to support knowledge seeing (Maton, 2020)

- Students able to understand academic writing standards of their discipline (Martin et al, 2020)

- 'Meaning making profiles' (Kirk, 2017) mapped based on Context independent and dependent knowledge in text
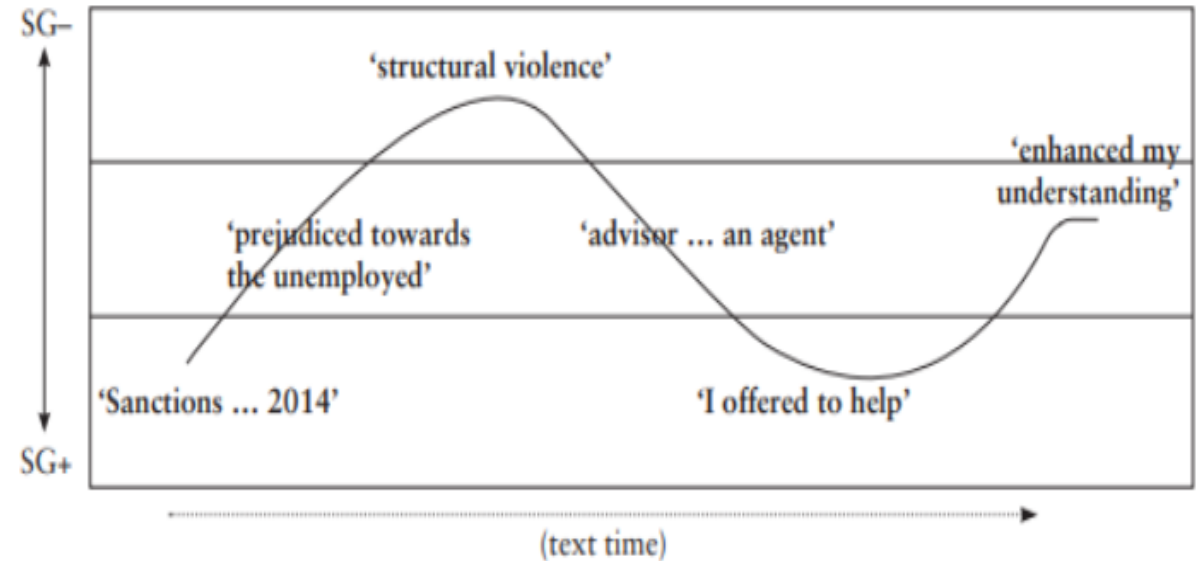

Figure 1. Anthropology student writing extract as a semantic gravity wave profile (Kirk, 2017, p. 114. © BALEAP. Reproduced with permission.).

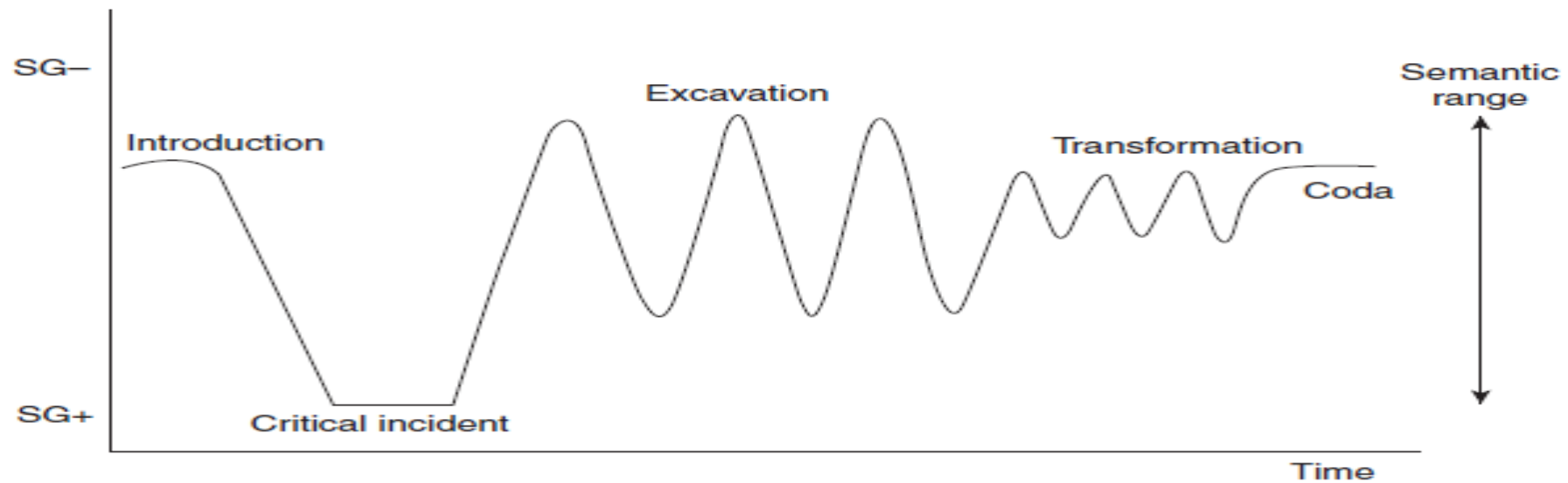# Semantic Waves: mapping genres

Figure 2: Semantic profile of a successful reflection essay in social work.
(Snezes, Tilakaratna and Maton, 2015)

My practice

- Foundation Year academic skills module- home students (Business)

- In-sessional UG EAP module international students (International Relations)

- Semantic Gravity used to teach textual analysis to students

- Semantic Wave profile apparent in many of the high scoring essays (60+): a move from CI to CD knowledge.

- A focus at the level of specific points that feed into a broader thesis.

Mapping points in essays using SG

"Explain the characteristics of workplace culture with high levels of employee engagement and discuss the extent to which an approach to people management is motivated by a genuine desire on the part of leaders to put employees first".
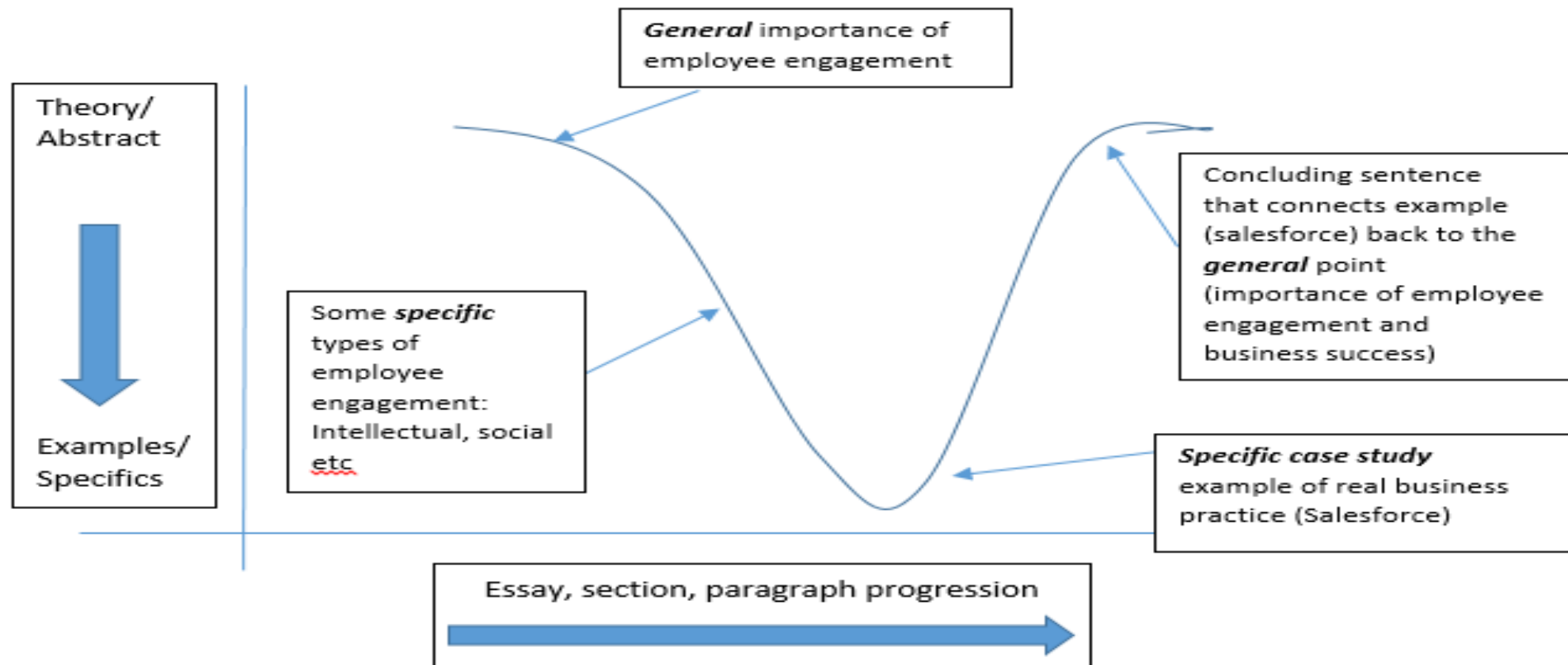
- **Read the first paragraph on employee engagement. What is the point they are making and what evidence do they use to support it?**

- **Read the next paragraph on the same point. How does the example mentioned connect to the ideas in the first paragraph?**
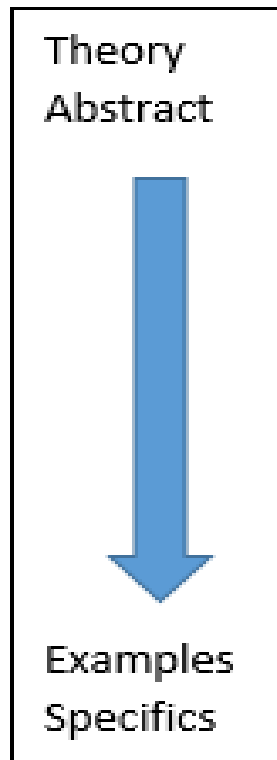
Explain the characteristics of workplace culture with high levels of employee engagement and discuss the extent to which an approach to people management is motivated by a genuine desire on the part of leaders to put employees first.

Today, employee engagement is seen as more important than ever with many businesses adapting their cultures to engage their employees and receive reciprocal benefits. There are several types of employee engagement, which include instance intellectual, affective or social engagement. Instance intellectual engagement can be described as an employee's dedication to work and developing or exploring the way performance could be improved. Whereas affective engagement is related to the positive emotions that an employee relates to the business. Social engagement is in regards to work relationships and how much they talk to one another about work improvements (Acas, 2010). Research suggests that businesses benefit from adopting such engagement. These benefits include a high performing workforce, innovation, higher productivity, lower staff turnover and avoiding a talent shortage (Smith, 2012).

Salesforce are a prime example of a business with highly engaged employees and have been certified with the 'Great place to work' award in 2017. The CEO Marc Benioff plays a crucial role by "being the soul of the company" and "truly leading by example" according to his employees (Great place to work, 2017). Employees love the 'Ohana' family culture that Benioff has created which pushes for equality, service and innovation. Salesforce are always pushing to incorporate new aspects to their engagement programme to keep their employees happy. Some examples of efforts to engage employees include a week off paid to volunteer, 'V2MOM' management practice, salesforce culture immersion days, interactive development tools and wellness reimbursement programs (Great place to work, 2017). These efforts have helped their employees to push Salesforce to be the number one in the world for CRM. This example is indicative of the importance that different forms of employee engagement have on ensuring the success of a business,

Mapping points in essays

Theory/
Abstract

Examples/
Specifics

General importance of
employee engagement

Some **specific**
types of
employee
engagement:
Intellectual, social
etc.

Concluding sentence
that connects example
(salesforce) back to the
general point
(importance of employee
engagement and
business success)

Specific case study
example of real business
practice (Salesforce)

Essay, section, paragraph progression

Theory
Abstract

Examples
Specifics

Some *specific* types of employee engagement: Intellectual, social etc.
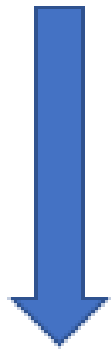
General importance of employee engagement

Concluding sentence that emphasises the importance employee engagement has on a business

Essay, section, paragraph progression

Theory
Abstract

Examples
Specifics

Linking case-study or specifics (salesforce) back to the general (but undeveloped point)

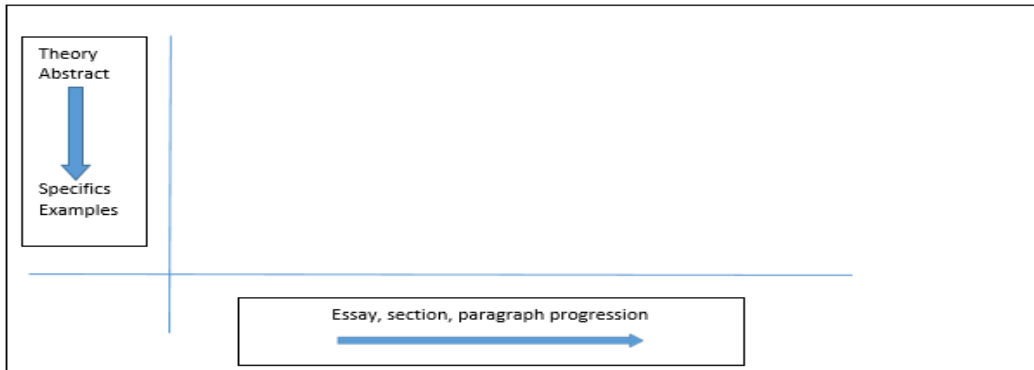Specific case study of real business practice (Salesforce) + explanation

Essay, section, paragraph progression

Practice 1

Goal Setting Theory

Look at different sections from the essay and draw a mini graph that charts the criticality of the topic being written about. Draw your waves in the blank graphs above each passage.

One of the underlying theories of performance management is goal setting theory which is based on motivation, behaviours and personal goals (Locke, 1968). The main objectives of this theory when applied is to set challenging and SMART goals, to get employees involved when setting their goals and to improve on past performance. This theory has a strong correlation to an individual's self-efficacy which is the confidence they have in their ability to perform. One of the main strengths of this theory is that it uses feedback on past performance which can enhance and boost an individual's self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). By providing feedback and setting goals, the employee feels satisfied that the business is supporting their development by reviewing their performance not only by highlighting areas for improvement but providing recognition of successes and strengths. Therefore, it is important to set goals for employees and improve their confidence in their ability in order to increase engagement between the employee and the business.

Application

See if you can apply the same analysis to an essay that you have written recently. First of all try to chart the waves for individual sections and paragraphs, then try to map the entire essay on one chart.

Foundation Year (home) students' essay writing process

- Stage 1: Initial stages of essay writing process

- Stage 2: Close reading, argument formation, planning

Autumn Term

- Stage 3: Drafting (production) **Spring term**

Teaching semantic gravity

Students using Semantic Waves?

a) What do you think the waves of their points looked like in the draft essay?

You have done well in this draft to cite some interesting case-studies that help to reinforce the points you are making. You explain these well adding sufficient detail. However, you need to make sure you engaging with the general points that link to these examples more thoroughly. For instance you talk about the impact that having CSR ethics has on a customer base, but do not show a broad level of understanding for this point before using your case-study example as further evidence of advantages that being CSR minded has (Patagonia example). The same point applies to the part where you mention that profits increase when a company adopts CSR principles- this needs to be proved first with reference to broad based support before linking to the example.

Draft Feedback

b) Did the waves look any different in the final submission?

"[...] However, you have not fully addressed the point made in your draft feedback about devoting more of your word count to making broader/general points about CSR, while supporting these with evidence. As it stands, your essay's arguments are supported at the level of examples/case-studies. [...]"

Final Submission Feedback
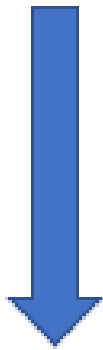
Pyramid Approach to Research

- Ensuring principles of SG are taught at the research stage of the writing process. Avoids flatlining, or uneven waves later in the drafting stage.

- Teaches students to consider the type of knowledge they are looking for in source texts
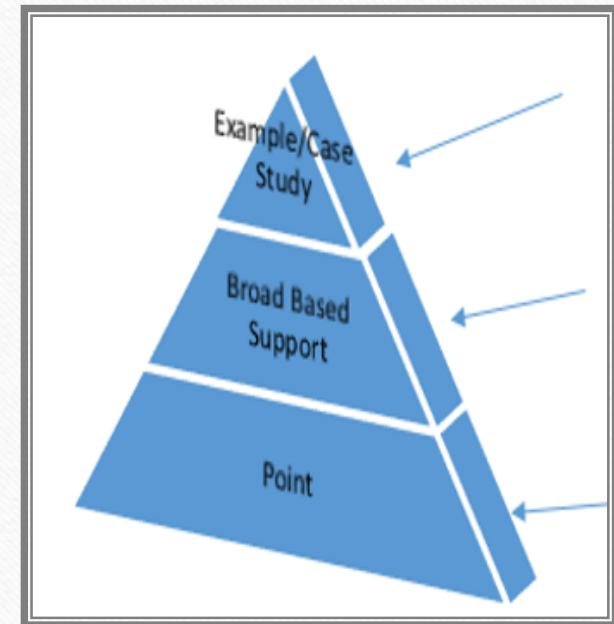
Applying the Pyramid

Example Essay Question:

The advent of digital and social media marketing in the UK signifies the end of traditional marketing practices, which are both costly and largely irrelevant for contemporary consumers. Discuss the accuracy of this statement through reference to contemporary marketing approaches.
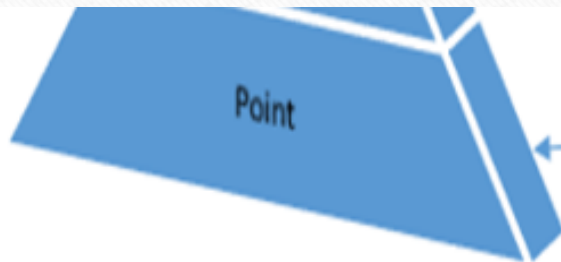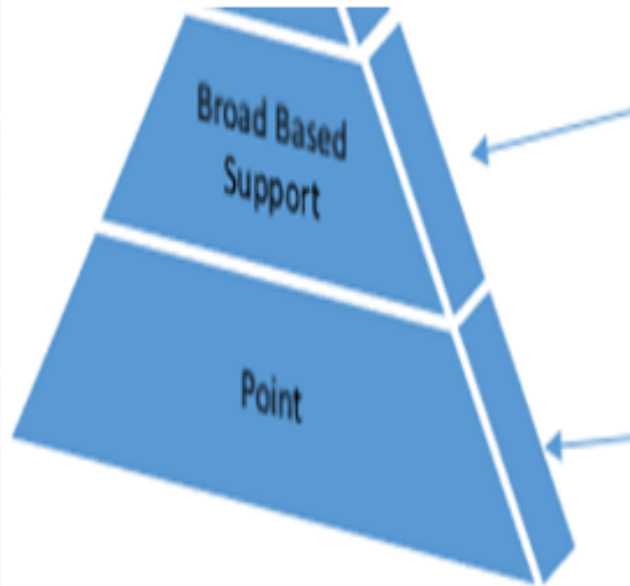
Point

Digital and social media marketing is a popular marketing tool which is more effective in reaching target audiences than more traditional forms of marketing.

Broad-based Support

- Read text 1 and find parts which show the benefits digital marketing brings over some forms of traditional marketing.

- Whose research does the writer cite to support this?

The Pyramid so far…

Broad Based Support

Point

Baines and Fill's (2014, cited in Needle, 2020) research supports this point. Explains reasons for this phenomenon- flexible, tailored messages and adverts for specific customers,

Digital and social media marketing is a popular marketing tool which is more effective in reaching target audiences than more traditional forms of marketing.

Case-study/Empirical example

- Read the Adidas case-study. Can you find evidence here that supports the Baines and Fill (2014) research?

Planning effective marketing strategies for a target audience

Introduction

Since it was established in Germany in 1949, by Adolf Dassler, adidas has been synonymous with the sporting industry. Today, adidas is a global public company and is one of the largest sports brands in the world. It is a household brand name with its three stripes logo recognised in markets across the world.

The company's product portfolio is vast, ranging from state-of-the-art sports footwear and clothing to accessories such as bags, watches, eyewear and other sports-related goods and equipment. Employing over 46,000 people worldwide, the adidas Group consists of around 170 subsidiaries including Reebok, TaylorMade-adidas Golf, Rockport and CCM-Hockey. The Group's

There are countless historic sporting achievements that have taken place in adidas products. These include:
- Jesse Owens' 4 gold medals in Berlin 1936.
- Cassius Marcellus Clay (Muhammad Ali) taking gold in the boxing light-heavyweight division at Rome 1960.
- Dick Fosbury's revolutionary new back-first high jump technique at Mexico 1968, known as the 'Fosbury Flop'.
- Gymnast Nadia Comaneci's perfect 10 at Montreal 1976.

This case study demonstrates how adidas used innovative marketing strategies in its sponsorship deal with the London 2012 Olympic Games to engage with young consumers in the UK and across the globe.

The Complete Pyramid


Example/Case Study

Broad Based Support
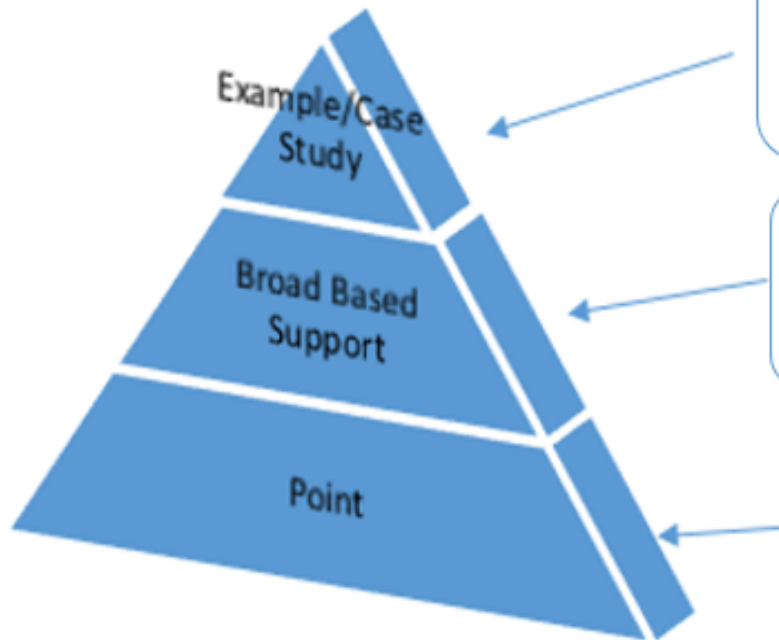
Point

Times 100 Case Study (Adidas) adds further support to this point. Case study highlights below the line marketing campaign during 2012 Olympics. Mentions Twitter '# Take the Stage' trend, Youtube Queen song.

Baines and Fill's (2014, cited in Needle, 2020) research supports this point. Explains reasons for this phenomenon- flexible, tailored messages and adverts for specific customers,

Digital and social media marketing is a popular marketing tool which is more effective in reaching target audiences than more traditional forms of marketing.

Structural integrity
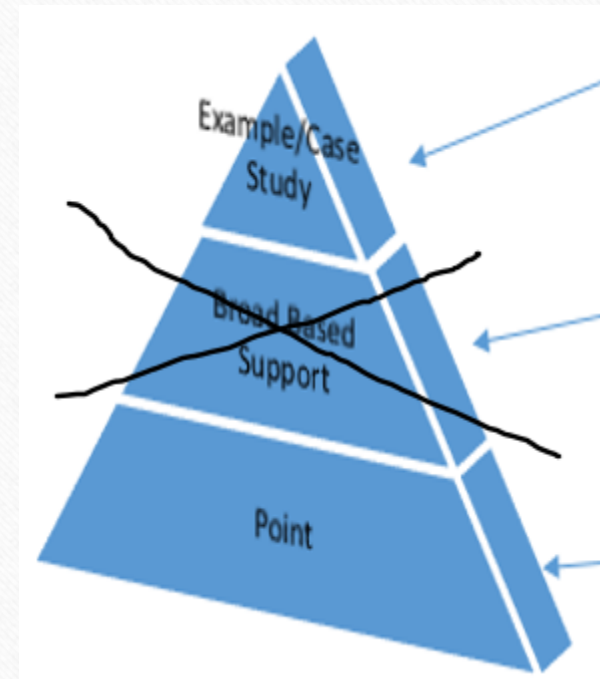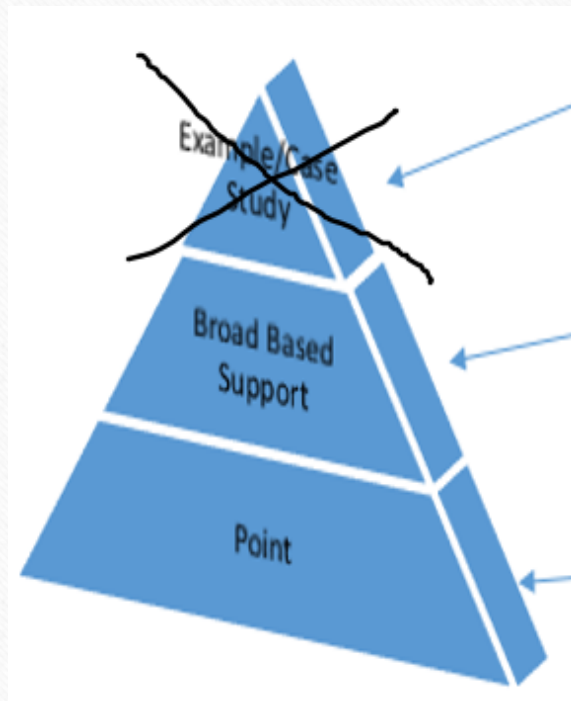
Overview of 'The Pyramid'
+ Discussion

- Tool for AD/EAP tutors and their students to support academic enquiry into subject areas.
- LCT informed
- Help to frame our feedback in essays
- Our interventions offer more than a divorce of skills from content

Q. Would either of these models work in your contexts?

Q. Could they support the research into (essay) writing process in your students' subject areas?

Another application of PAR

- Insessional EAP module: obliges students to use the PAR as part of a POF assessment

  - Some research needed towards an essay question

  - Explanation of how PAR applies to a few points they could make in the essay

  - 'Write-up' of this point (300-500 words)

References

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