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International Education Institute

The place for creative writing within EAP provision: a poetic autoethnography

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Date Submitted: 23/07/24

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DISSERTATION TITLE: The place for creative writing within EAP provision: a poetic autoethnography

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SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 09.08.24

DATE SUBMITTED: **23/07/04**

DECLARATION

I hereby certify that this dissertation, which is 16,470 words in length, has been composed by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me, it conforms to the University's GAP Policy, and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree. This project was conducted by me at the University of St Andrews from February 2024 to August 2024 towards fulfilment of the requirements of the University of St Andrews for the degree of MSc International Education under the supervision of Kirsty McCall.

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I agree to my anonymised dissertation being shared electronically with future International Education students. YES/NO

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Kirsty McCall for encouraging me to choose a research topic that I was passionate about and Sin-Wang Chong for answering my many questions about the ethics of autoethnography. I am also incredibly grateful to my colleagues for helping me juggle the demands of conducting research while getting my head around a demanding new role, particularly Lisa Hanson and Maxine Gillway who encouraged me to believe in myself.

Abstract

Starting with the belief that the Creative Writing (CW) education I received at a UK HE institution has had a significant effect on my ability to produce Academic Writing (AW), along with a desire to improve English for Academic Purposes (EAP) practices, this study employs autoethnography to discover and reflect upon how exactly this was the case, how CW might fit within six of the main EAP pedagogies identified by Tibbetts & Chapman (2023), and how it might be used in the EAP classroom. Making use of my extensive experience of CW, AW and EAP teaching, both evocative and analytical approaches to ethnography are used in a split-page format (Rogers-Shaw, 2002), the former taking the form of free verse. My data consists of self-generated field notes reflecting on my experiences of CW and AW triangulated with personal memory data and previously written reflections, notes and interview transcripts. It reveals that Academic Literacies and Critical EAP are the most relevant pedagogies, followed by Genre Analysis and Systemic Functional Linguistics, and finally Corpus Linguistics and Legitimation Code Theory. On the basis of this, a wide variety of different possible classroom activities are proposed that aim to bridge the gap to EAP, raise awareness of genre, develop writer confidence and provide potentially transformative student experiences. In keeping with autoethnography, the findings of this study are not deemed to be widely generalizable; however, it is hoped that they may provide food for thought to other creative EAP practitioners wishing to develop engaging new methods of teaching and learning.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 An unconventional start

My pathway is STEM—
a dry, steep, dusty track
of report writing,
compare and **contrast**,
cause and effect.

I stumble ahead,
tripping over noun phrases,
reporting verbs,
integral citation,
not enjoying the scene.

But who can blame me—
it's barren and dull!
The view, so I'm told,
is over the hill,
at the end of this s t r e n u o u s slog.

Anyway, better to keep
my eyes on my feet,
carefully picking my way
when asked for my stance
yet told to keep it IMPERSONAL.

And all the while,
the sun beats down,
with submission
after submission
after submission.

How I long for the shade,
a lush green valley,
a winding stream—
just something different,
an unexpected turning,
an adventure,
a story,
a poem.

I have chosen to begin my dissertation, unconventionally, with a poem. This seemed fitting given both the subject of research and the method used to conduct it. Written by me, I hope it conveys the feelings of some of the students I have taught English for Academic Purposes (EAP) to over the years at several higher education (HE) institutes in the United Kingdom (UK). In particular, the poem intends to convey the wishes of a certain International Foundation Programme (IFP) student who, although content with the quality of the provision, directly voiced their desire to write stories and poems in their EAP classes. My response, at the time, was that they were studying on an academic writing (AW) unit rather than a creative writing (CW) one and that its purpose was to prepare students for their undergraduate courses.

That was a number of years ago now. I have often returned to this interaction in my thoughts, vaguely wondering whether I gave the best answer, musing on whether there is actually a place for CW within EAP provision which 'seeks to engage leaners in a critical understanding of the increasingly varied contexts and practices of academic communication' (Hyland, 2006a, p.2). As both a published creative and academic writer myself, I am very aware that my own practice in each has informed the other. Indeed, I would go further than this and argue that my CW has enabled the development of my AW in a variety of significant ways. However, the demands on my time mean that I have not had the time or space to reflect systematically on these questions or consider how CW might be used by myself and other practitioners as an engaging way to help students develop both their AW and other key EAP skills. The dissertation process has provided me with an opportunity to do just that.

Having made my case for the relevance and importance of this research project, the remainder of this chapter will very briefly introduce the method I used to conduct my research

before exploring what is meant by AW and CW, presenting my research questions and finally outlining the structure of the whole dissertation.

1.2 Research method

I have chosen to take the 'less-treaded path' of autoethnography (Mirhosseini, 2018, p.76) to conduct my research. This method involves the collection, analysis and interpretation of self-generated data for the purposes of better understanding the culture in which one operates (Chang, 2008). Having studied for an MA in CW as well as being a published writer of CW and AW texts, and an EAP practitioner with over twenty-five years' of teaching experience, I regard myself as sufficiently 'expert' in each of these areas to make such a study possible. As Wall (2006) states, practitioner knowledge is as important as scientific data.

Autoethnography is both process and product (Ellis et al., 2011) and takes a variety of unconventional and creative forms including story, art, photography and performance. As explained further in Chapter 3, it seemed appropriate to make use of free verse when presenting my findings in Chapter 4, although all other chapters follow normal academic conventions.

1.3 The nature of academic writing

In style guides and textbooks, AW is traditionally presented as being very different from CW. Oshima and Hogue (2007) explicitly state as much, drawing attention to its formal nature. Hyland (2002, p.351) points out that it is frequently portrayed as 'a kind of impersonal, faceless discourse', citing Arnaudet and Barrett's (1984) reference to its objectivity, Spencer and Arbon's (1996) claim that it should not contain personal pronouns, and Gong and Dragga's (1995) assertion that the active voice is inappropriate for scientific writing. In his

handbook for university students, Bailey (2021) identifies common features of AW including, but not limited to, the use of formal words and phrases, citation and quotation, abbreviations for convenience, titles, subtitles and footnotes. There is also a common expectation that even at the formative stages, AW is 'always required to appear polished, and is rarely seen by others in a raw and rambling state' (Antoniou & Moriarty, 2008, p.165).

Given the unique features of AW, it is perhaps unsurprising that Dong (1997) notes that writing academically involves learning and playing by a new set of rules, although with the caveat that the rules differ from discipline to discipline. Hyland (2002, p.351) also emphasises that disciplines do not follow the same conventions regarding impersonality, and goes on to argue that 'there is considerable scope for the negotiation of identity in academic writing'. Molinari (2022) goes one step further by critically observing the defensive nature of the academy when it comes to its writing traditions, and posing that writing practices need questioning if universities are to be places of inclusion, diversity and knowledge transformation.

1.4 The nature of creative writing

CW is a little harder to define than AW since it encompasses so many forms of writing. Typically including short stories, novels, poetry and plays, the Oxford English Dictionary (2010) defines it as 'writing which displays imagination or invention' and differentiates it from more constrained forms such as academic or journalistic writing. However, others regard it differently. Cramer (1975, p.1), prefers to see it as 'simply an act of personal authorship', while Morley (2007, p.1) sees it as the act of 'creating an entirely fresh piece of space-time and another version of your *self*.'

What struck me the more I read about CW is how often the overlaps with AW were mentioned. Grant and Knowles (2000, p.17) argue that 'perhaps the boundaries are fruitfully blurring' while Antoniou and Moriarty (2008, p159) regard it as a false dichotomy, a 'relic of Western Enlightenment thought'. All four agree that academic writers can learn a lot from their fiction writing counterparts. Lucchi (2016) maintains that there is a hidden connection between CW and AW, claiming that the latter is also an art. McVey (2008, p.289) goes even further by arguing that 'all writing is creative writing'. Although different forms of writing are subject to different constraints, this view is certainly one I subscribe to. Reading others' views on the overlap reinforced my personal belief that there might be a place for CW within EAP provision and encouraged me to proceed by formulating specific research questions.

1.5 Research Questions

This dissertation attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. How has CW HE helped develop my own 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?

In order to narrow the scope of this research, the first question specifies my formal study of CW rather than other CW practices I engaged with prior to completing my MA. It also specifies development in AW because although English is my first language, (and putting aside objections to my misrepresentation of Bourdieu and Passeron, 1994, p.8), 'academic language is […] no one's mother tongue.' However, I have deliberately broadened the second and third questions out from AW to EAP so as not to exclude any findings that may be beneficial in other related areas such as reading and critical thinking. The choice of the modal verb 'might'

in Question 3 was deliberate: it is not my intention to propose a prescriptive model or framework to be applied across all EGAP provision, but to provide practical suggestions for how likeminded practitioners might choose to engage those students who are receptive to the idea as and when appropriate. To keep my findings generalisable, I have chosen to focus on English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) within the UK HE context; this is also the one I am most familiar with.

1.6 Dissertation structure

Having introduced the background to my research, Chapter 2 will review the relevant literature on CW and EAP / EGAP teaching and on how the former has been used within the latter and in other related contexts. Chapter 3 will then examine what autoethnography is, give my rationale for using it, outline the stages of data collection, analysis, interpretation and writing up, and finally discuss research rigour, ethical considerations and the challenges I faced. Chapter 4 takes a creative approach to presenting results: split pages (Rogers-Shaw, 2002) will be used to present analytical and evocative autoethnographic approaches side by side. Chapter 5 takes a more conventional approach to discussion of findings, and Chapter 6 draws conclusions both in terms of my own development and implications for wider EAP practice. The raw data can be found in full in the appendices.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter will begin by reviewing the relevant literature on the culture of CW and EAP teaching in UK HE, paying attention to the six 'pillars of EAP' (Tibbetts & Chapman, 2023, p.62) since these are used as a framework for my research. It will then review the limited literature

available on the role of CW within EAP teaching and other related teaching contexts in order to identify a research gap.

2.1 A culture of creative writing teaching in the UK

As an academic research field, CW is relatively new in the UK, with the first MA established in 1970 at the University of East Anglia, having been inspired by CW and composition studies courses in the US (Holeywell, 2009). However, by 2005, Beck (2005, cited by Leahy et al. 2014) claims that CW was the fastest growing and most popular field in UK higher education with undergraduate and postgraduate courses being offered at almost every university and college. Typically, CW courses take a nontraditional academic approach: rather than being based around lectures and exams, their pedagogy is supported by cognitive science and is more workshop based (Leahy et al., 2014). Inspired by Mills' (1953) seminal article, their focus is less on the product and more on the process of writing (Mayers, 2015). Writing is regarded 'as a social act involving relationships between writers and readers' (Antoniou & Moriarty, 2008, p.165) so workshops are typically based around the giving and receiving of feedback. However, despite its growing popularity, in many universities CW teaching is not regarded as academically respectable (Hobsbaum, 1992), with many still arguing that writing cannot be taught (Bell & Magrs, 2001). In answer to this, CW teachers might agree that whilst it is impossible to teach originality and perseverance that writers invariably need, literary tradition and technique can be taught, and talent can be fostered in a supportive academic environment (Newman, 2007). Having completed an MA in CW myself, I was keen to consider what could be learnt from it and applied to EAP provision.

2.2 A culture of teaching EAP / EGAP in the UK

Despite having 'pushed itself to the forefront of innovative research and educational practice' (Hyland, 2006b, p.34), EAP teaching is frequently viewed merely as a service or mercantile activity (Hyland, 2006b) and, like CW, often suffers from having a reputation inferior to the 'proper' more literary disciplines. It was subdivided into English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) and English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) by Blue in 1988; the former refers to provision for students in particular disciplines while the later caters for those in all fields of study.

Traditionally, EAP teaching followed a study skills approach (Storch et al., 2016). However, this was critiqued by Lea and Street (1998, p.158) for being based on a deficit model and for regarding literacy as 'a set of atomised skills which students have to learn and which are then transferable to other contexts'. Hyland and Hamp-Lyons (2002) argue that such an approach is too narrow and deals too superficially with the range of discourses across different disciplines. While decontextualised study skills provision can still be found in the UK (Tibbetts & Chapman, 2023), much EAP teaching has moved beyond this to focus on the development of academic literacy which, as Wingate (2015, p.6) defines it, is 'the ability to communicate competently in an academic discourse community'. Enabling students to move towards membership of their chosen community is, as Alexander et al. (2019) see it, the purpose of an EAP course. Rather than being constrained to a particular approach, EAP teaching is now informed by a wide variety of theories including Genre Analysis, Corpus Linguistics, Legitimation Code Theory, Systemic Functional Linguistics, Academic Literacies and Critical EAP (Tibbetts & Chapman, 2023). In my own teaching context, I adopt Larson-Freeman's (2000) approach of 'principled eclecticism', drawing upon these underpinning theories as

appropriate. The following six subsections will briefly discuss the approaches and criticisms of these 'pillars of EAP' (Tibbetts & Chapman, 2023, p.62) since they are used as a framework for analysing data in this research.

2.2.1 Genre Analysis

Genre Analysis (GA) frequently underpins EAP provision, with activities designed to raise awareness of textual and linguistic features in authentic texts. A common classroom application is the analysis of the different rhetorical 'moves' (Swales, 1990) within a research article; for example, students might examine the stages within introduction, method, results and discussion (IMRD) sections (Tibbetts & Chapman, 2023).

Swales (1990, p.58) defines genre as 'a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes'. In English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) provision, discipline specific genres can be analysed, while in an EGAP context, there is some value in the comparison of the features of different genres. Training learners to become discourse analysists can be helpful in its own right, not only for the development of their writing, but to promote autonomy and student-centred learning (Tibbetts & Chapman, 2023).

A GA approach can be criticised for regarding genre as fixed and for its 'acculturation of students into academic discourse' rather than considering the part that learners themselves play in shaping the discourse community (Lea & Street, 1998). I was curious to reflect on the extent to which I have used such an approach in my own CW and whether this might inform EAP practice.

2.2.2 Corpus Linguistics

Corpus Linguistics (CL) is a branch of genre theory (Charles, 2013) which makes use of technology to analyse certain text types, a corpus being a database of authentic texts which can be analysed by concordance software to identify linguistic patterns and frequency. This approach often influences EAP materials and teaching, e.g. through the use of Coxhead's (2000) New Academic Word List, even if the technology is not directly used in the classroom. However, both teachers and learners can use corpora and concordance software to conduct useful analyses of relevant academic genres to inform their teaching and writing. Despite being freely available and enabling autonomy and student-centred learning, sufficient training time is required on the part of the user (Conrad, 2005). This has discouraged me from using CL extensively in my own EAP teaching, but I was interested to consider how it could be exploited with CW in EAP.

2.2.3 Systemic Functional Linguistics

Also known as the 'Sydney School' on account of where Halliday's rhetorical research was developed, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a genre-based instructional model (Wingate, 2015) based on his linguistic theory of the same name. It sees language as a social semiotic or a meaning-making system which can both realise and communicate every possible meaning (Ding & Bruce, 2017). For this reason, the pedagogical approach 'places emphasis on the social use of language in context in the creation of a text and its interpretation as discourse' (Ding & Bruce, 2017, p.68) and involves students unpacking the language conventions of genres in an attempt to understand 'varieties and linguistic choices that are available' to enable application in their own practice (Wingate, 2015, p.31). The model involves the guided 'deconstruction' of a sample text, followed by the 'co-construction' of that text by both teacher and students, and then the independent 'reconstruction' of a similar

text (Purser et al., 2020). Although based on complex theory heavily reliant on metalanguage, this model is easily applied in the EAP classroom, and Halliday's idea of 'language as choice' can be very appealing to practitioners (Tibbetts & Chapman, 2023), as indeed it is to me.

2.2.4 Legitimation Code Theory

Developed by Maton (2014), Legitimation Code Theory (LCT) builds on the ideas of Bernstein (e.g. 1990, 2000) and Bourdieu (e.g. 1996, 2000) and provides a framework for the study of knowledge and education rather than EAP specifically. Through three different analytical 'dimensions' (Specialisation, Semantics and Autonomy) a wide range of social practice can be analysed and explained including 'the dispositions of actors, the contexts within which they are situated, and their resultant experiences and practices' (Maton & Chang, 2019, p.36). The ambitiousness of the LCT framework can seem forbidding (Solli and Muir, 2021), although Maton (2014, p.19) himself states, 'you only need as much theory as the problem-situation demands, no more and no less'. Within EAP, the dimensions of Specialisation and Semantics are perhaps most relevant. Specialisation codes concern 'what can be legitimately described as knowledge (epistemic relations); and who can claim to be a legitimate knower (social relations)' (Maton & Chen, 2020, p.38). Solli and Muir (2021) argue that within the context of EAP, these can usefully be explored to address issues of rhetorical positioning and audience. The dimension of Semantics concerns the context-dependence (semantic gravity) and complexity (semantic density) of practices. Within EAP, this dimension can be applied as Tilakaratna et al. (n.d.) propose, by exploring semantic gravity waving to demonstrate critical thinking. In my own context, I find the concept of semantic waving between abstract theory and concrete experience particularly helpful when teaching reflective writing. I wanted to consider how CW might also fit within this framework and inform EAP practices.

2.2.5 Academic Literacies

More about the writers of texts, their identities and transformations than the analysis of texts themselves, the Academic Literacies (AcLits) approach was put forward by Lea and Street in 1998. Viewing literacies as 'social practices' (Lea & Street, p.159), Lea and Street argue that this approach understands the 'nature of student writing within institutional practices, power relations and identities' (Lea & Street, p. 158) and involves 'negotiation of conflicting literacy practices' (Lea & Street, p.172). Such an approach requires students to switch practices between different genre and discipline contexts and to deal with the different social meanings and identities that these involve (Lea & Street) since, as Zamel and Spack (1998) observe, there is no single 'culture' within the academy that students must learn and apply. Although popular in principle, a common criticism of this theory is that it has no clear pedagogical framework (Tibbetts & Chapman, 2023). However, as someone who regularly shifts between academic and creative genres in my own practice, I am naturally drawn to the approach and was keen to explore the ways in which it might encompass CW and AW within EAP.

2.2.6 Critical EAP

The aim of Critical EAP (CEAP) is twofold: to help students perform well academically while encouraging them to challenge and bring about change to the education they are being offered (Benesch, 2001). It is, therefore, similar to AcLits in that it focuses on transformation of the individual, but goes one step further in that it aims to reveal hidden ideologies and bring about change to the learner's educational context (Tibbetts, 2023). Pennycock (1997) rejects 'vulgar pragmatism', an 'unreflective acceptance of explicit and implicit standards, conventions, rules and discourse-practices that we find around us' (Cherryholmes, 1988,

p.151) in favour of 'critical pragmatism' which 'continually involves making epistemological, ethical, and aesthetic choices (not necessarily in serial order or this order) and translating them into discourse-practices.' (Pennycock, 1997, p.179). Within EAP, this can be done by problematising assumptions, for example,

> Which English is being referred to? If academic English is not monolithic, whose gets taught? In EAP, what is "academic"? And what are the purposes? Are students' purposes congruent with those of academic institutions? If not, how can the relationship between them be theorized?
>
> (Benesch, 2001, p.xvi)

The desire to not simply 'reinforce the status quo in academia and society' (Allison 1996, p.90) is a worthy one but, as Ding and Bruce (2017) point out, few choose to adopt CEAP's more activist agenda, citing Williams' (2016) concern about practitioners being expected to adopt a particular stance in order to facilitate students' rejection of it. As a neurodivergent person who, for many years, found it difficult to question assumptions, preferring simply to accept rules regarding the way things are done, CEAP continues to challenge me as an EAP practitioner. However, I am conscious that my experiences with CW have enabled me develop in this area and was, therefore, keen to include it within my framework.

2.3 The role of creative writing in EAP teaching

Having examined the cultures of teaching both CW and EAP in the UK and the main pedagogies involved in the latter, I will now turn my focus to what the literature says about how CW has been applied within EAP pedagogies either in practice or theory. However, whilst

much has been published on the role of CW in second language acquisition (e.g. Smith, 2013; Del Águila Pinto, 2017; Dai, 2010), very little attention has been paid to its potential role within EAP in particular, so other related contexts are also considered here. The following discussion will follow a similar organisation to that of the six preceding subsections, i.e. gradually move from a focus on the development of understanding around genre and textual features towards that of writer identity and finally on to the wider educational context. Specifically, it will consider understanding of genre, vocabulary development, fluency, bridging to AW, building confidence, developing creative and critical thinking, developing voice and writer identity, and pushing boundaries in the academy.

CW can be helpful in developing students' understanding of genre. Whitney et al. (2011) designed a CW course based on Fleischer and Andrew-Vaughan's (2009) book, *Writing Outside your Comfort Zone* in a successful attempt to help their high school students in America think more deeply about genre and develop GA skills. In a very different context, Dai (2010, p.555) claims that students who completed an English CW course as part of their degree at Sun Yat-sen University in China 'have laid a very good foundation for the mastery of other genres of writing' through greater exposure in their reading and more experimentation in their writing, and hopes that such provision can be made available to more Chinese writers.

Vocabulary development is another area in which CW may be beneficial for students. Although not writing specifically about EAP, in her autoethnography Hanci-Azizogl (2018) concludes that writing poetry in a second language enabled her to write in a more sophisticated style, to discover new lexical and semantic connotations thus enriching her vocabulary, and to use more meaningful ways to express herself. CW encourages writers to

use vocabulary in unusual ways with a sense of playfulness (Lutzker, 2015) and this may help students to gain more control in their ability to manipulate language. This effect was witnessed by Randolph et al. (2011) after EAP students at Western Michigan University had completed a CW course; it was also commented upon by the students themselves who claimed that CW 'helped them learn to "play with the language," "appreciate the language," and "view it as a living thing that grows"' (Randolph et al., p.73). I was curious to know whether it could be similarly useful in a UK HE EAP context.

Engaging in practical CW activities helps students to develop fluency in personal story telling (Heathfield, 2015). Randolph et al. (2011) point out that the average home student completes a great number of CW assignments in their own language before being expected to write academic English. They point to neuroscience (Murphy Paul, 2009, cited by Randolph et al., 2011) to emphasise the positive impact that completing CW assignments has on verbal language development, and highlight the fact that most English as a second language (ESL) learners miss out on this step. Keaveney (2005) presents a variety of different ways in which CW can be used within primary and secondary immersion education in order to develop fluency in the second language. However, apart from including some examples of student writing, she does not present any findings to prove her claim that CW can develop fluency.

CW is occasionally used as an accessible and engaging bridge to AW. Randolph et al. (2011, p.74) argue that the former is a key element for successful AW, and their CW course was instituted as a bridge for EAP students at an American university. This is based on the premise that 'creative writing is 'natural' because it is based on the learners' own memories and experiences […], while academic writing is, to a certain degree, *forced*, *unnatural*, and often times *unfamiliar'.* The authors claim that their creative writing intervention is backed by two

findings from neuroscience: firstly, the more the brain is exercised, the healthier it becomes (Hortsman, 2011; Iacoboni, 2009; Jensen, 2008; Medina, 2009, cited by Randolph et al., 2011), secondly, fiction excites and stimulates the human brain more than academic literature (Murphy Paul, 2009, cited by Randolph et al., 2011). They assert that their CW intervention has resulted in significantly higher EAP exit writing assessment scores and greater enjoyment of writing on the part of students. However, they provide no information on the number of students taking these tests or other factors that may have played a part in their improvement, nor do they have a control group. In the UK, King and de Wilde (2019) encourage postdoctoral STEM students at Imperial College London to start by writing haiku on the first day of a writing retreat as a gentle, non-threatening and thought-provoking way into thesis writing. I found it interesting to consider whether CW might act as a bridge to AW more widely within a UK HE EAP context.

CW can also be used to build confidence and establish safety. Although writing about what academics rather than EAP students can learn from the teaching of CW, Antoniou and Moriarty (2008) identify that AW can cause feelings of anxiety, inadequacy and fear, even among experienced subject experts, and conclude that CW lecturers are an underutilized resource in higher education who may be able to provide support and guidance in this area. It would seem logical to extend this to EAP students who do not have the experience and expertise of university staff.

Much has been written about the need for creative and critical thinking; as early as the 1950s Carl Rogers (1954, p.249), for example, wrote about the ‘desperate social need’ for creative individuals who can play with concepts and ideas. Nowhere is this more true than in academia where students should come to see that ‘things could always be other than they are’ (Barnett,

1990, p.155). In her book, Edberg (2018, p.374) claims that the narrative imagination, or narrative text type, is essential in order to see things from different perspectives. With the support of case studies, she argues that CW can be used as a 'method for learning critical metareflection' (Edberg, 2018, v); moreover, she asserts that a CW method can be applied to any writing course. EAP courses often have the development of critical thinking within their learning objectives and yet very little has been published on how CW can serve this purpose in an EAP context. However, Alkhaldi (2019, p.83) does identify the need to 'prepare students creatively for the future', highlighting the problem-solving nature of CW, and arguing that it can 'complement technical subjects such as engineering as they are two sides of the same coin'. With this in mind, he proposes a simple framework for incorporating CW into ESP / EAP courses which involves Awareness (raising awareness of the benefits of CW), Practice (reading and discussing samples), Inspiration (providing or co-creating a model), Writing Up (preparing drafts independently), Development (improving drafts based on feedback) and Production (publication of work in books, magazines or websites). Although Alkhaldi obtained his PhD in the UK, his work is set in an Arab world context where CW is not emphasised in the curriculum. However, the same is generally true in the UK HE context so it will be interesting to consider the applicability of this framework in the light of my findings in Chapter 5.

Another way in which CW is used within EAP provision is to enable students to develop their own voice and ultimately their identity as a writer. Newman (2007, p.32) quotes an MA CW graduate who claims that 'the wide range of things we had to do made us experiment and extend ourselves.' Hyland (2006b, p.35) emphasises the need for academic writers to also do this, enabling them to write in a 'fresh and spontaneous' way. Solli and Muir (2021, p.14) ask their doctoral students to deliberately write something 'ambitious, overblown, magnificent

and absurd' that is not intended for publication; in such a way they are encouraged to experiment, take risks and discover what kind of writer they might be. Coming from an UK HE context where time constraints and progression requirements often seem to limit what I think is possible or desirable to cover in class, I find this approach interesting and appealing and certainly worth exploring in Chapter 5, again in light of my findings.

Extending this further, CW in EAP can be used to push the boundaries of what is acceptable and possible within the academy. Molinari (2022) argues that by focusing on writing forms and conventions, teachers are merely training rather than educating their students. She goes on to say that by teaching *about* writing as well as *how* to write, and by encouraging students to engage with a much broader range of academic texts, much more meaning-making potential might emerge. I would go even further than this and ask why this should be limited to academic texts. After all, Solli and Muir (2021) have invited their doctoral students to engage with a range of non-traditional texts in their *Experimental writing and life beyond IMRD* course: students may choose to write an aspect of their research as a fairy tale, ghost story, detective story, romance or comic strip. Not only does this enable students to consider issues of voice and identity in an AcLits way, but it moves into the realms of CEAP by enabling students to demonstrate their discontent with standardisation (Swales, 2017) and play an active part in shaping their discourse community. As Tomlinson (in Tomlinson et al., 2015) states, 'creativity involves transcending the conventional norm'; likewise, Csikszentmihalyi (1996, p.2) asserts that 'creativity leaves an outcome that adds to the richness and complexity of the future'.

Despite an obvious lack of literature on the current use of CW within EAP provision, its documented role within other educational contexts indicates that there may well be a place

for it in UK HE. In this research it was, therefore, interesting to explore how this could best be done within the framework of the six 'pillars of EAP' (Tibbetts and Chapman, 2023, p.62). The following chapter discusses the methodology I used to do this.

Chapter 3: Methodology

In order to understand how creative writing practices may be of use within UK HE EAP provision, autoethnography was used. The primary data source was reflective notes written regularly by myself over a period of two months, supplemented for the purposes of triangulation by self-generated data from the previous six years in the form of reflective journal entries, personal correspondence, notes made prior to a conference presentation and responses to author interviews.

After outlining what autoethnography is and what it entails, in this chapter I will present my rationale for using such an avant-garde research method; explain the stages of data collection, analysis, interpretation and autoethnographic writing; discuss research rigour and ethical considerations; and finally consider the challenges I faced during the research process.

3.1 What is Autoethnography?

Autoethnographies 'are highly personalized accounts that draw upon the experience of the author/researcher for the purposes of extending sociological understanding' (Sparkes, 2000, p. 21). Breaking down the word first coined by Heider in 1975 (Mirhosseini, 2016), 'auto' refers to the choice of 'self' as subject, 'ethno' to the cultural experience the researcher seeks to understand, and 'graphy' to the description and systematic analysis involved in such a study (Ellis, 2004). A qualitative research method with its origins in the field of anthropology (Chang,

2016) and used in the social sciences, autoethnography is grounded in postmodern philosophy which views different ways of knowing and inquiring as legitimate (Wall, 2006). Drawing on principles in both ethnography and autobiography, as a method it is both process and product (Ellis et al., 2011). Often divided into 'objective' and 'subjective' camps, autoethnographers tend to produce work that is either analytic or evocative in nature. A proponent of the former, Anderson (2006) proposes five key features that should be present in analytic autoethnography:

> (1) complete member researcher (CMR) status, (2) analytic reflexivity, (3) narrative visibility of the researcher's self, (4) dialogue with informants beyond the self, and (5) commitment to theoretical analysis. (p.380)

In an unconventional response to Anderson which takes the form of a dialogue, Ellis and Bochner (2006) argue that autoethnography was conceived in an attempt to make the reader care, feel, empathise and act, and that Anderson's approach merely attempts to return this more personal, creative and engaging method of research (which may include prose, verse, photography and artwork) back to the traditional 'gaze of the distanced and detached observer' (p.433). They object to the realist position of favouring analysis over story and, whilst widely regarded as evocative autoethnographers, Ellis and Bochner (2006) consider the word 'evocative' to be redundant here given the original purpose of this method.

However, some researchers such as Rogers-Shaw (2002) regard the issue of objectivity and subjectivity as less of a dichotomy and more of a continuum. She attempts to combine the analytic and evocative in a layered account which makes use of personal storytelling at the top of each page and related analysis beneath it. Ronai (1995) argues that such layered accounts demonstrate the importance of both components. However, while I agree in part,

for me Rogers-Shaw's (2002) decision to place the story at the top of the page has the effect of placing greater weight on this component.

3.2 Rationale for using Autoethnography

Autoethnography is not the obvious choice for a dissertation in TESOL. However, given the lack of literature on the role of creative writing within EAP provision, conducting secondary research would not have been particularly enlightening. As an EAP practitioner with an MA in Creative Writing and the author of both fictitious and academic texts, I was well placed to make myself the subject of study. As Ellis (1991) puts it, who is better positioned to research a subject than one who has lived experience of it; 'who would make a better subject than a researcher consumed by wanting to figure it all out?' (pp.29-30). Doing autoethnography 'lets you use yourself to get to culture' (Pelias, 2003, p. 372); in this case the culture is that of EAP teaching in UK HE.

Described as 'action research for the individual,' (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 754), I would argue that autoethnography empowers the practitioner through valuing their experience and knowledge. With its focus on reflexive practice, it may also contribute significantly towards the professional development of the researcher. Furthermore, although autoethnography aims to extend sociological understanding (Sparkes, 2000), as 'action research for the individual' (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 754) it is entirely appropriate in contexts where findings are not intended to be scientifically generalisable (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014). Although I wanted to discover how CW practices might effectively be used within UK HE EAP provision, I am under no illusions that CW will appeal to all learners and teachers.

Having stated that autoethnography is not the most obvious method for research within TESOL, it is certainly growing in popularity within this field, perhaps for the reasons given above or possibly in response to Mirhosseini's (2018, p.76) article in the *TESOL Journal* inviting practitioners to follow the 'less-treaded path' of autoethnography. Prior to this, Canagarajah (2012) attempted to develop a strategic professional identity through their autoethnography by using correspondence, institutional reports and texts read and written by the author in order to explore 'hidden feelings, forgotten motivations, and suppressed emotions' (p261). More recently, Stevenson (2023) has used personal journal reflections to create an autoethnography about the emotional labour of black English language teachers in the United States, and Yazan et al. (2023) have produced a collaborative autoethnography exploring their professional identity tensions as transnational TESOL practitioners. Autoethnographies have also now been done within the field of EAP (e.g. Mumford & Dikilitaş, 2020; Hudson, 2022) and I believe there was a strong rationale for joining them on this lesser-trodden research path.

As a writer of fiction, I found myself naturally drawn to evocative autoethnography: not only did I want my reader to 'to feel the story in their guts, not just know the 'facts' in their heads' (Ellis & Bochner, 2006, p.435), but it seemed fitting that a piece of research about CW should be presented in a creative way. However, coming from a family of scientists, I am familiar with a critical realist research philosophy and can appreciate Anderson's (2006, p.380) insistence on 'commitment to theoretical analysis' and the need to reach beyond the self. It is for these reasons that I wanted to combine evocative storytelling with more systematic, scientific analysis in a similar way to Rogers-Shaw (2020). However, when presenting my results, I made the decision to split my page vertically rather than horizontally in an attempt to make the two

accounts seem more equally weighted. Of course, it could be argued that the left-hand column has the appearance of being more important since my audience is likely to have been conditioned to start reading that one first, but there is arguably more chance of the two being read simultaneously in that configuration.

3.3 Methodology, Paradigm and Theory

De Costa et al. (2017) emphasise the need for alignment between methodology, paradigm and theory in qualitative research, as shown in Figure 1. Working within a postmodernist paradigm which acknowledges a plurality of perspectives, meanings and ways of knowing (Hlynka & Yeaman, 1992), means I am aware that ontologically there are multiple realities, and epistemologically there is no one truth. The data I have generated and selected only represents *my* reality and *my* truth. This is aligned with the methodology of autoethnography because, as previously mentioned, while aiming to be relatable and extend sociological understanding (Sparkes, 2000), it focuses on the experience of the researcher and does not pretend to be scientifically generalisable (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014).

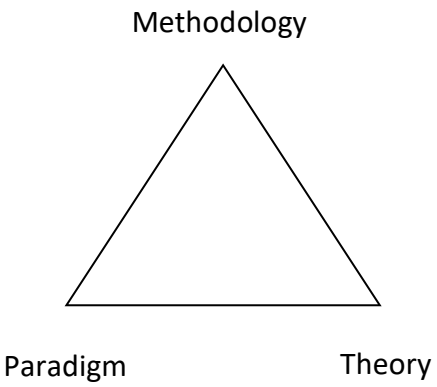

Figure 1 : Alignment Matters (De Costa et al. 2017)

In terms of theory, I have chosen to use the six 'pillars of EAP' identified by Tibbetts and Chapman (2023, p.62) as a framework to guide the analysis of my data. This, I would argue, is central to my EAP practice and entirely relevant to the research questions and the type of data likely to be obtained through autoethnography.

3.4 Data Collection

There is no single way to do autoethnography (Wall, 2006). Instead, as Atherton (2020) states, 'it invites multiple, primarily qualitative methods'. Autoethnographers have predominantly followed in the tradition of ethnography (Wall, 2008) by using data gathered from field notes, document and artefact analysis, research diaries and interviews (Myan, 2001; Morse & Richards, 2002, cited by Wall, 2008). In the present study, I used a variety of self-generated data from the past to make up eight 'hard' (Wall, 2008) or 'external' (Chang, 2008) datasets, including critical commentaries I was required to write as part of two summative assessments, notes I made before giving a conference presentation, my responses to author interviews, and personal email correspondence with a CW critique partner. The correspondence has not been used in its original form for ethical reasons (see section 3.7) but a reflection has been written upon rereading it.

As well as 'hard' or 'external' data, personal memory data can be used in autoethnography (Chang, 2008). Indeed, Wall (2008) argues that such research can rely on memories alone. She does so in her research even when her memories cannot be corroborated with other data, claiming, like Ottenberg (1990, p.144, cited by Wall, 2008, p.46), ' "I remember many things…[and] I am certain that they are correct and not a fantasy."' She makes the very convincing point that were her memories to appear in the interview data of another, they would be legitimate for research purposes, so the same should be true when the researcher

is the subject of their own research. In terms of generating rich memory data, Muncey (2005) advocates reflecting on and writing about metaphors and journeys (both metaphorical and literal). Ellis et al. (2011) also proposes writing about critical incidents or moments, which Atherton (2020,p.4) defines as 'events that have occurred and reflected upon.' Chang (2008) explores a number of further methods including chronicling the past by writing autobiographical timelines or about routines; inventorying self by selecting and writing about meaningful proverbs, rituals and celebrations, mentors, and cultural artefacts; and visualising self through making kinship diagrams and free drawing. Whatever means the researcher uses to select, record and reflect on memories, the act of writing about them is powerful and enlightening, for as Richardson (1994) says, writing is a form of inquiry: as well as being a form of telling, it is also a form of knowing. This is certainly something I have discovered in my own CW. In this study, I deemed the most appropriate personal memory data to be an autobiographical timeline as well as reflections on critical incidents in my CW, AW and EAP journey and a cultural artefact. Thirteen datasets were produced in this way, through freewriting without any constraints in terms of form, length or content.

In addition to data from or about the past, autoethnographic data can also come from the present (Chang, 2008). This is equivalent to ethnographic participant observation and can take the form of systematic self-observation and reflection (Chang, 2008). In the present study, for the sake of triangulation, a field journal (Chang, 2008) was completed over two months, with seventeen reflective entries, each completed immediately after every occasion I engaged in either the process of CW or AW. Again, my entries did not follow a particular form; in them I merely reflected on what I had done and thought about using freewriting (subjective self-reflection).

Given the quantity used, it was very important to organise my datasets carefully. I adapted Chang's (2008) method of labelling, using a primary organisational label (stating collection date, collection technique and data source) where appropriate, and a secondary topical label in parentheses (stating original timeframe, topic and geographical information). The datasets were logged on an Excel spreadsheet ready to be classified at the data analysis stage. A list of the thirty-eight datasets used in this research (totalling over 12,500 words) can be found in Appendix 1; the raw data can be found in full in Appendices 2-4.

3.5 Data Analysis

Although they claim that autoethnographic data potentially requires less coding, Denzin and Lincoln (2011) argue that this is still important for the sake of clarity and coherence. In this research, thematic analysis was used to identify, analyse, organise, describe and report themes found within each data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Nowell et al.'s (2017) six phases were followed in order to do this: familiarisation with data; generation of initial codes; search for themes; review of themes; definition and naming of themes; and production of a report.

The first phase of familiarisation was relatively straightforward since the data was self-generated. In the second phase, a deductive approach was taken: six codes were used which reflected my chosen framework of the six EAP pedagogies discussed in section 2.2. Colour coding was used to do this, and has been included in the raw data in Appendices 2-4. Themes and sub-themes were then developed inductively for the sake of more accurate representation, and can be seen in Appendix 5. The final phase (production of a report) will be discussed in Section 3.7.

3.6 Data Interpretation

According to Wolcott (1994), data analysis and interpretation are closely linked but not the same. The former focuses on identification of the features and interrelationships within the data while the latter involves looking beyond the data to find cultural meanings. However, as Chang (2008, p.128) states, the two 'should be seen not in conflict with each other, but as a balancing act between fracturing and connecting, between zooming in and zooming out, between science and art' and thus are often conducted concurrently. Elaborating on the third type of balancing act, Chang refers to the acceptability of non-scientific factors in autoethnography and points to Creswell's 'three I's' of 'insight, intuition and impression' (1998, p.142, cited by Chang, 2008, p.130). Throughout the process of analysing and interpreting my data, I continually strove to achieve all three types of balance, the product of which will be explained in the next section.

3.7 Writing Autoethnography

Having analysed and interpreted my data using the methods outlined above, I then had to present my results in a way that would enable the reader to 'to feel the story in their guts, not just know the 'facts' in their heads' (Ellis & Bochner, 2006, p.435). I was inspired by Liao's (2020) poetic autoethnography in a book entitled *Autoethnographies in ELT*, in which the researcher explored how receiving poetry writing instruction could impact an L2 writer's identity. Their first-hand data took the form of freewrites which, through the process of analysis, were transformed into poetical representations for the final product.

Following the systematic process of identifying themes within my data (Braun and Clarke, 2006), I then condensed the pertinent data into poetic form. In my published novels I have

pushed boundaries by using free verse for its ability to capture the essence of scenes, situations and stories accessibly in very few words, and was keen to try a similar approach here, curious about whether it could also convey the essence of my raw data in the results chapter. The use of poetry enabled me to fracture and connect, zoom in and zoom out, and take an artistic approach to analysis and interpretation (Chang, 2008). To balance this, I presented my more scientific analysis alongside it in the right-hand column. I hope that the result is both suitably evocative and analytical. To satisfy the requirements of this dissertation, my discussion chapter follows normal academic conventions.

3.8 Research Rigour

Autoethnography has been criticised for lacking in rigour due to its subjectivity and bias, and for lowering academic standards (e.g. Anderson, 2006; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Campbell, 2017). Delamont (2007, p.2) claims that it is both 'literally and intellectually lazy'. However, others counter this; Atherton (2020, p.2), for example, proposes that 'autoethnography is a rigorous and powerful research method.' Ellis et al. (2011) argue that autoethnography cannot be judged in the same terms as traditional forms of research. Writing about Scholarly Personal Narrative writing (SPN), a close relation of autoethnography, Nash and Bradley (2012, p.10) encourage writers to strive for an academic rigour in their writing 'that is closer to academic vigor than it is to academic rigor [mortis].'

In terms of reliability in autoethnography, Ellis et al. (2011) assert that it is the authors' credibility that is important: consideration should be given to the feasibility of events described in autoethnographic accounts and the extent to which artistic license is used to do so. The reliability of memory is also necessary to consider, for as Atherton (2020) points out, while

positivists might regard it as reliable (Ettorre, 2005; Muncey, 2010), others such as Fuchs (2017) do not. Muncey (2005) discovered that reactions to her autoethnographies centred around memory: how her memory may have changed over time and whether or not her memories were based on truth. This encouraged her to use snapshots and artefacts to enhance her credibility. While I do not have photographic evidence to support my data, I have ensured that most of the events or outcomes I write about could be externally verified should the reader wish to do so, and have provided the relevant information on the Excel spreadsheet. However, for ethical reasons the names of institutions, websites and publications can only be provided on request (see section 3.8). Concerns about the possibility of artistic license may be harder to reassure the reader on, but this, like the question of memory reliability is, at least in part, addressed by the fact that much of my data has been selected from a period of time before this research project was conceived in 2024.

Regarding validity, Ellis et al. (2011) cite Plummer (2001, p.401) who writes that "what matters is the way in which the story enables the reader to enter the subjective world of the teller - to see the world from her or his point of view, even if this world does not match reality." They point out that the questions "How useful is the story?" and "To what uses might the story be put?" (Bochner, 2002, p282, cited by Ellis et al., 2011) are particularly helpful when considering the validity of an autoethnographic study. I hope that my audience may find this study useful when reflecting on how they might develop their own EAP practice, and thus regard it as a valid contribution to the literature.

In terms of generalisability, Ellis et al. (2011) argue that autoethnographers should not be concerned about findings being applied to large populations, but rather with the way readers can relate what they read to their lives and those of others. As previously stated, I am well aware

that CW approaches will not suit everyone; however, readers may take something from this research and apply it in their own practice, making it generalisable on a small scale.

Like Ellis et al. (2011), I believe it is important not to shy away from the subjective nature of my research, but rather to acknowledge and accommodate its subjectivity, emotionality and my influence on it. My choice of incidents to reflect on, along with how I have described them, for example, have been entirely guided by my subjective ideas (Wolcott, 1994). I am also well aware that confirmation bias and hindsight bias (Anderson, 2006) may play a part in this research: I set out with a belief that CW has played a part in the development of my own AW, and it is likely that my subsequent recollections and reflections will have been shaped by this belief. However, since I started this research project with no preconceived ideas about how CW might be incorporated into EAP provision, and one of my goals was to identify this in order to inform EAP practice by means of a systematic process of thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006), I would argue that my approach meets Ellis et al.'s (2011) requirements in terms of reliability, validity and generalisability.

3.9 Research Ethics

Referring to BERA (2011), Atherton (2020) claims that in terms of ethics, autoethnography that involves no interviewees nor named participants is relatively straightforward. When I embarked on an autoethnographic study, I was under the same impression. However, I quickly realised that no researcher lives in isolation and other participants are always implicated in their data (Ellis et al. 2011). Indeed, protecting the privacy of such participants may be even more difficult than in other forms of research (Loughborough University, 2024). Since my own autobiographical data is in the public domain (as a university employee, a published author and user of social media), any other people mentioned in my reflections and correspondence could

be identifiable even if unnamed. Thus it was vital that these 'relational' concerns stayed firmly in mind throughout the whole process (Ellis, 2007, p.25). As it was, these concerns forced me to reconsider what data was acceptable in the absence of informed consent, and I was obliged to abandon my original plans to reflect on how particular mentors, family members and certain events had influenced me (as suggested by Chang, 2008), selecting other forms of data instead. Including my responses to a critique partner's emails would also have been problematic for this reason, so as an alternative I chose to write reflections upon rereading this correspondence. In such a way, I could focus on the content relevant to this research rather than the relationship with the implied participants.

Where reference to other participants or institutions was unavoidable or desirable in order to engage the reader (for example, in the introduction), I have omitted names and avoided mentioning characteristics (including gender, race, appearance and / or location), favouring the essence and meaningfulness of the research story over accuracy (Bochner, 2002; Tullis Owen et al., 2009). In my view, poetry has an advantage over prose in this respect since it can focus on the emotions, beliefs, experiences and perceptions of a character without focusing on the character themselves. However, while protecting the identity of characters and institutions in this story, this approach moves beyond anonymisation and into the realms of fictionalisation, which can have implications on the integrity of the research (Ellis et al., 2011). Given that none of the aforementioned characteristics are relevant to the research questions and that I have openly declared and justified my decision to avoid focusing on them, I hope this will not be the case.

3.10 Challenges

Completing this research was challenging, mainly for the ethical reasons just mentioned. In hindsight, it would have been wise to gain ethical approval to analyse the relationships between the self and others (Chang, 2008), giving rise to richer data. A lack of 'dialogic engagement with others in the social world [I] seek to understand' may invite accusations of self-absorption (Anderson, 2006, p.385), although I hope to have sufficiently moved beyond the data in my interpretation (Wolcott, 1994).

However, the research was also challenging because there is no standard way of conducting autoethnography (Méndez, 2013). Although potentially liberating and offering appealing creative possibilities, I did have to carefully consider how my approach might be compatible with the required academic conventions of an assessed dissertation. In particular, many published autoethnographies do not separate out research findings, analysis and interpretation as is required here. This constraint was both restraining and enabling (Onarheim & Biskjaer, 2013), forcing me to find my own 'custom-tailored' approach that Chang (2008, p.130) deems 'absolutely necessary in autographic data analysis and interpretation.'

Another challenge was how to present the following chapter in a way to make the reader care, feel, empathise and act (Ellis & Bochner, 2006). It is one thing to write an exciting and moving story in free verse, quite another to present EAP research in this way.

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Creative writing and Genre Analysis

Writing the unfamiliar,
like setting foot in a new land,
can be lonely,
confusing,
exciting,
strange.

But the path ahead
has 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
clears the way for **evaluation**,
helping us find our own path.

Yes, writing the unfamiliar
requires the words of others—
extensively.

Just as EAP students are encouraged to analyse the genres they are expected to produce themselves, analysis of a variety of texts has played a vital part in my CW. Through the process of thematic analysis of my data, I identified five sub themes within the theme of Genre Analysis: **familiarisation**, **preparation**, **inspiration,** **evaluation** and **extensive reading**.

I've not been here before,
at the foot of this particular mountain.
I'm setting out in darkness
anxious for the dawn to arrive,
for something glorious
and hitherto unseen
awaiting me
at the summit.

But for now
I'm searching for the **familiar**—
reaching out for the boulders
that punctuate the landscape,
placing my feet in the footsteps of others,
clutching the branches I've seen others use
to slowly haul myself up.

When starting to write in unfamiliar genres in both AW and CW, I deliberately chose to read texts of a similar genre to consciously analyse certain textual features. For example, I chose to analyse Sarah Crossan's (e.g. 2015) use of punctuation, capitalisation and positioning of words when starting to write verse novels. I categorised such examples from my data under the sub theme of **familiarisation**.

Before I set off,
I'll find out which way my partner's gone,
what choices they've made,
what tools they've used.

I'll question the route they've taken,
the options they've selected,
the devices they've employed.

And after all that mental limbering up,
I'm much more **prepared**
for the journey.

When engaging in CW, I regularly analyse texts of similar genres as a highly valued form of critical **preparation** activity: repeated reference was made to 'warming up my brain', for example.

Sometimes
I don't set out to find directions,
don't study the route of others,
don't search for tried and tested routes.

Sometimes
the memory of an **inspirational** path
is really all I need.

Rather than deliberately setting out to analyse certain features of genre, sometimes **inspiration** came from texts that had been previously read and which had

captured my interest. This was the case with John Green's *Turtles All the Way Down* (2019) which sparked an idea regarding the development of a theme around a character's thought processes. Sometimes I made reference to recently read texts of a similar genre to my own writing (e.g. Emma Carroll, Phil Earle and Lesley Parr), sometimes to texts I had read years ago.

It's not always easy to **evaluate**
that which you have little experience of,
that is abstract, dry and detached,
and that you don't have the words for.

How much easier
and more accessible—
not to mention fun—
it is to appraise
depictions of life on the page.

The greatest number of words within this theme are to be found within the sub theme of **evaluation**. Here I write about the process of analysing and evaluating similar genres produced by my peers with the intention of helping them to improve their own writing as well as developing my own. I admit to the challenges I faced with this in AW as a teenager but how much easier, more accessible and enjoyable it was with CW as an adult.

The words of others
guide the way
through analysis
and questioning
and evaluation.

But mainly
by being read
and read
and read
and read
and read.

In the final sub theme, I describe the importance of **extensive reading** to develop one's ability as a writer, both in AW and CW. As one of my critical incidents, I identify teaching myself to reference an essay correctly simply by reading a large number of academic articles, and in two author interviews I encourage aspiring creative writers to read as much as possible. It would appear that conscious detailed analysis is not always necessary; exposure through extensive reading may also be beneficial.

4.2 Creative writing and Corpus Linguistics

I'm fumbling my way
with a character I don't know,
whose voice is not familiar,
whose dialect is alien,
needing to bring him to life,
to lift him off the page,
to make him seem real,
so that my reader
(and I)
will relate to him,
believe him,
and most of all,
love him.

What I need is a bank of language,
of **authentic** speech
just as it's used in real life.

Only 136 words of my data had much direct relevance to Corpus Linguistics; most of these were connected with the desire for **authenticity**. Although I have not made use of corpora in my own CW, I reflected on an occasion when this would have helped to make my protagonist sound more convincing and authentic.

What I need
is **corpus linguistics**.

4.3 Creative writing and Systemic Functional Linguistics

The writer makes a choice
with every last word:
active, passive,
noun phrase or verb,
past tense or present tense,
first person or third.

The writer makes a choice
with every last word:
sometimes they choose to **innovate**
when something unique is preferred,
sometimes it's for a certain **voice**
they're wanting to be heard,
sometimes it's their **beliefs**
they'd like to be transferred.
The writer makes a choice
with every last word.

But choices can be changed,
decisions reversed,
texts **re-genred**.

That's why
being a writer
is such a great choice.

There is inevitably some overlap between Genre Analysis and SFL, so in order to categorise my data I grouped anything that referred to genre analysis more broadly under the previous heading, and 'language as choice' under this one. I identified four sub themes within my data: **Choice for Voice**, **Choice for Innovation**, **Choice for Beliefs**, and **Re-genreing**.

First person, second person,
third person, fourth,
trustworthy, unreliable,
hesitant, assured,
informal, academic,
juvenile, mature,
prosaic, lyrical,
from the south or up north.

All of these **choices**

The data refers to a number of different **Choices** that I made in my CW for the sake of **Voice** including decisions around point of view, vocabulary, style and imagery. For example, I refer to rewriting a text in the

and many more,
all for the sake of **voice**.

third person rather than the first person in order to justify using more lyrical language.

I could choose to use language
to say what I normally say,
to do normal things,
in a normal way.

Or I could choose to spice it up a bit,
try writing in verse,
omit punctuation,
innovate or subvert.

The greatest number of words within this theme were connected to **Choice for Innovation**. I refer to making language choices based on the innovative effects I wish to have on my reader; for example, I mention my decision to write in verse in order to appeal to reluctant readers, to not use punctuation because it doesn't add anything, and to use rhythm, alliteration, assonance and repetition to increase pace and white space to decrease it. I repeatedly refer to the freedom that choice offers and how it can be liberating but also paralysing in too great a degree.

If language is a means of expression,
shouldn't every single word,
tense,
comma,
space,
construction,
inversion,
contraction,
typeface
be **chosen** with care
to express what I truly **believe**?

Just sixteen words were written on the sub theme of **Choice for Beliefs**, but they seemed important and different enough to include in their own category: "If language is choice, why would I choose language

which doesn't reflect my intentions or beliefs?" There may be some overlap with the themes of Academic Literacies and Critical EAP here, but it has been categorised here for its direct reference to language as choice.

From 'once upon a time'
to 'this report will present',
from whodunit
to 'the evidence suggests',
from memoir
to reflection,
verse
to concision,
there may be gems to be found
in **re-genreing**.

The final sub theme for SFL is **Re-genreing**. My reflections here were all on AW and teaching EAP rather than CW, and how I tend to write quick 'vomit' drafts which I then go back through and add certain conventions required by a specific genre. However, I did reflect on the potential value of asking EAP students to rewrite texts in different genres when teaching about grammatical metaphor; this might include more creative genres.

4.4 Creative writing and Legitimation Code Theory

You've steered us to the end,
but what we wanted
was to savour the journey
and to live it ourselves,
they said.

We understand how we got here,

Of the six theories of EAP I have chosen to focus on, my data seemed least connected to LCT. Anything loosely associated with the

but what we wanted
was to feel the wind on our cheeks
and the salt air on our skin,
they said.

You told us all that happened,
but what we wanted
was to see it spread out before us
in all its colour and glory,
they said.

And they're right, of course.

I was surfing so high
on the crest of that wave,
so close to the end of my journey,
that I forgot to wave down
to take them on the journey *they* wanted.

I forgot to **show and not tell**.

Specialisation dimension was deemed more relevant to Academic Literacies so was categorised there. The only sub theme I identified here was that of **showing not telling** which included a reflection on how my CW critique partner suggested I might want to show my reader something with a concrete example rather than directly tell them. This reminded me of semantic gravity within the second dimension of LCT, in particular waving down to specific examples in order to ground the reader.

4.5 Creative writing and Academic Literacies

Process over product,
writer over text,
confidence over content,
a sense of **belonging,**
of personal **transformation,**
over what belongs
or has been grammatically transformed—
a completely different way
of viewing writing.
And it's huge.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given its greater focus on the writer than texts themselves, Academic Literacies was the theory that had the most data associated with it. There were 2332 words connected with this theme, almost 700 words more than for the next most common theme. In fact, whilst writing my reflections, I noted, "as I write this, I'm becoming concerned that my

reflections are more about me, the experience of writing, and my development as a writer than about the production of texts." However, despite my concerns, I continued with my intention to write freely without restraints so as to generate more representative data. I identified four sub themes within this theme as follows: **Confidence**, **Belonging**, **Transformation** and the **Writing Process**.

Imposter,
fraud,
bad speller,
flawed,
incapable,
failure,
under achiever.
But slowly,
s l o w l y,
I
wrote
my
way
to
confidence.

Almost one quarter of the words within the Academic Literacies theme dealt with **Confidence**. There was repeated mention of imposter syndrome and feeling like a fraud until I had been accepted for publication in CW or written a dissertation in AW. Sometimes particular weaknesses were mentioned, such as inadequacies around spelling and handwriting; sometimes there was just a general feeling of incapability. Notably, there were four mentions of how much confidence CW (and

particularly publication) had given me; for example, I write that my fiction writing "has helped me to believe in myself and know what's possible." I also reflect on the huge knock to my confidence that came from being awarded a low grade for my first university essay, and how I regarded this as a failure rather than an important stage in my learning journey.

Not knowing how to use your words
can keep you on the outside
without a key to the door,
or lost without a map.

But reaching a distant milestone—
and being seen to do so—
can change all that.

Suddenly you hold the key,
own the map,
and find yourself on the inside.

Suddenly, you **belong**.

Almost a third of the words written about this theme were about a sense of **Belonging**. There was repeated reference to initially feeling lost, like an outsider or not belonging; for example, I state, "I guess I had yet to learn what was expected of me in this new discourse community" when reflecting on the low grade I received for my first degree essay. In a variety of contexts, the feeling of not belonging continued until I had reached a certain milestone: completing a dissertation in AW, having an article published in EAP, and

having a novel published in CW. Prior to these milestones I was reluctant to talk about my feelings with my peers, but since then I have felt very comfortable about doing so, as the following quote indicates: "I found that I talked more about my own writing and my experiences of doing so in my EAP classes, which my students generally seemed to enjoy and find engaging". Also, in a conference presentation, I openly talked about my previous feelings of not belonging.

Hesitant, reluctant,
resistant at first,
I took the suggested path—
hitherto untrodden,
unconsidered,
unknown.

It led me round a corner
to the crest of a hill
where the grassland
spread out before me,
rolling into the distance,
the world at my feet.
The freedom,
the pride,
the **transformation,**
when I finally found my voice.
gone was the solitary, tuneless humming—
I was singing to the world!

Throughout the data there is reference to the **Transformative** experience of finding my voice in CW. It is described as both "liberating" and a "turning point" and although I was reluctant to try the suggested approach at first, once I had done so, there was no looking back. I reflected on a similar event when I discovered a love of writing poetry as a child; I identified the feeling of pride that

remained with me for a long time. I also refer to the transformative experience of writing this dissertation as if "the process of completing it will somehow validate me as an 'expert' in my chosen area". I see it as a rite of passage, just as publishing a novel was: I did not feel able to call myself a writer until this had occurred. The transformative nature of writing certainly captured my interest while writing my reflections: at one point I commented that perhaps I should have chosen to focus on this and Academic Literacies for my dissertation.

There's so much to enjoy about—
and learn from—
the **writing process**:
taking different paths,
doing it for oneself,
changing strategy,
increasing efficiency,
building confidence,
co-authoring,
starting in the middle.

And not only does
process lead to product,
but writing breeds writing,
ideas generate ideas,

Almost a third of the words categorised within the Academic Literacies theme fell into the sub theme of the **Writing Process**. This encompassed a wide variety of data including reflections on the value of writing in different genres and styles for different audiences, and the positive effect this had

and with the necessary practice,
writers go from strength to strength.

on finding my voice. I also reflect on the importance of enjoying the process of writing rather than focusing on the final product, and consider writing for the writer as well as the reader. I contemplate how my writing process has changed over the years and has become much more efficient, including how I now value the process of co-authoring and am more likely to take a non-linear approach to writing. In addition, I identify that having been successful in the past gave me confidence in different contexts. Finally, I reflect on how writing breeds writing both in terms of ease and idea generation.

4.6 Creative writing and Critical EAP

Writing can help you become critical,
to not accept the status quo,
to **experiment**,
push boundaries,
take risks
and challenge
the **wider context**.

After Academic Literacies, Critical EAP is the theory that has the most data connected with it (1635 words). I have divided it into the following four sub themes:

Experimentation, **Pushing Boundaries**, **Taking Risks** and the **Wider Context**.

Ex**p**^{e}r**i**m^{e}n**t**a^{t}**i**o**n**
is not something
to be afraid of.
Playing with
words,
with layout,
with f**o**nt and f o r m
can liberate the writer,
bring pleasure
and reform.

My author interview data included three mentions of the importance of **Experimentation** within writing: I urge my readers not to be afraid of experimenting, playing with words and having fun. I reflect on how I have experimented with layout, vocabulary, fonts, sizes and other aspects of language in my free verse, and mention again how liberating this has been. I also recall a critical incident from my childhood when I experimented with an unusual way of filling a notebook with text, and reflect on the pleasure and satisfaction this gave me.

There's a certain pleasure to be gained
from doing something out of the ordinary,
breaking with convention,
pushing boundaries.

It's liberating
and can fill you with pride
when it pays off.
But breaking rules
for the sake of breaking rules
serves little purpose—
at least for me.

But what purpose do the rules serve?
I wonder.

A close extension of the previous sub theme, **Pushing Boundaries** contains more data than all the other individual sub themes, and almost as much as the main themes of SFL, LCT and Corpus Linguistics combined. Once again, there is mention of the liberating nature of breaking with convention in CW, and I reflect on how

although it will not please everyone, ultimately it has been a good choice since it led to publication and critical acclaim which fills me with pride. There is also much reflection on how I wanted to do something a bit out of the ordinary in the process of writing this dissertation. However, I also reflect on the importance of a rationale for this. In CW it was to appeal to reluctant readers; in AW (this dissertation) it was in keeping with both my subject matter and research method, and was also a very neat solution to the ethical issues faced.

The more I reflected on pushing boundaries, the more I began to question the purpose of traditional academic conventions. Having always accepted them before, I began to question whether there might be a case for abandoning certain conventions altogether provided there was good reason and that it could be done with integrity.

Taking the less-treaded path
can be exciting,
liberating
and a whole lot of fun.
But it's scary,
and I worry,
What will others think?
What if I stray too far?
What if I simply fail?
But a little voice urges me on,
urges me to keep **taking risks**:
Surely the reason I'm here
is to challenge,
to innovate
and grow?
And anyway,
there comes a point
when it's just too late to turn back.

Again, the next sub theme follows on closely but is more explicitly about **Taking Risks**. Twice I mention that breaking with writing convention is "scary" as well as "liberating," and I wonder whether it might be better to play it safe. In AW, this fear partly comes from what others (work colleagues and my supervisor) will think, and partly from concerns about failing. In CW, I reflect on the role that others (family, friends, agent and publisher) played in encouraging me to break with convention. Ultimately I decided to continue down this route in AW because "shouldn't HE be about moving things forward, questioning the status quo, trying things differently?" and because it was "too late to change direction" anyway.

Writing within the **wider context**
isn't always easy:
accurately representing the past
to acceptably reflect the present
is a challenge in itself.

The small amount of data categorised within the **Wider Context** sub theme contains reference to the difficulty of

producing CW that faithfully represents the social, historical and political realities of certain events in the past in a way that is acceptable, relevant and believable for a modern audience.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Having presented my findings in both an evocative and analytical way, this chapter will now use them to answer my three research questions. Given the nature of the results, it is possible to answer the first two (how CW has developed my own AW, and how CW could fit within EAP pedagogies) relatively briefly. The third (how CW practices might be used within UK HE EGAP provision) will then be discussed in much greater depth since the practical classroom implications are arguably where the value of this autoethnography lies; it is they that prevent the research from being a mere exercise in self-indulgent navel gazing (Holt, 2003). Finally, the difficulties encountered while conducting this research as well as its limitations will be discussed.

5.1 How has CW HE helped develop my own AW?

The findings of this autoethnography demonstrate that CW HE has helped me to develop my own AW in a number of very important ways. Firstly, it has encouraged me to read more extensively in a far wider variety of genres than I would have otherwise done. This has led to a greater familiarity with the language choices available to me and the effects that these have on the reader (Nation, 1997; Atilgan, 2013). I would also argue that this extensive reading has developed my ability to critically evaluate text.

On the matter of critical evaluation, the personal memory data revealed how much easier, more accessible and enjoyable it was to begin critiquing fiction than texts of a more academic nature; in this sense it acted as a very effective bridge (Randolph, 2011). Furthermore, I am confident that extensive CW workshopping experience has had a positive ongoing impact on my critical evaluation skills. Critiquing my peers' texts not only enabled evaluation of the effectiveness of their particular language choices, but also empowered me to develop a more critical approach when making choices of my own (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009).

Greater criticality has, in turn, led to increasing bravery in the language choices that I make. This began in my CW and, through the process of writing this dissertation, has now fed into my AW. Having been successfully innovative in CW has emboldened me to challenge the conventions of AW in order to develop my own unique voice in a way that conveys my beliefs. Important to note here is that publication was identified as being the key to my own perception of success. This has been transformative, increasing my confidence and sense of belonging to one discourse community which has, in turn, led to a sense of belonging to another.

5.2 How could CW fit within EAP pedagogies?

My Results chapter clearly demonstrate that CW could fit within some of the six chosen EAP pedagogies more naturally than others. Here I summarise my findings for each pedagogy in turn.

5.2.1 Creative writing and Genre Analysis

Despite the many differences between the products of CW and AW, this research has identified that the process for each can be much the same. It shows that I have used (and

continue to use) GA as a valuable approach to developing my CW through familiarisation, preparation, inspiration, evaluation and extensive reading. As such, CW practices could easily fit within the pedagogy of GA.

5.2.2 Creative writing and Corpus Linguistics

CL was found to be less relevant to my CW practices since it is not something I have personally used in this context. However, potential opportunities were identified around authenticity of voice.

5.2.3 Creative writing and Systemic Functional Linguistics

CW practices could also fit very neatly into the pedagogy of SFL since there is such an emphasis on language as choice within this discipline. Indeed, the more open, creative nature of such writing has been seen to allow even greater choice than in AW in terms of developing a unique voice, being innovative and expressing beliefs.

5.2.4 Creative writing and Legitimation Code Theory

In this research, CW practices were found to potentially fit less well within the pedagogy of LCT than within the other EAP pedagogies selected. Nevertheless, the concept of semantic gravity waving (Tilakaratna et al.,n.d.) was seen to be relevant and helpful to consider when writing CW.

5.2.5 Creative writing and Academic Literacies

This autoethnography has clearly demonstrated how well CW practices could fit within the pedagogy of AcLits. Developing the confidence to switch between genre practices (Lea and Street, 1998) as well as developing a sense of belonging, and focusing on the transformation

of the writer and the writing process over product have all been found to be important components of my own CW.

5.2.6 Creative writing and Critical EAP

CW could easily fit within the pedagogy of CEAP due to the fact that it regularly involves the writer 'making epistemological, ethical, and aesthetic choices' (Pennycock, 1997, p.179) rather than accepting the status quo (Allison 1996). In this research, CW has been seen to involve experimentation, pushing boundaries and taking risks.

5.3 How might CW practices be used within UK HE EAP provision?

Having established that CW could fit within each of the chosen six EAP pedagogies to a greater or lesser extent, I will now discuss the implications of this by proposing concrete ways in which CW practises might be utilised within EGAP provision in UK HE. Breadth will be favoured over depth here: my intention is to present a wealth of different ideas that practitioners can select from and develop as they see fit depending on the needs of their students. Once again, I will follow a similar organisational structure to other sections, moving from suggestions related specifically to genre and text to those more focused on the writer, and finally to those that concern the wider context of HE.

5.3.1 Genre Analysis

Already widely used in EGAP, I would argue that there is a case for GA to be used with a greater variety of genres, at least at the early stages of a relatively long course such as an IFP. This is for two reasons. Firstly, it is possible that students new to GA may find it challenging and / or unstimulating especially when working with academic texts that may be perceived as

dry and unrelatable; being introduced to the process with more engaging CW texts may ensure it is more accessible. As students become more confident and familiar with the process of analysing textual and linguistic features, they can gradually be introduced to various different academic genres. This may go some way to addressing the issue of student engagement frequently reported since the Covid 19 pandemic (e.g. Wu & Teet, 2021). Secondly, the wider the range of genres analysed, the more contrasting features may be noticed. Where students only analyse academic genres, particularly when they have limited experience of English, their awareness of the range of language options open to them may be less developed. Not only does this limit them in terms of 'language as choice' (Halliday, 1964) in their own writing, but it may also prevent them from truly understanding the nuance involved in what they read. Given this, it might be interesting for students to compare fictional and academic texts on the same topic and discuss the different treatment each receive in order to develop this awareness.

It is widely reported that international students often struggle with the volume of reading they are expected to complete at university (e.g. Anderson, 2015), so one of the goals of a preparatory EGAP programme such as an IFP may be to prepare students for this requirement. Encouraging university students to read accessible and relatable works of fiction extensively alongside their academic studies has been proven to develop reading rates (Beglar, Hunt & Kite, 2012) and increase vocabulary (Mason, 2004). Inviting university students to read common texts which they then discuss has a well-established history in the US: as well as promoting good reading habits this can also build a sense of community (Baverstock, 2020). A GA approach could be used with passages from these texts, students could be encouraged to evaluate the effect that textual and linguistic features have on the

reader, and they could be encouraged to write responses to what they read, either using CW or AW.

5.3.2 Corpus Linguistics

As an EAP pedagogy, CL can be very useful for students but it requires learner training and sufficient time for students to become familiar with it (Conrad, 2005). In my experience, if students are not heavily invested in the task they are using it for, as has often been the case with AW, they are less likely to engage with the process. However, if a particular group of learners show an interest in CW, a task could be designed which requires them to investigate authentic language by means of a corpus (e.g. natural spoken language to be used in a dialogue). This would serve as an engaging, relatable and meaningful learner training task to raise awareness of the value of CL; the skills developed could then be put to use with AW tasks.

5.3.3 Systemic Functional Linguistics

Using an SFL approach, students could be encouraged to deconstruct sample CW texts and reconstruct their own in a similar genre. These could then be critiqued in class as an enjoyable and accessible introduction to peer review. Once students have gained confidence evaluating their peers' CW they may then be more open to and successful at peer reviewing AW. This process is similar to the framework for developing CW in ESP and EAP proposed by Alkhaldi (2019). Moving beyond this framework, having revised their CW, students could be invited to re-genre their texts (either into a different CW genre or an AW one) carefully considering the language choices they make to do so. Again, the process of peer review could be used to evaluate how successful their attempts have been. Beginning with a CW text and moving

towards an AW one may be beneficial in terms of accessibility, student engagement and developing a deeper understanding of genre.

5.3.4 Legitimation Code Theory

Within LCT, sometimes students are encouraged to identify the semantic gravity and density of certain texts in order to help them wave between abstract theory and concrete examples in their own AW. In an EGAP context, semantic gravity and density can often be very abstract concepts; if these are explored in the context of unrelatable AW texts, students may fail to engage or understand the relevance or usefulness of this approach. However, analysis of more engaging creative texts which move between general and specific prior to academic ones may offer more clarity for students. This could be done by plotting sentences at appropriate points on a Cartesian graph. Learners could then be asked to create a CW passage of their own which demonstrates waving between the general and the specific before they attempt to employ this in AW.

5.3.5 Academic Literacies

Following an AcLits approach, CW could be used in a number of different ways. Being encouraged to write in a variety of genres may help with the 'negotiation of conflicting literacy practices' (Lea & Street, 1998, p.172) required in AW. Given that my findings include reference to 'writing breeding writing', it may be helpful to offer as many opportunities for students to engage in the process of writing as possible. This could be done as regular free writing, which Koropec (2021) argues is beneficial for AW, or could involve specific briefs in different genres. In either case, it is important that there is a focus on process over product.

In terms of confidence development and transformation of the writer, a significant finding in this research is that, in my case, publication was quite a turning point. Clearly, it is entirely unrealistic that EGAP students should be externally publishing either their CW or their AW. However, that is not to say that publication opportunities cannot exist for them. Even if the publication of a class or programme magazine is not feasible, blogs, websites and other online platforms can easily be utilised to publish student writing. Having a text recognised and selected for publication in any format may be a motivating and even transformational experience for students, as Maley (2015) also argues. This could, of course, be done with successful pieces of AW, but for many student cohorts, CW may be more engaging and widely read. It is interesting to note that Alkhaldi (2019) also shows the importance of publication in his framework for developing CW in ESP and EAP.

5.3.6 Critical EAP

There is arguably much value in using CW within a CEAP approach. If students are to be encouraged to challenge the status quo, experiment, push boundaries and take risks, it may be best to initially do this in a creative and low-stakes way in which there is more scope for such endeavours. Just as Solli and Muir (2021, p.14) encourage their doctoral students to write something 'ambitious, overblown, magnificent and absurd', I would argue that there may be contexts in which EGAP students might benefit from such experimental writing. They might, for example, be asked to present an argument or a set of results in as creative a form as they wish. This could be followed by a process of re-genreing in order to encourage students to consider what might need changing in order to comply with conventions. They might then be asked to reflect on the process, either orally or in more formal AW, considering their feelings and what they learned as a writer. EGAP students at the beginning of their

academic journey, such as those on an IFP programme, are unlikely to adopt 'critical pragmatism' (Pennycock, 1997, p.179) immediately but should be encouraged to start challenging assumptions in order to avoid 'unreflective acceptance of explicit and implicit standards, conventions, rules and discourse-practices that we find around us' (Cherryholmes, 1988, p.151).

5.4 Difficulties and limitations

Conducting autoethnography presented many challenges I had not anticipated, the main one being the difficulty of balancing the need for reliability with ethical considerations. It would have been possible to demonstrate my credibility and thus the reliability of the research (Ellis et al., 2011) by providing evidence of the events I reflected on and selected data from. However, that would have inevitably made other people and institutions more identifiable, and consent had not been obtained for this so had to be avoided.

Ethical concerns and a lack of consent also prevented me from including any data that involved another person. I had not appreciated how often other participants are implied in data (Ellis et al., 2011) and the extent to which this would limit what I could collect. As Chang (2008, p.27) states, 'self is invariably bound with others within the cultural group' and attempting to extract the self is neither easy nor helpful in terms of research. Although I have endeavoured to show the practical implications of my research in an EAP context, having to rely on data that focused exclusively on the self increases the likelihood of it being regarded as self-indulgent navel gazing (Holt, 2003). Also, as Denscombe (2007) argues, the more the 'self' features in qualitative research, the more cautious one's approach must be to the findings.

In terms of data collection, there is an imbalance of AW and CW self-reflective data collected over the two-month period on account of having to spend most of my available writing time working on this dissertation (AW) rather than my usual CW projects. This has an implication on triangulation since the additional data is skewed the other way: all the external data and more personal memory data is related to CW than AW. A longer period in which to generate self-reflective data would certainly have been beneficial.

Another difficulty I had was how to present my results in a way that was both in keeping with autoethnography and acceptable in terms of particular assessment requirements. The split page approach (Rogers-Shaw, 2002) seemed like a good compromise, although the inclusion of both the evocative and the analytical limited the amount I could write for each. Whilst it was an interesting challenge to present the same information in two very different ways, sometimes it did feel like a waste of words and I frequently found myself wondering what each one added to the other.

While some of the sub themes lent themselves to the composition of verse, I had also not anticipated how difficult it would be to write interesting, engaging poetry about all of them. Often I found myself using metaphor which Muncey (2005) argues is useful for autoethnography (in this case various types of 'journeying' metaphor), sometimes I was able to use rhyme, alliteration, repetition, word play and other poetic techniques, but occasionally I found that I was far too constrained by the theme-associated words and data I must include (as well as the overall word count) to create good poetry. In such instances, the results seem much less like verse and more like bullet-pointed lists. However, on the whole I found that verse was often a very good tool for condensing large amounts of data and for 'fracturing and connecting' and 'zooming in and zooming out' (Chang, 2008, p.128).

In terms of limitations, although I have endeavoured to demonstrate how my findings might be applied within UK HE EAP provision, I am well aware that certain activities will not appeal to or be suitable for all EAP practitioners and students. For example, teachers without a background in CW may not feel confident using my activities in their classes without extensive further training. Thus, although I hope the conclusions I draw are relatable (Dzakiria, 2012), they are by no means generalisable.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Summary of research findings

By 'looking backward and forward, examining […] memories through a lens that has been influenced by experience and reflection' (Muncey, 2005, p.71), this autoethnography has demonstrated the great extent to which CW has helped me develop my own AW. Having interrogated the micro of my own experiences (Atherton, 2020), I have identified that CW could be used within each of the six common EAP pedagogies to a greater or lesser extent. The data I generated suggests that AcLits and CEAP are perhaps the most relevant pedagogies, followed by GA and SFL, and finally CL and LCT. Implications for UK HE EGAP provision have been considered and it has been concluded that a wide range of activities could be used to serve a variety of purposes. It is anticipated that many of these activities could be used as Randolph et al. (2011) suggest, as an accessible and engaging bridge to EAP, for example by providing a more relatable context in which to practise GA, engage in peer review, learn to use corpora, and plot semantic gravity. However, other activities have been suggested for their potential to raise awareness of genre (e.g. re-genreing tasks). Further activities have been proposed in order to raise writer confidence and provide potentially transformative

experiences (e.g. the provision of publication opportunities) or encourage experimentation and boundary pushing.

6.2 Research significance

Continuing in EAP's tradition of pushing 'itself to the forefront of innovative research and educational practice' (Hyland, 2006b, p.34) while working within established pedagogies, the ultimate aim of this autoethnography has been to explore new creative ways of teaching. This is of particular importance given that student engagement is currently an issue of great concern to many teachers working across the HE sector (e.g. Wu & Teets, 2021). It is hoped that this research might encourage the reader to consider a variety of ways in which CW might be put to good use within the EGAP classroom and adapt and develop these to suit the needs of their particular learners.

6.3 Recommendations for future research

Although it was interesting learning about and conducting autoethnography, in hindsight, it would have been much more insightful to gather data that would have revealed multiple perspectives; in the future, therefore, it might be interesting to conduct a collaborative autoethnography on this topic, making use of critical friends who could question the data, push my thinking and 'further the data collection into directions that would not be possible with solo reflective effort' (Yazan, 2024, p. 71).

Having conducted this desk-based research, it would be interesting to now engage in an action research project by implementing and evaluating some of the activities I suggested in the Discussion chapter in my own teaching context. A qualitative study could be useful to

ascertain students and teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of such an approach, whereas a larger scale quantitative study might attempt to measure its effectiveness in terms of student attainment in AW. If I wanted to bring other perspectives to the former, I might consider doing this collaboratively with other practitioners, perhaps even using collaborative autoethnography as a methodology. Either way, like De Costa et al. (2022), I believe there is value in researchers sharing findings and collaborating with teachers to ensure that both parties are able to effectively merge theory and practice.

Given the amount of data that was related to AcLits and CEAP, further action research might focus on how CW can be used within EAP provision to facilitate the development of the writer and / or their involvement in challenging the education they receive. Alternatively, it might be worth conducting a more in-depth study to explore ways in which CW might be used to enable students to develop a particular aspect of EAP or AW, for example, developing a coherent narrative thread.

6.4 Reflections on the research process

The process of conducting this poetic autoethnography has been both enjoyable and challenging. I found it fascinating to learn about a research methodology that was completely new to me, and like Atherton (2020, p.12) in his autoethnography on using digital communication to tell his own stories, I found that for me 'part of the value and validity of this autoethnographic study has been in the iterative journey, not the destination.' In a professional sense, while I have made recommendations for how CW might be used within EAP in my Discussion chapter, the destination will not be reached until they are implemented, at which point a second stage of practitioner research may be set in motion. However, in a personal sense, as a researcher I have unexpectedly reached a very different destination.

When I embarked on an autoethnography, I had no idea what form it would take, the extent to which it would be a transformative experience and to which I would find myself deeply considering the ethics of both academic research and fiction writing as well as challenging the academic conventions I had hitherto unquestioningly accepted and followed. In this sense, the process of writing this dissertation has, in effect, embodied the AcLits and CEAP approaches. This is particularly interesting to note given that the latter was the pedagogy I had previously found most difficult to work with given my own neurodivergence and natural preference to follow rules and established conventions.

Having been brave enough to push boundaries in this research, I believe I will feel more confident about using a CEAP approach, encouraging my students to challenge the status quo and perhaps shape the discourse practices in their own contexts. I very much hope that as a result of this research, CW may start to be used more within UK HE EAP provision as an engaging way for students to develop various aspects of EAP, but if nothing else, it is gratifying to know that my own practice will have developed.

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Appendix 1: List of Datasets

Figure 1: A list of the datasets used in this research

ID.	Data category	Form of data	Label	Date	Verifiable associated event (where possible)	No. of words
1	External	Critical commentary	(19.05.19 / Critical commentary part of an MA assessment / UK HE institution 2)	19/05/2019	UK HE institution 2 summative assessment task	568
2	External	Critical commentary	(08.12.19 / Critical commentary part of an MA assessment / UK HE institution 2)	08/12/2019	UK HE institution 2 summative assessment task	577
3	External	Responses to author interview	(30.11.20 / Author Q&A 1 / website 1)	30/11/2020	UK HE institution CW Anthology	363
4	External	Responses to author interview	(01.02.21 / Author Q&A 2 / website 2)	01/02/2021	UK HE institution CW Anthology	556

ID.	Data category	Form of data	Label	Date	Verifiable associated event (where possible)	No. of words
5	External	Notes for my conference presentation	(07.07.22 / Notes for a conference presentation / UK HE institution 2)	07/07/2022	UK HE CW Conference	102
6	External	Responses to author interview	(22.07.23 / Author Q&A 3 / website 3)	22/07/2023	Online author Q&A	384
7	External	Responses to author interview	(09.08.23 / Author Q&A 4 / website 4)	09/08/2023	Online author Q&A	895
8	External	Reflection on email correspondence with MA critique partner	20.06.24 / reflection on reading correspondence / home (2018-2020 / email correspondence with a critique partner discussing the writing of our first novels / home)	20/06/2024	UK HE institution 2 CW course	419
9	Personal memory	Autobiographical timeline	11.05.24 / Autobiographical timeline / home (whole life / key events / various)	11/05/2024	Author website	335
10	Personal memory	Critical incident CW	12.05.24 / reflection on a critical incident CW / home (1983 / poetry book gift / childhood home)	12/05/2024		140
11	Personal memory	Critical incident CW	13.05.24 / reflection on a critical incident CW / home (1988 / discovery of a new way to fill a book / childhood home)	13/05/2024		202
12	Personal memory	Critical incident CW	20.05.24 / reflection on a critical incident CW / home (2018 / first CW workshop / UK HE institution 2)	20/05/2024	UK HE institution 2 CW course	279

ID.	Data category	Form of data	Label	Date	Verifiable associated event (where possible)	No. of words
13	Personal memory	Critical incident CW	14.05.24 / reflection on a critical incident CW / home (2019 / encouragement to write in free verse / UK HE institution 2)	14/05/2024		228
14	Personal memory	Critical incident CW	15.05.24 / reflection on a critical incident CW / home (2019 / attempting to write a regional accent / UK HE institution 2)	15/05/2024		190
15	Personal memory	Critical incident AW	16.05.24 / reflection on a critical incident AW / home (1992 / critiquing a partner's AW / UK sixth form college)	16/05/2024		146
16	Personal memory	Critical incident AW	18.05.24 / reflection on a critical incident AW / home (1994 / receiving 55% for my first UG essay / UK HE institution 1)	18/05/2024	UK HE institution 1 degree transcript	279
17	Personal memory	Critical incident AW	19.05.24 / reflection on a critical incident AW / home (2023 / having my first academic article published / UK HE institution 3)	19/05/2024	Publication of first academic article	194
18	Personal memory	Critical incident EAP	21.05.24 / reflection on a critical incident EAP / home (2002 / first teaching PG students EAP / UK HE institution 3)	21/05/2024	UK HE institution 3	174
19	Personal memory	Critical incident EAP	23.05.24 / reflection on a critical incident EAP / home (2021 / returning to teach EAP / UK HE institution 3)	23/05/2024	UK HE institution 3	216

ID.	Data category	Form of data	Label	Date	Verifiable associated event (where possible)	No. of words
20	Personal memory	Critical incident EAP	25.05.24 / reflection on a critical incident EAP / home (2022 / teaching nominalisation / UK HE institution 3)	25/05/2024	UK HE institution 3	335
21	Personal memory	Reflection on cultural artefacts	26.05.24 / reflection on cultural artefacts / home (published copy of debut novel)	26/05/2024	Publication of debut novel	309
22	Self-reflection	Reflection on process of AW	02.06.24 / self-reflection on AW / home (June 24 / writing the methodology chapter / home)	02/05/2024	UK HE institution 4 dissertation	344
23	Self-reflection	Reflection on process of AW	08.06.24 / self-reflection on AW / home (June 24 / writing the methodology chapter / home)	08/05/2024	UK HE institution 4 dissertation	559
24	Self-reflection	Reflection on process of AW	09.06.24 / self-reflection on AW / home (June 24 / writing the methodology chapter / home)	09/05/2024	UK HE institution 4 dissertation	416
25	Self-reflection	Reflection on process of AW	10.06.24 / self-reflection on AW / home (June 24 / writing the methodology chapter / home)	10/05/2024	UK HE institution 4 dissertation	170
26	Self-reflection	Reflection on process of AW	11.05.24 / self-reflection on AW / home (May 24 / choosing a RQ / home)	11/05/2024	UK HE institution 4 dissertation	472
27	Self-reflection	Reflection on process of AW	11.06.24 / self-reflection on AW / home (June 24 / writing the introduction / home)	11/05/2024	UK HE institution 4 dissertation	289

ID.	Data category	Form of data	Label	Date	Verifiable associated event (where possible)	No. of words
28	Self-reflection	Reflection on process of AW	11.06.24 / self-reflection on AW / home (June 24 / writing the methodology chapter / home)	12/05/2024	UK HE institution 4 dissertation	43
29	Self-reflection	Reflection on discussion about my CW with my critique partner	18.05.24 / reflection on video call with critique partner CW / home (May 24 / two novels / home)	18/05/2024		233
30	Self-reflection	Reflection on process of AW	19.05.24 / self-reflection on AW / home (May 24 / planning the dissertation / home)	19/05/2024	UK HE institution 4 dissertation	917
31	Self-reflection	Reflection on process of CW	23.05.24 / self-reflection on CW / home (May 24 / Editing 3rd novel / home)	23/05/2024		217
32	Self-reflection	Reflection on process of AW	24.05.24 / self-reflection on AW / home (May 24 / writing the literature review / home)	24/05/2024	UK HE institution 4 dissertation	224
33	Self-reflection	Reflection on process of AW	26.05.24 / self-reflection on AW / home (May 24 / writing the literature review / home)	26/05/2024	UK HE institution 4 dissertation	389
34	Self-reflection	Reflection on process of AW	27.05.24 / self-reflection on AW / home (May 24 / writing the literature review / home)	27/05/2024	UK HE institution 4 dissertation	146
35	Self-reflection	Reflection on process of AW	28.05.24 / self-reflection on AW / home (May 24 / writing the literature review / home)	28/05/2024	UK HE institution	122

ID.	Data category	Form of data	Label	Date	Verifiable associated event (where possible)	No. of words
					4 dissertation	
36	Self-reflection	Reflection on process of AW	29.05.24 / self-reflection / home (May 24 / writing the literature review / home)	29/05/2024	UK HE institution 4 dissertation	252
37	Self-reflection	Reflection on process of AW	30.05.24 / self-reflection on AW / home (May 24 / finishing the literature review / home)	30/05/2024	UK HE institution 4 dissertation	418
38	Self-reflection	Reflection on process of AW	31.05.24 / self-reflection on AW / home (May 24 / writing the methodology chapter / home)	31/05/2024	UK HE institution 4 dissertation	455
						12557

Remaining appendices removed for the sake of data protection