



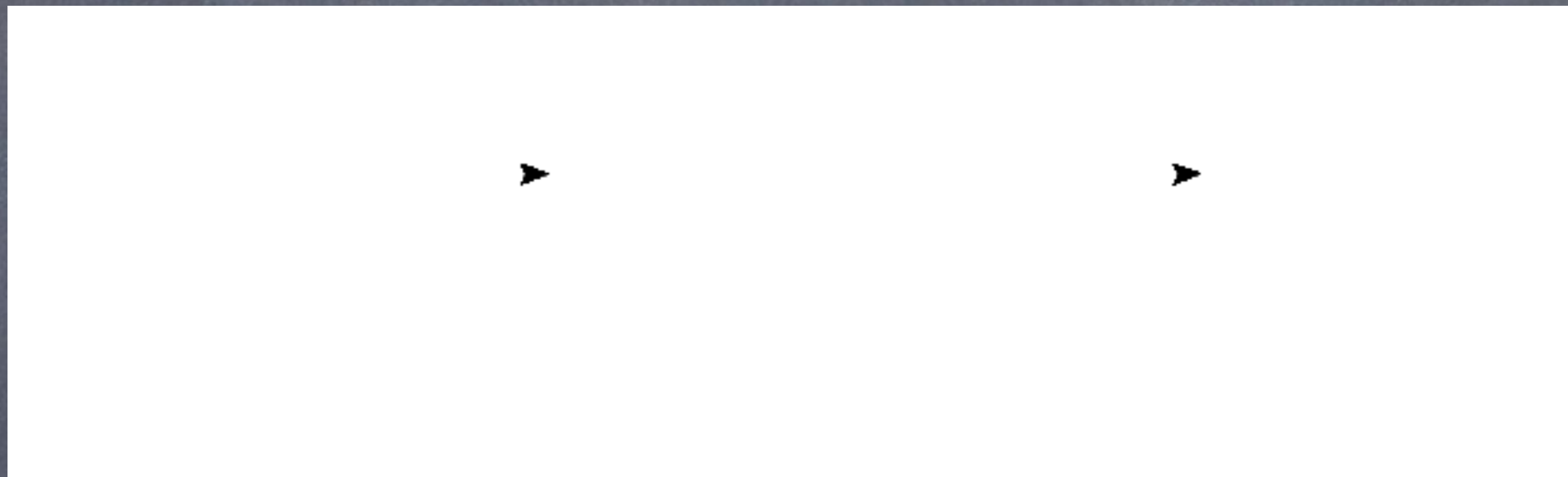
Academic writing as a social practice

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Discourse community - simple definition

A discourse community is a group of people who have texts and practices in common, whether it is a group of academics or the readers of teenage magazines. In fact, discourse community can refer to several overlapping groups of people: It can refer to the people a text is aimed at; it can be the people who read a text; or it can refer to the people who participate in a set of discourse practices both by reading and writing (Barton 1994).

Jakobson's model of communication



Discourse community - Swales's definition

- A discourse community:
 1. has a broadly agreed set of common public goals;
 2. has mechanisms of intercommunication between members;
 3. uses its participatory mechanisms primarily to provide information and feedback;
 4. utilizes and hence possesses one or more genres in the communicative furtherance of its aims;
 5. has acquired some specific lexis;
 6. has a threshold level of members with a suitable degree of relevant content and discoursal expertise.

Implicitness of fluency in the code

- To speak with authority [our students] have to speak not only in another's voice but through another's code; and they not only have to do this, they have to speak in the voice and through the codes of those of us with power and wisdom; and they not only have to do this, they have to do it before they know what they are doing, before they have a project to participate in, and before, at least in the terms of our disciplines, they have anything to say (David Bartholomae, interviewed in Harris 1989).

Naive vs. worldly message-sending

Because only a few people have most of the money and power in Australia, I conclude that it is not an equal society. Society has an Upper, Middle and Lower class, and I think that most people, when they are born into one class, end up staying in that class for their whole lives. When all three classes are looked at more closely, other things such as the

- differences between the sexes and people's racial backgrounds also add to the unequal nature of Australian society.

Women earn and own less than men. Why is this so?

The inequality of the distribution of wealth in Australia is yet another indicator of Australia's lack of egalitarianism. In 1985, 20% of the Australian population owned 72.2% of the wealth, with the top 50% owning 92.1% (Raskall 1988: 287). Such a significant skew in the distribution of wealth indicates that, at least in terms of economics, there is an established class system in Australia. McGregor (1988) argues that Australian society can be categorised into three levels: the Upper, Middle and Working classes. In addition, it has been shown that most Australians continue to remain in the class into which they were born (McGregor 1988: 156), despite arguments about the ease of social mobility in Australian society (Fitzpatrick 1994). The issue of class and its inherent inequity, however, is further compounded by factors such as race and gender within and across class divisions.

The relative disadvantage of women with regard to their earnings and levels of asset ownership indicates that within classes there is further economic inequity based on gender.

Deficit model of student writing

- ❶ The problem with writing is a student problem, not a problem with the teaching we give them or the tasks we set them.
- ❷ Writing is something students are generally not good at, and are reluctant to do.
- ❸ Students' problems with writing often arise from their previous (secondary) education, and not from the education they receive here in the university.

3 Models of student literacy

1. Study skills model.

2. Academic socialization model.

3. Academic literacies model.

•Lea and Street (1998)

Example realizations of the academic literacies model in the UK

- Stop and write
- More writing for thinking
- Free writing