

# Academic Writing Workshop for EAP Tutors

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# 4<sup>th</sup> April – Agenda

1. Current key issues in teaching writing in an EAP context & possible solutions
2. Successful classroom activities / materials (sharing concept)
  - Process vs product writing activities
3. Useful online websites for students & tutors
4. Giving feedback in academic writing
  - Approaches & strategies
  - Consideration for the mark scheme
  - The usefulness of writing check-lists

# 1. Current key issues in teaching writing (i)

We are going to focus on some of the current key issues in academic writing classrooms found at HE institutions throughout the UK and in your country.

## **Before we begin**

- Write a list of some of the key issues that you have in your own academic writing classrooms.
- How do you overcome these issues? **Discuss with a partner.**

# 1. Current key issues in teaching writing (ii)

**Here are the 10 most common key issues in teaching writing in HE institutions throughout the UK:**

1. Students have different linguistic levels
2. Learners are studying different disciplines
3. Deciding which approach to academic writing to follow (different learning preferences)
4. Students don't use enough academic vocabulary
5. Students write in an informal way (looks more like spoken English)

# 1. Current key issues in teaching writing (iii)

6. Students don't plan before they write, therefore, their writing is not structured and confusing to read
7. Students don't use the correct punctuation
8. Students make lots of spelling mistakes
9. Their writing is littered with grammar mistakes
10. Students don't reference other author's ideas (not something they are used to doing)

# 1. Current key issues in teaching writing (iv)

## **With a partner:**

- Look through each problem and discuss how serious it is.
- Do your students have the same issues?
- How do you overcome these issues? Or How could you overcome these issues?

# 1. Possible solutions (i)

**Choosing the right approach to academic writing for your students.**

**With a partner, discuss:**

- What are the current approaches used to teach academic writing in your country?
- Can you name any other approaches which you have read about?
- Which approach do you use and why?

# 1. Possible solutions (ii)

**Most popular approaches to teaching Academic Writing used in the UK:**

## **General EAP**

- **Focus:** general linguistic & cognitive needs of non-native speakers (Benesch 2001, Leki & Carson 2004).
- **Aim:** what is taught & learnt helps ss with writing across the curriculum (Leki & Carson 1994).
- **Materials:** study skills.
- **Issue:** Pre-determined, non-discipline specific materials.



# 1. Possible solutions (iii)

## Academic Literacies

- **Focus:** diverse writing practices in HE (Lea & Street 1998).
- **Aim:** address literacy from cultural & social perspective and contemplate issue of identity & power relationships.
- **Materials:** Limited availability & time for preparation.
- **Issue:** No practical suggestions of integration (Wingate & Tribble 2012).

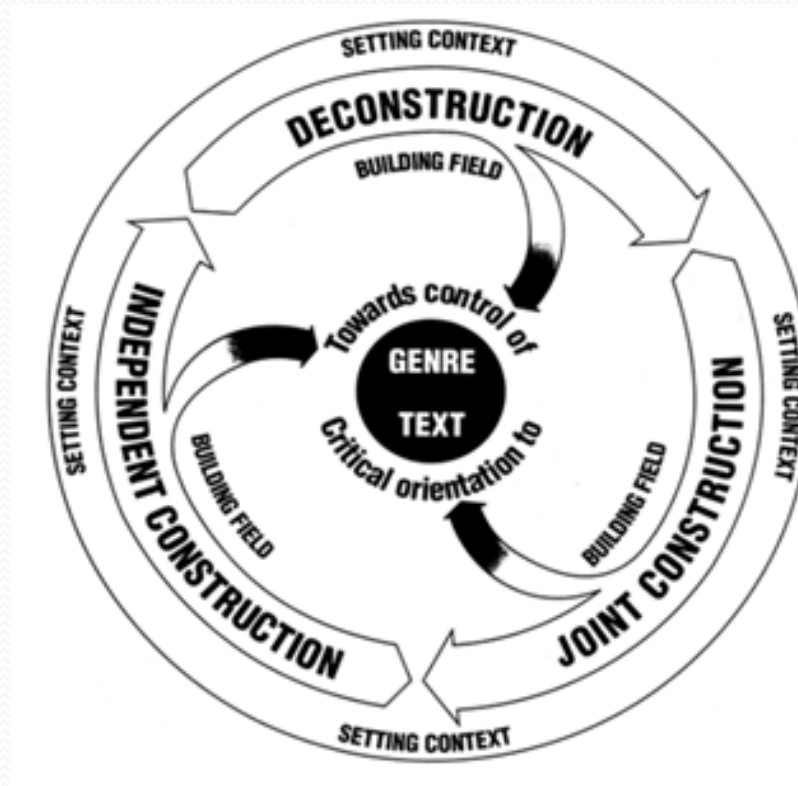
# 1. Possible solutions (iv)

## Genre-based approaches

- **Focus:** Explore genres students are required to write. Awareness that variations exist in different contexts of writing.
- **Aim:** to provide a contextual framework.
- **Pedagogic approach:** Genre-informed pedagogic framework (Tribble & Wingate forthcoming).
- **Role of teacher:** guide & support the learners (Vygotskian scaffolding).

# 1. Possible solutions (v)

- The Teaching-Learning Model



- (Rothery and Stenglin 1994:8 cited in Martin 2000:19)

# 1. Possible solutions (vi)

**Introduce students to the Academic Word List (AWL).**

**With a partner, discuss:**

- What is the AWL?
- How could it benefit your students?
- Do you make your students aware of it in your classrooms?
- How could you/do you incorporate it into your materials?

# Introduction to the Academic Word List (AWL) (i)

- Compiled from corpus of 3.5 million words of written academic texts
- 570 word families (10% of total words in academic texts)
- Arranged into 10 sublists
- Reflect word frequency & range

(Coxhead 2000)

# Academic Word List (AWL) (ii)

- Sublists

## Sublist 1

Analysis	Approach	Area
Assessment	Assure	Authority

## Sublist 5

Academic	Adjustment	Alter
Amendment	Aware	Capacity

## Sublist 10

Adjacent	Albeit	Assembly
Collapse	Colleagues	Compiled

# Academic Word List (AWL) (iii)

- Word families

analyse

analysed  
analyser  
analysers  
analyses  
analysing  
*analysis*  
analyst  
analysts  
analytic  
analytical  
analytically  
analyze  
analyzed  
analyzes  
analyzing

(Sublist 1)

symbol

*symbolic*  
symbolically  
symbolise  
symbolises  
symbolised  
symbolising  
symbolism  
symbolize  
symbolized  
symbolizes  
symbolizing  
symbols

(Sublist 5)

assemble

assembled  
assembles  
assemblies  
assembling  
*assembly*

(Sublist 10)

# AWL – Advantages

1. Words students need in wide range of academic texts
2. Free online sources available (PC & Smartphone):

- Flashcard maker

<http://orangeorapple.com/Flashcards/Default.aspx>

- Exercises

<http://www.englishvocabularyexercises.com/AWL/index.htm>

- Test maker

[http://www.phonetain.com/Phonetain\\_Software/Products.htm](http://www.phonetain.com/Phonetain_Software/Products.htm)

- AWL highlighter

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/alzsh3/acvocab/awlhighlighter.htm>



# AWL – Disadvantages

1. No focus on collocations (Durrant 2009)
2. Does not address discipline-specific vocabulary (Martinez et al 2009)

**How can we overcome this problem? Discuss with your partner.**

# Practical suggestions (i)

- Problem: Does not address discipline-specific vocabulary
- Solution: **Create a discipline – specific wordlist.**
- **What needed?**
  - Discipline-specific texts.
  - Concordance software programme e.g. Antconc (free), Sketch engine, Wordsmith Tools.
  - Time!

# Practical suggestions (ii)

## 6 Steps

1. Save discipline-specific journal articles as .txt docs.
2. Open the txt docs in Antconc.  
<http://www.antlab.sci.waseda.ac.jp/software.html>
3. Click on create 'Word List'.
4. From top 100 most frequent words, make a list of discipline-specific vocab.

Rank	Freq	Word
1	1236	the
2	986	of
3	783	and
4	607	in
5	509	a
6	442	to
7	403	that
8	327	RNA
9	274	A
10	265	by

# Future consideration

## **Future consideration**

- The key is to anticipate the problems and address the possible solutions before they come up. You should always factor reoccurring problems into the scheme of work or your lesson plans.

## 2. Successful classroom materials

### Product vs process writing

#### Let's discuss:

- What are the differences between *process* and *product* writing?
- Which approach do you tend to use in your classroom?
- Can you think of some advantages and disadvantages of each approach?
- As a learner, which approach would/do you prefer?

## 2. Successful classroom materials

### Process writing

- Do any of you have any classroom activities that focus on process writing?
- Do you use any course books which emphasize process writing? If yes, what types of activities do they encourage?
- **Share your ideas with your group and then with the class.**

## 2. Successful classroom materials

### Product writing

Read through the following activities to see how they break down the product.

**Discuss the following questions with your partner/group:**

- Do you use this type of activity in your classroom?
- Do you use different types of activities to carry out the same task? **Share your ideas/activities.**
- Would your students benefit from carrying out this activity? If no, why not? If yes, how?

## 2. Successful classroom materials

### **Time to share...**

Now that you have looked through some of the ways in which I break down the product, it's time for you to share some of the materials that you find work well with your students.

- Tell your partner/group about the task.
- What your students like about the task
- What it teaches them
- How you incorporate it into the class



### 3. Useful online websites (i)

**Before we look at some useful online tools, discuss the following:**

- Which online tools/websites do you use in the classroom?
- Which online tools/websites do you direct your students to use outside the classroom?
- Would it be more useful to hand your students a list of useful websites or demonstrate how to use them in class?

# 3. Useful online websites (ii)

## General Academic English

The following websites can help students with their grammar, listening, developing academic skills and presentations.

- <http://www.prepareforsuccess.org.uk/> (Introduction to life at university – main differences between school and HE)
- <http://elc.polyu.edu.hk/cill/eap/> (General EAP skills + presentation skills)
- <http://www.uefap.com/> (General EAP skills)
- [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/exercises/grammar/grammar\\_tutorial/page\\_41.htm](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/exercises/grammar/grammar_tutorial/page_41.htm) (Grammar)
- <http://aeo.sllf.qmul.ac.uk/> (General Academic skills)

# 3. Useful online websites (iii)

## 2. Focus on vocabulary

### 2.1 Academic Word List (AWL)

Numerous exercises which focus on the Academic Word List can be found on the following websites:

<http://www.englishvocabularyexercises.com/AWL/index.htm>

<http://www.uefap.com/vocab/exercise/exercise.htm>

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/alzsh3/acvocab/>

# 3. Useful online websites (iv)

## 2.2 AWL Highlighter

- With this tool, students can upload their written work and see how academic their vocabulary is as the tool highlights all of the words in the text from the AWL.

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/alzsh3/acvocab/awlhighlighter.htm>

## 2.3 Academic phrases & expressions

- Often students use the same expressions and phrases in their writing. This site introduces postgraduates and undergraduates to a whole range of phrases used in introductions, methodology sections, etc.

<http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/>

# 3. Useful online websites (v)

## 2.4 Understanding key words in context

- The following Corpus can be used by teachers and students alike to see how words work in context:

<http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/>

## 2.5 Word collocations

- If students are struggling with collocations (words that come before or after the target word), they can access the site below:

<http://wordtree.coventry.ac.uk/?BAWE>

# 3. Useful online websites (vi)

## 3. Common mistakes in written work

### 3.1 Common Errors Detector

- With this programme, you can upload any written text and the program will output the text with the errors highlighted, give comments and explanations to help you solve the problems.

<http://www2.elc.polyu.edu.hk/CILL/errordetector.htm>

## 4. Referencing (Using the Harvard Referencing System)

### 4.1 Online reference guide

- For help writing in-text references of a list of references using the Harvard referencing system, students can go to:

<https://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/harvard.htm>

### 4.2 Mobile phone (iphone) app:

- *ReferenceME* (Students can scan the barcode of the book they want to include in their list of references and it will write it in the Harvard Referencing Style).

# 3. Useful online websites (vii)

**Discuss the following questions.**

- What are your student's main weaknesses?
- Which websites do you think your students would benefit most from?
- Do you use others that are not on this list? If yes, which ones?
- How could you incorporate the new websites into your classroom?

# 3. Useful online websites (viii)

**Now that you have seen some useful tools.**

- **Discuss the following questions.**
- Which websites do you think your students would benefit most from?
- How could you incorporate the new websites into your classroom?



# 4. Giving feedback in academic writing (i)

**Before we begin thinking about feedback, discuss the following:**

- What is the purpose of feedback?
- How and when do you typically give feedback?
- What do you comment on?
- How much time do you spend giving feedback?
- Do you pick up on general mistakes and feedback in class?
- Do you think students take on board your feedback?
- Can you think of any better ways of giving feedback? (time dependent)

# 4. Giving feedback in academic writing (ii)

## Approaches & strategies

- There are many different ways and levels of giving feedback. If students are able to submit draft copies of their essays/writing then the feedback that you give them at this stage is vital for the students to improve their work.
- **Let's look at your pre-workshop task to see how you have chosen to give the student feedback.**

# 4. Giving feedback in academic writing (iii)

- **Draft feedback**

Here are a number of ways to give feedback on draft essays/writing:

1. **Overall comment at the end of the essay**

**Discuss with a partner:**

- What are the advantages of this approach?
- What are the disadvantages of this approach?
- Would the students benefit from the feedback given?

# 4. Giving feedback in academic writing (iv)

## 2. In-text feedback (using track changes & comments)

### **Discuss the following:**

- Do you feel the student would benefit from this level of comments? If yes, how? If not, why not?
- Do you have the time to give this level of comments?

# 4. Giving feedback in academic writing (iii)

## 3. Reformulation

### **Discuss with your partner/group:**

- As a learner, how would you feel about carrying out this type of activity?
- Do you think your students could benefit from this type of activity?
- What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of carrying out this type of task?
- **Think about how you could reformulate the first paragraph of the pre-worksheet task. What changes would you make?**

# 4. Giving feedback in academic writing (iv)

## Final draft feedback

- The same type and level of feedback can be given for the final draft. But at this stage, it can be important to consider the mark scheme.
- **Discuss with a partner/group:**
- If your students have continued to make the same errors in their final draft, how could you prevent them in the future?

# Consideration for the mark scheme

## **Discuss with a partner/group:**

- How important is it to show the students the mark scheme before they submit their work?
- How can the students benefit from seeing it?

# The usefulness of writing checklists

**Before we look at the essay checklist that I often give to my students, discuss the questions with a partner/group:**

- Do you ever give your students checklists before they submit their written work? Why? Why not?
- What are some of the advantages of using checklists?