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Embedding students' academic writing development in early-career disciplinary lecturers' practice

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This study proposes a theoretically grounded and resource-efficient triadic model with the aim of supporting early-career subject lecturers in learning how to understand discipline-specific academic writing and teach it to their students. The model constitutes a 'bottom-up' collaboration process among a subject lecturer, an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) lecturer, and an academic developer. Adopting a case study approach, qualitative data were collected at multiple points in the process and were analysed using both thematic and linguistic analysis. Results indicate that the collaboration's genre-based, dialogic and egalitarian nature enabled the subject lecturer to grow her understanding of students' writing development. She acquired some metalanguage to conceptualise and articulate her expectations in terms of her students' assignments and was able to co-create learning tasks. Our study contributes novel insights into debates around where and how students' academic writing development should be delivered, and, importantly, early-career lecturers' role in that delivery. Finally, we propose an extension of the EAP lecturers' remit to encompass working with early-career subject lecturers in a developmental role.

Key Words: academic writing; dialogism; early-career lecturer; EAP; professional development; task.

1. Introduction and literature review

The problem of who should deliver post-entry/in-sessional students' disciplinary (and in some cases, professional) writing development, and how, remains a longstanding challenge for universities globally. Academic writing specialists have long maintained that responsibility for disciplinary writing development should be at a minimum shared with subject lecturers (e.g., Johns, 1997; Murray, 2010; Wingate, 2006) as they are best placed to induct students into the specific discourse

of their disciplinary/professional communities (Johns, 1997; Benzie et al., 2017). This is in part because assignment expectations and language use are genre-specific, based upon disciplinary and professional contexts (Hyland, 2004; Kuteeva & Airey, 2014). Increasing recognition of this specificity has gone hand in hand with the acknowledgment that in-sessional disciplinary writing development stands to benefit all students in higher education (HE) (Hathaway, 2015; Murray, 2022; Wingate, 2012) and should not be confined to the deficit models that have predominated in the past (Lillis, 2001). Nonetheless, in many universities in the UK, developing students' writing remains segregated, outsourced to study skills or English for Academic Purposes (EAP) provision, delivered outside of the disciplinary context (i.e., in study skills or EAP classes rather than embedded in the disciplinary curriculum). This model is problematic on three fronts: first, it assumes that literacy can be "acquired, possessed, and transferred unproblematically from one context to another" (Tuck, 2018, p. 8); second, the study skills model assumes that writing conventions are universal rather than disciplinary-situated (e.g., Gimenez, 2012); and third, it is unlikely that EAP or study skills provision would be sufficiently resourced to reach all students across the university (see Murray, 2022) given its extra-curricular delivery model.

In the US, writing across the curriculum (WAC) and writing in the disciplines (WiD) have a long tradition (Li, 2020). Yet it is only in the last decade or so that accounts of embedded models that situate writing development within the disciplinary classroom in other geographical contexts have begun to emerge in the literature, with Australia in the vanguard (see e.g., Benzie et al., 2017; Chanock et al., 2012; Devereux et al., 2018; Maldoni, 2017; 2018; and Li, 2020 for an overview). There are also examples from other sociolinguistic contexts, such as Hakim (2023) in an EMI university in Lebanon and Macnaught et al. (2022) in New Zealand. Both studies reported positive outcomes with some caveats.

A common model is as follows: EAP specialists design materials and team teach with the subject specialist, and then responsibility (materials and teaching) is handed over to the disciplinary team (e.g., MacNaught et al., 2022). The model has much to offer (see Maldoni & Lear, 2016; Maldoni, 2018), but success is difficult to evaluate empirically (Fenton-Smith et al., 2017). For instance, academic language development is a lengthy process and can occur outside of the classroom through socialisation processes (Duff, 2010), and the use of student surveys to evaluate courses is problematic as they can be more a measure of student satisfaction than learning (Bedggood & Donovan, 2012). The model is also costly, complex, resource-intensive, and assumes that subject specialists have the commitment and capacity to work with students' writing development, or at least are willing to acquire these skills 'on the job'.

Most subject lecturers are not academic writing specialists and may lack the pedagogical tools to integrate this disciplinary knowledge into their practice. Some subject lecturers avoid dealing with writing development (Lillis, 2001; Bergman, 2016) or struggle, as disciplinary writing knowledge is often tacit (Haggis, 2006; Elton, 2010; McGrath et al., 2019) and developed through discourse community membership (Swales, 1990). Thus, while subject lecturers can write the assignments they set, they are not necessarily aware of their own expectations of those assignments (Lillis & Turner, 2001), or cannot articulate them (Dysthe, 2002). This predicament is likely more acute among early-career lecturers who are new to university assessment processes and the genres students are expected to produce.

Tuck warns against framing subject lecturers as "deficient in developing students' writing" (2018, p. 10) and this is certainly not our purpose. We recognise the many obstacles that subject lecturers face, particularly early-career lecturers. These include structural barriers (Bergman, 2016; Fenton-Smith et al., 2017). For instance, in the UK, HE policy neglects students' writing (Nicholls, 2020; Heron et al. 2021) or reduces writing to accuracy in spelling and grammar (Office for Students, 2021). Guidance on how to deliver writing development, or how early-career lecturers can be prepared to work with students' writing development, is notably absent. Many universities do mandate or encourage inexperienced lecturers to obtain an HE teaching qualification, such as a

UK Postgraduate Certificate (PGCHE), delivered by academic developers. These qualifications often require lecturers to align their practice to Advance HE's UK Professional Standards Framework (HEA, 2011). The UKPSF dimensions of practice are broad, yet within the 'core knowledge' dimension, no reference is made to how lecturers can develop their students' writing. In addition, recommended course textbooks (such as Biggs & Tang, 2011) do not address this aspect of professional competence.

A key question then is how might HE address the lack of attention to students' academic writing development in early-career lecturers' training, and who would lead that initiative? Percy (2014) has called for academic writing specialists and academic developers to collaborate to promote "the development of language and learning simultaneously" (p. 1203). An extension of this type of collaboration to lecturer training could have potential; however, the organisation of universities places stakeholders in students' writing development in departmental or professional services silos: academic developers, EAP lecturers, study skills specialists and subject lecturers are often located in separate faculties or directorates. Academic developers work with faculty and lead on PGCHEs, but their expertise may not extend to writing. EAP lecturers undertake multiple roles at the university (Hoadley & Hunter, 2018; Nicholls, 2021), but they are traditionally (international) student-facing, which means those lecturers may not have been trained or sit comfortably in an academic development role (see for example the BALEAP[1] competency framework for teachers of English for Academic Purposes).

These silos, roles and perhaps identities render tripartite collaboration difficult to establish and maintain, and thus there is a "notable dearth of literature that explores the notion of [subject lecturers] taking a primary role in developing students' literacy skills [...] This is likely because implementation comes with considerable challenges" (Murray, 2022, p. 4). We agree with Murray that studies are needed that explore how such challenges can be overcome to inform university strategy and plug gaps in lecturer training syllabi. Thus, our case study explored an 'inside' (rather than outside or top-down) (Benzie et al., 2017) process of collaboration and investigation which aimed to foster an early-career subject lecturer's capacity and commitment to integrate disciplinary writing development in her teaching. The case study comprised Author 1, an EAP lecturer and researcher with no background in teacher development (Literacy specialist, LS), Author 2 an academic developer and researcher (AD), and the early-career subject lecturer (SL). Our aim was to a) explore the design and implementation of a collaborative and scaffolded process to support our participant in reaching an understanding of the writing skills required by the assignment she sets her students and b) to support her in planning how these can be taught to students in a disciplinary contextualised way. Our study therefore makes the following contribution: we build on the results of McGrath and colleagues' (2019) development of metacognitive tasks to render explicit early-career subject lecturers' tacit knowledge of disciplinary writing by incorporating those tasks in a longer programme of professional development. Second, we demonstrate through this programme how writing tools rooted in genre-based pedagogy can be successfully integrated into early subject lecturers' practice – how a subject lecturer can learn to deliver genre based academic writing instruction to her students. Third, we suggest that with support, EAP lecturers can contribute to early-career subject lecturers' professional development in this area.

2. Theoretical framework: genre and dialogism

We view disciplinary writing through the prism of genre theory (Swales, 1990; Tardy, 2009). Swales defines genre as a class of communicative events, a category at the text/context nexus. Thus the knowledge a student needs to complete assignments transcends linguistic competence— the 'genre knowledge' required is multifaceted, comprising knowledge of the text, as well as "less visible knowledge" (Tardy, 2009, p. 19) such as disciplinary/professional values, ideologies and

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[1] British Association of Lecturers of English for Academic Purposes.

epistemology. Different genres (a report, a reflection, an email) have their own conventions tied to authorial intention and audience expectations.

We draw on Tardy's (2009) conceptualisation of genre specific knowledge, which comprises four facets, understood here as the ability to successfully write the assignment set by our participant. These four facets are formal knowledge: the lexicogrammar and structure, the conventionalised textual form of the genre; rhetorical knowledge: the intended purpose, author positionality and audience awareness, and disciplinary values; process knowledge: the 'procedural practices' involved in producing the genre such as literature searches and composition, and what will happen to the genre on completion (e.g., how it will be assessed); and subject-matter knowledge: the content learned in the disciplines (Tardy, 2009, p. 21). The advantage of this conceptualisation lies in its explicit focus on the multi-componential nature of academic writing knowledge: in other words, academic writing is not simply a matter of getting the spelling and grammar right.

Genre-based pedagogy is underpinned by analysis tasks, helping students recognise genre conventions (Swales, 1990) and relate those conventions to the communicative context, while at the same time underscoring the potential for variation and subversion of those conventions in genre performance (Tardy, 2016; Negretti & McGrath, 2020). Theoretical conceptualizations of genre awareness and development should therefore include more than fostering writing skills among early-career subject lecturers and need to be translated into learning tasks for both the subject lecturers (McGrath et al., 2019) and the students they teach. Another important dimension of genre pedagogy is reflection and discussion. While analysis is step one in developing genre knowledge, it is only through dialogue and discussion with other students and community experts (Swales, 1990) that more nuanced dimensions of genre knowledge are developed. This dialogic element inherent in genre pedagogy is often overlooked, even though interaction with an expert insider has been shown to be a gateway to disciplinary literacy (Negretti & Mežek, 2019).

Our study is thus also shaped by dialogism, in that it is central to constructive collaboration: the development of thinking, learning and knowledge occurs through talk, i.e., expressing, questioning, critiquing and negotiating ideas and opinions in an atmosphere of equality, collectivity, reciprocity and accountability (Alexander, 2020; Mercer & Littleton, 2007; Reznitskaya et al., 2009). Dialogism has its origins in Bakhtin's (1981) theory of dialogism, Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory of learning, and Freire's (1970) concept of dialogic pedagogy. Bakhtin and Vygotsky both locate learning in and through social interaction. Bakhtin (2010) argues that thinking and learning happen via dialogic speech - the interactive act of drawing from, rearticulating, anticipating and responding to the 'utterances' of others. Vygotsky (1962) highlights the mediating role of language and social interaction in learning, arguing that language works as both a communicative and psychological tool, facilitating social interaction and the internalisation of knowledge and skills. Thus, rather than seeing learning as an individual cognitive activity whereby students receive, accept and assimilate facts, Bakhtin and Vygotsky see learning as a social activity involving active engagement and negotiation during interaction. This difference is illustrated by Freire's (1970) re-framing of students as receivers of knowledge (the 'banking' model) to co-constructors of knowledge (the 'problem-solving' model). Teo (2019) describes the dialogic process at work:

> … for cognitive development and learning to take place, there must be an active grappling and wrestling with new, different and unfamiliar ideas in relation to ideas that are already familiar, accepted and internalized as knowledge or even wisdom. This grappling and wrestling, manifest through earnest probing, questioning and challenging, may or may not lead to agreement or even conciliation, but should broaden and deepen one's views and lead to an honest revaluation of one's idea or position in relation to those of others. In this way, knowledge is co-constructed, understandings recalibrated, and learning deepened. (p. 172)

Applying this dual lens allows us to not only document the developments in our participant's practice; we can also tease out the dialogic and collaborative 'grappling and wrestling' with ideas that led to that development.

3. Methodology

We adopted a qualitative exploratory case study approach to show the complexity of our collaboration, how it unfolded over time, and why it led to certain outcomes (Mills et al., 2010; Yin, 2009). Exploratory case studies enable an in-depth understanding of real-life phenomena in their complex contextual conditions. Flyvbjerg (2011, p. 302) emphasizes: "… the case study produces the type of concrete, context-dependent knowledge that research on learning shows to be necessary to allow people to develop from rule-based beginners to virtuoso experts." As such, the case study enables a detailed and contextualized description of how collaboration could be scaffolded for replication or adaptation in other educational contexts.

In case study research, a crucial step is selecting a relevant case (Flyvbjerg, 2011). We required an early-career subject lecturer. This was because we wanted to frame students' academic writing development as part of disciplinary learning, and therefore it was useful to embed the project within an early career-lecturer teacher training programme. Sam (a pseudonym) was recruited from a PGCHE course at a university in northern England, where she has taught since 2016, first as an associate lecturer and then as a lecturer. Informed consent was obtained. Her field is media production, and she teaches both undergraduate and postgraduate students. Prior to her academic career, Sam spent over 20 years in professional practice.

We developed a sequence of activities with the objective of fostering our participant's understanding of disciplinary writing and how writing development could be incorporated into her practice. The scheme comprised nine stages which meant extended engagement with the participant and data collection from multiple points and sources in the process (see Figure 1).
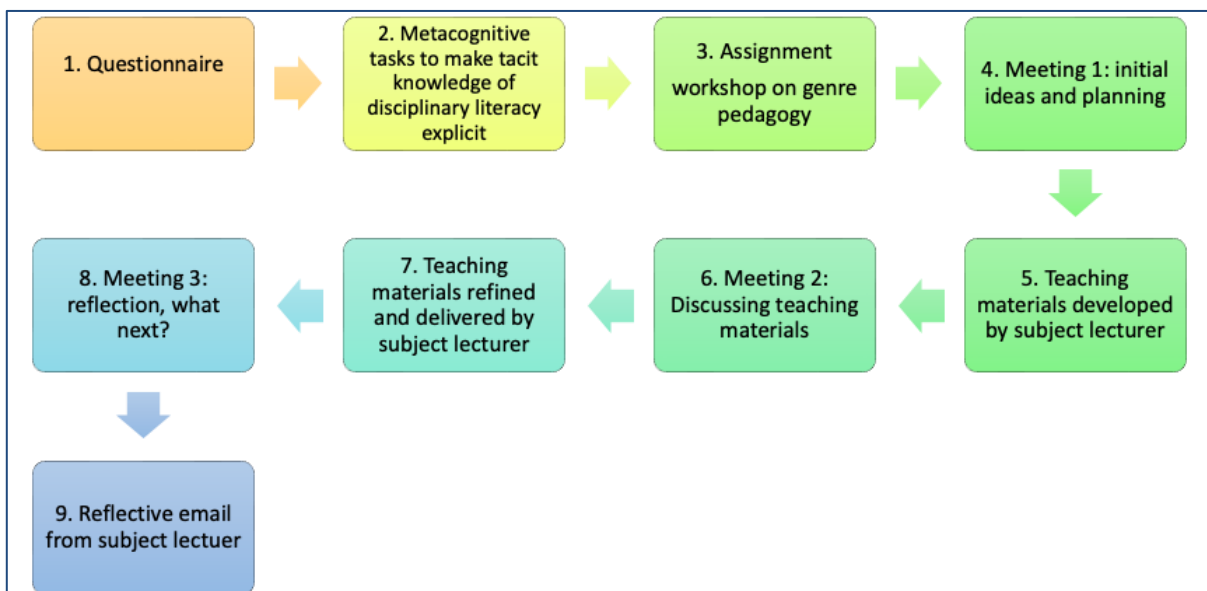

Figure 1. Stages of the collaboration and data collection.

We began with a questionnaire (1) probing her existing conceptualisations of disciplinary writing. Sam then completed three metacognitive scaffolding tasks designed to enhance lecturers' commitment and capacity to engage with students writing development (2) (McGrath et al., 2019) and participated in a taught session on writing a PGCHE module assignment (3). This session enabled Sam to experience genre-based pedagogy as a student. The first meeting (4) was held shortly after

to discuss the intervention for Sam's students. Following the meeting, Sam drafted teaching materials (5). A second meeting was held to discuss the materials (6). Sam then revised the materials and emailed them to us for feedback. After Sam taught the session (7), a third meeting was arranged to discuss her experiences (8). She sent us a final reflection post assignment marking (9). This plan provided three opportunities for the three 'experts' in their respective fields to interact.

This rich data set comprised: a questionnaire, responses to metacognitive scaffolding tasks; three transcribed meetings, transcribed post-meeting reflections of Authors 1 (LS) and 2 (AD), a post-marking reflection from Sam, and drafts of the tasks she designed. The data set were analysed in two ways: first, following inductive qualitative techniques (Saldaña, 2011), we began by familiarising ourselves with the data, reading several times independently and then sharing observations. The objective was to derive a rich account of Sam's experience, from the initial questionnaire and metacognitive task to the meetings and final reflection, and to explore Sam's practices and how they shifted over time. We then performed what Saldaña (2011, p. 108) describes as *themeing* - descriptive interpretations of what the data says and what it means (manifest and latent meanings of data). These interpretations were verified by extracting quotes from data relevant to our themes separately. Focusing on the three transcribed meetings, we identified sequences of dialogic talk which merited a second round of close linguistic analysis, and used Alexander's (2020, p.131) principles to identify dialogic talk (see Table 1).

Table 1. Alexander's principles to identify dialogic talk.

Collective	Participants are willing and able to address learning tasks together
Supportive	Participants can express ideas freely without risk of embarrassment and help each other to reach common understandings
Reciprocal	Participants listen to each other, share ideas, ask questions, and consider alternative viewpoints
Deliberative	Participants discuss and seek to resolve different points of view, present and evaluate arguments and work towards reasoned positions and outcomes
Cumulative	Participants build on their own and each other's contributions and chain them into coherent lines of thinking and understanding
Purposeful	Talk is structured with a specific learning goal in view

Ethical approval for the study was granted by Sheffield Hallam University (ER26729240).

4. Findings

Through collaborative talk, our participant adopted a genre-oriented understanding of her students' writing development in relation to the assignment for her module. Below, numbers refer to stages in Figure 1.

Sam's response to the initial questionnaire evidenced an unnuanced view of writing. Despite the writing experience accrued from her industry background, she described both professional and academic writing in similar, generic and formal (Tardy, 2009) terms:

> *I have written proposals previously for TV programmes and use same approach – keep it simple and convey facts in an accessible way... good communication, clear, professional, no errors.* (1)

Task 2 (mapping genre knowledge) elicited a more nuanced understanding of writing than the questionnaire (1), or at least seemed to equip Sam with some metalanguage. She began to describe writing from a more genre-oriented perspective, noticing, for example, that different texts place different demands on the author:

> *Today I learnt that students need to be <u>adaptive writers to a wide range of genres</u> e.g., lab report, forum post, peer review, dissertation and that all of these require different approaches, <u>different understanding of subject, process, formal knowledge and rhetorical knowledge</u>.* (2)

In these tasks, Sam elaborated on how she had aimed to develop her students' writing in the past: giving ideas, drafting a detailed module brief, providing exemplars, and referring students to study skills provision. Her description seemed to consider both formal and process aspects of genre knowledge:

> *I give them ideas on where to look for research, how to carry out primary research with contributors and how to extract quotes / the information they need for their own personal development plan.* (2)

At the same time, her approach was prescriptive and transmissive, with no reference to learning or task in her descriptions of teaching practice. Instead, her focus was written guidance:

> *I have created a <u>detailed module brief</u> which gives a <u>list of subject headings</u> which many of them follow.* (2)

> *I try to help them structure their ideas with <u>proforma documents</u> and <u>written guidance</u> [...], we talk about creating subject headings and what could go in each section.* (2)

Sam recognised her approach was counterproductive: prescriptive conventions delivered through guidance documents inhibited students' creativity and discouraged an individual response to the assignment, despite the fact that innovation emerged as an important disciplinary value (rhetorical knowledge) and fundamental to the successful completion of the assignment:

> *This [guidance] really helps them structure their ideas - however it does result in many of the development plans being very similar and I wonder whether I am spoon feeding too much.* (2)

Meeting 1 (stage 4) allowed us to dig deeper; Sam recounted how she provided students with examples of previous assignments, a strategy adopted after experiencing genre-informed pedagogy herself. However, she lacked expertise in how to exploit these exemplars through task design, which meant that her disciplinary values of exploration and creativity were again compromised. Thus, while Sam valued originality and creativity, her strategy for enabling students to demonstrate formal knowledge inhibited their ability to meet her expectation of a bespoke response.

> *[The exemplars] really help [students] understand what they're supposed to do, <u>but again means there is less room for exploration and creativity</u>.* (4)

Once Sam was prompted to engage in materials development (5,6), she began to consider specific learning objectives, task design, problem solving and how to elicit students' responses. While some of her aims remained abstract – "make things clear, convey ideas" (6) – the process of drafting a task enabled her to provide more details about her genre expectations. For instance, she homed in on argumentation and the weaving of quotes into the text, synthesising primary and secondary research:

> *What I want them to understand is how to make things clear, how to be able to convey their ideas, <u>how to use the interviews that they're going to be carrying out</u>, how to <u>weave in the quotes</u> and how to structure their ideas in a plan that's useful for them.* (6)

> *... what the second student does is <u>she uses her primary interviews to kind of support about other findings</u> [...] 'oh this interviewee says this, and this is what I discovered in my secondary research.* (6)

Figure 2 below is the draft task that Sam produced.

Look at the two sample assignments:

Which [assignment] extract is simpler to read and why?

What is it about the structure that is helpful? How is the work organized?

Do the extracts demonstrate a critical awareness of both the practical and creative skills needed? Why is this important?

How effective are the quotes in enabling you to understand the subject being explored?

What secondary research is used?

How are the primary and secondary research used together to highlight the points explored?

This is a 'personal' development plan. What makes it personal and why is a bespoke plan helpful for the student going forward with their career?

Figure 2. Draft 1 of Sam's Task Design.

Sam wanted to build her task around a successful and a less successful example of a student assignment in order to raise awareness of her expectations of the genre. However, she struggled to nail down and articulate what made the successful assignment effective. She was nonetheless able to talk about the effects the text had on the reader in terms of content and the lack of references and organisation:

> *… the [successful assignment] very much shows that the student has gone away and thought <u>this is going to be useful for me</u>, what are my influences film wise and where do I want to be and really, sort of, considered creativity and practical elements, practical and creative things that she would like to improve on in order to get to where she wants to be career wise. <u>I find that quite hard to read and that student hasn't referenced anything,</u> so there's obviously some reading that's gone on, <u>but the ideas feel a little bit blurred, and it needs to be structured a bit better</u> [...] for <u>primary and secondary research to understand how to interweave</u> those is hard …* (6)

Sam's task comprised questions probing facets of genre knowledge that Sam had raised in our discussion, and included 'why' prompts, presumably to connect formal and rhetorical knowledge. However, due to the wording, and by not isolating specific examples of features in the text, 'successful writing' remained an abstraction. Further, the students were not asked to apply their insights to their own writing context (e.g., Devitt, 2015; McGrath et al., 2019).

Through collaborative work in the second meeting to address the points above, the following writing intervention was designed: first, to underscore the value of originality and creativity in the assignment, Sam showed a short clip of unusual marriage proposals and elicited what they all had in common, showing that as long as a text achieves its purpose, authors can perform genres in different ways (rhetorical knowledge development). Second, students were assigned genre analysis tasks (Figure 3) to train more formal aspects of genre knowledge, tied to rhetorical knowledge. Students read the grading criteria to help establish audience expectations and authorial purpose (rhetorical and process knowledge), read the two assignments and graded them according to the criteria, answered questions aimed at eliciting how the writers were able to achieve their purpose (rhetorical knowledge), and highlighted the relevant sections in the text (formal knowledge). Finally, students noted five take aways from the session that they could apply in their own writing of the assignment.

The task clearly addresses some of the deficiencies of the previous draft. For example, in the revision, students are encouraged to isolate examples of effective writing in the text, justify their reasoning and apply their insights to their own contexts.

Look at these extracts from students' assignments:

If you were marking these extracts, what grade would you give and why?

Do the extracts demonstrate a 'critical awareness' of both the practical and creative skills needed? Why is this important? *Highlight the sections where you feel this is successfully achieved.*

How clearly are the aims laid out?

How effective are the quotes in enabling you to understand the subject being explored?

Do the students effectively 'synthesize' primary and secondary research to highlight the points explored?

Write down the 5 key take-aways that you will carry forward from reading these extracts.

Figure 3. Revised task.

Post-teaching, Sam's reflections (8) summarised the key take-aways from her professional development experience. First, she seemed to have a greater sense of the need to root discussions of genre expectations in examples:

> *Even though I've been telling them what's required and going through different headings and sections, I think actually seeing some past work has really kind of crystalised what they need to do in their minds.* (8)

While she persisted in talking about writing in general terms ("professional", "clear"), she foregrounded rhetorical aspects of texts, such as the role of the author and audience in determining textual features:

> *I did ask them to <u>think about them as an author</u> and the fact that this is their journey, and it needs to be relevant. I did <u>think about the audience, which is me,</u> and being able to present and convey information in a <u>sort of professional and clear way</u>.* (8)

She was also able to describe the moves of argumentation that students were expected to employ:

> *When they are making a point and then they go on to analyse that point. So, if they are using a quote, they're then exploring it further and putting their own thoughts afterwards and connecting that quote to the relevant point that they're making.* (8)

Finally, in her post-marking reflection (9), she expressed her willingness to apply her learning from the collaboration and development of the task to other modules she teaches.

> *I felt really positive<u>. It felt like I had real purpose</u> in showing the extract and going through the task [...] <u>I'd sort of managed to overcome a bit of a challenge</u> [...] I think this has been incredibly useful for me and <u>I will be using it across other modules</u> in the future.* (9)

Having described the impact of the collaborative process on Sam's understanding and teaching, we now turn to how the triadic, dialogic nature of talk during the three meetings supported the process. Firstly, a cooperative culture was established through supportive and collective talk; participants were able to express ideas freely and help each other to reach common understandings. This was established explicitly at the beginning of the first meeting:

1   LS   *So, this first meeting, we want it to be a very relaxed, collaborative meeting where we just start to plan together a bit of teaching that you're going to do on the module, so it's a discussion, a collaboration, OK?* (4)

Rapport was built through jokes and laughter and shared experiences, for example (4):

1   LS   *You can take my shopping list jokes, if you remember those*

2   Sam   *Brilliant, yeah I do* (laughs)

3   LS   *It's very embarrassing because I do it every year so [AD] hears the same jokes* (laughs)

4   Sam   *It's funny when you do that isn't it because you know when we do open day, we've*
5   *got these points where you're doing the same joke like three times in a day*

6   LS   (laughs)

7   Sam   *You know when the other person's going to be telling this joke that's no longer*
8   *spontaneous*

9   LS   (laughs)

10   AD   *And you always fear, because it's so familiar, you fear you've told this audience*
11   *the same joke before, yeah*

12   *Yeah, yeah* (laughs)

Importantly, there were also many instances of language used to promote or enhance harmonious relationships. For example, in the extract below, LS offers an alternative suggestion to an activity that Sam suggested but uses strategies to mitigate any possible face threat this may engender. First, LS praises part of Sam's idea (1–2), then uses mitigators and softeners to preface her suggestions (3–4, 5–7, 9–10). She uses the more inclusive pronoun 'we' in line 2 (instead of 'you'), indicating collaboration and shared endeavour, and ends with a question (10), eliciting and valuing Sam's opinion (4):

1   LS   *So, I think it's really great that you're showing them exemplars. I think that's really*
2   *important. But I wonder if there's a way that we could work with these exemplars*
3   *where instead of you giving them the headings, that you give them the opportunity*
4   *to explore these examples and come to a realisation of why they're effective. And I*
5   *wonder if you have three or four that they look at that are written in different ways,*
6   *that could maybe give them a sense that there are different ways to attack this while*
7   *they can still achieve their overall purpose*

8   Sam   *Yeah, yeah, yeah*

9   LS   *So, a kind of exploration of examples and why they're effective, rather than a kind*
10   *of top-down structure. Do you think that that would be something worth trying?*

There are also many instances of LS and AD offering encouragement to Sam and enthusiasm for the tasks they are designing, for example:

| 1 | LS | *Exciting – I love it when things aren't rigid, and students can explore* (4) |

| 1 | LS | *I'm really excited to see how it goes* (6) |

Participants engaged in collective talk, expressing willingness to address their goal together. For example, at the beginning of meeting 1, LS explained the meeting purpose as "to plan together a bit of teaching that you're going to do on the module", and at the end of the meeting, ensured Sam knew what she needed to do and checked whether she required assistance (4):

| 1 2 | LS | *Do you want to go away and have a go at designing a task, an exploration task and taking the triangle and thinking about what you would say for each of the points* |

| 3 | Sam | *Yeah, yeah* |

| 4 5 | LS | *Do you think there's anything else you need in the interim to support you to design that task or do you have some ideas and you've got your criteria* |

| 6 7 8 | Sam | *I think I'll have a stab at it first. I feel, you know, let me have a go at it and then I will – it would be great to meet and talk through it as well and, yeah, I think that would be really good* |

Secondly, talk was reciprocal, deliberative and culminative, aspects which often overlapped and co-occurred. While supportive and collective talk helped build relationships and established an atmosphere of cooperation and trust, reciprocal, deliberative and culminative talk developed knowledge and understanding. For example, while the participants discussed Sam's task in which students first assess and grade two exemplar assignments and then analyse structure and language, LS begins by questioning the order of the two tasks (6):

| 1 | LS | *I wonder which order they should come in?* |

| 2 3 4 | Sam | *Hmmm, I was think–, yeah, um…true, yeah that's true. I don't know. I'd imagine that you'd just grade it first of all and then we deconstruct why they gave it that grade - we'd talk through it after they'd done the task of grading it* |

| 5 | LS | *Would there be any advantages of doing it the other way round I wonder?* |

| 6 7 8 | Sam | [Pauses] *Yeah, you're right, yeah, because once we've discussed it then they could really look at the criteria and think oh I see now what makes the first and second – do you think?* |

| 9 10 | LS | *I guess it's just something to think about. I think instinctively I would do it the other way round – I don't know about you,* [AD]? |

| 11 12 13 14 15 16 | AD | *I thought so at first but then I thought I wonder if it would be helpful to know before you start doing the in-depth analysis what each is an example of, especially for a student, just to have that background knowledge might help them when they – and actually, to be honest, I kind of think they might want to know that at the outset. I mean, I know what you mean, that the analysis and the in-depth reading of it would then enable you to grade it a lot easier, but maybe the students grading it is not the important thing here, maybe it's the being aware of what's expected* |

17

18 Sam *Yeah, I mean, my thoughts are that if I put them into breakout rooms, it might be*
19 *they could have a chat about it, might be quite fun for them to decide what grade*
they would give them
20

21 AD *Yeah, that is a nice task I think*

22 Sam *Because it's sort of straightforward in a sense, they don't have to write anything,*
23 *they could just decide oh is it a First or is it, you know, where would I put it on that*
scale – and then they could have a little chat about why and then we could have a
24 *more in-depth chat when they come back*
25

26 LS *Actually that might be useful because one thing I picked out in discussion, I noticed*
27 *that one of your questions was do the extracts demonstrate a critical awareness*
and I thought ooh what does a critical awareness mean in this context and maybe
28 *if they'd met it in the discussion of the criteria, that will come up before they then*
look at what it actually looks like with examples
29

30

In this extract, talk is reciprocal: participants listen to each other, share ideas (e.g., 2–4; 5; 11–17), ask questions (1, 5, 10), and elicit (5, 10) and consider (6–8; 11–17) alternative viewpoints. Talk is also deliberative as participants discuss alternative actions and work towards a reasoned decision (26–30). Talk is culminative – Sam and AD build on their own and each other's contributions, chaining ideas about the benefits of assigning a grade first. LS adds the final coherent and satisfying link (29–31) to arrive at a justified and satisfying ("actually that might be useful" 26) decision. This extract shows Sam taking an equal part in the discussion and justifying her plan, signifying confidence and knowledge, and shows LS and AD engaging in genuine dialogue with Sam and each other (e.g., 9–18), rather than simply giving advice and suggestions to SL. Triadic interaction thus promotes dialogic talk.

Finally, talk is purposeful i.e., structured with a specific learning goal (creating learning materials for SL's students). Although the goal is set by the pre-determined focus and structure of the meetings and tasks, it is achieved through talk. LS also guides the talk and keeps talk focused on the goal. For example, she proposes actions:

> *So shall we have a quick look at the discussion questions and have a chat about your thinking there?* (6)

She is also directive, reminding participants of pre-agreed tasks between meetings and further action points:

> *Do you [SL] want to go away and have a go at designing a task, an exploration task and taking the triangle and thinking about what you would say for each of the points?* (4)

> *And then when you've done that, we'll meet again and we can help you refine it or just give some suggestions or how does that sound?* (6)

LS summarises and guides the discussion:

> *So, I think then from what I've picked up from what you've been saying is that you really feel that they need help with structuring this assignment and that you somehow feel that by giving them the headings you're constraining them*

> *a little bit and they're writing to these headings, rather than producing a piece*
> *of writing themselves – is that fair?* (4)

and elicits a summary from Sam which serves to check shared understanding:

5   Sam   *Firstly I want to help them to be able to approach writing a 4,000 word report from*
              never having done anything like that before, so that was one thing that we talked
6   *about and then you were suggesting to look at the exemplars and to help them find*
              ways of helping them to write this. And then the other element was that we want
7   *them to be more explorative and creative in their approach so they're not just tick*
              boxing (4)
8

9

10

To summarise, our findings first reveal the important shift in Sam's practice from a transmissive approach in addressing students' writing development, to a more genre-oriented and pedagogical practice. Second, we illustrate how the triadic and dialogic nature of the collaboration was instrumental in facilitating this shift.

5. Reflection and discussion

Murray (2022, p. 3) asserts that decisions around how to implement writing development in universities should be informed by "a clear theoretical and pedagogical rationale and an appreciation of the implications for human resources and for staff professional development." Our results speak to both these agendas. From a theoretical and pedagogic perspective, our framing of disciplinary writing (Hyland, 2004) as genre knowledge (Tardy, 2009) was a useful conceptualisation for both our participant and her students, fostering pedagogical knowledge of writing (Worden, 2018). From the start, our participant recognised the potential for variation and creativity within genres (Tardy, 2016) and the disciplinary values that shape them (Gimenez, 2012). However, despite evidencing a commitment to developing her own knowledge and teaching practice (cf. McGrath et al., 2029; Tuck, 2018), she lacked a theoretical grounding and metalanguage to conceptualise writing and identify teaching aims, and the pedagogical knowledge to translate those aims into learning tasks. Over the course of the collaboration, this shifted as Sam co-created tasks drawing on a genre perspective (Swales, 1990).

From a human resource perspective (Murray, 2022), our collaboration was relatively resource-light, the main time investment being three one-hour meetings (the teaching was delivered by the disciplinary lecturer as part of the usual timetabled curriculum and therefore no extra teaching resource was needed). This is modest compared with the significant resource entailed by WAC provision, and the prevalent EAP models of bespoke provision, in which the EAP lecturer must develop a level of discoursal expertise in the discipline they are assigned to (Nicholls, 2021), meet with subject specialists and collect genre samples, timetable sessions, and teach. This is time consuming and often, once that expertise has developed, the EAP lecturer is moved to a new area of the curriculum (Murray, 2022). While the embedded model of bespoke provision (with handover to the subject specialist) is undoubtedly better, the resource implications are significant (see e.g., Maldoni & Lear, 2016). As for the third widespread model of EAP/study skills provision, in which generic classes or one-to-one meetings are provided only to students who seek help (often cast as deficient in language/skills) (Lillis, 2001), our collaboration is more resource-light, inclusive, targeted and potentially far-reaching.

We are certainly not suggesting that all EAP/study skills work with students be abandoned, particularly on the grounds of one case-study. Indeed, as with other studies of this nature, it would

be difficult to evaluate the impact of our study empirically (Fenton-Smith et al., 2017). However, based on our results, we suggest that embedding academic writing development in early-career lecturer qualifications such as the PGCHE, coupled with supporting EAP lecturers to work with early-career lecturers to develop writing tasks, has potential. Indeed, the advantage of reversing the roles of stakeholders in writing development – the subject lecturer acquiring pedagogical skills rooted in genre theory to develop their students' writing and the EAP lecturer supporting the subject lecturer to do so – is that knowledge then resides in the discipline, and the ambition that writing development instruction reaches all students (Wingate et al., 2011) becomes more attainable.

The triadic design of our collaboration was important. Operating outside the normal parameters of all our roles (the EAP lecturer in a staff-facing role, the academic developer and subject lecturer working with writing development) seemed to enhance a sense of trust and egalitarianism. Collectivity, support, and reciprocity engendered a dialogic culture which created a sense of ease in venturing and discussing ideas, thus maximising learning potential (Alexander, 2020, p. 131). Reciprocal, deliberative and culminative talk exposed Sam to alternatives, encouraged her to evaluate ideas, and helped her make decisions, culminating in the creation of tasks and an evolved perspective on disciplinary writing. As shown in the results section, while potentially occupying a position of power, LS and AD maintained respect for the SL's subject and contextual knowledge and expertise and maintained awareness of face considerations (Haugh & Bargiela-Chiappini, 2010). Crucially, the inclusion of an academic developer meant we could embed tasks in the PGCHE and frame the collaboration in the context of professional development. Equally important was the inclusion of the EAP specialist, which meant that the professional development and subsequent task design was built on a solid foundation of research into writing development (e.g., Johns, 1997; Swales, 1990; Tardy, 2009).

We recognise that in the current culture of HE globally, academic staff are "continually being asked to rethink their practices in response to seemingly ever-changing directives from senior management" which can lead to "a lack of enthusiasm combined with a degree of scepticism – even cynicism – on the part of those expected to implement the change" (Murray & Nallaya, 2016, p. 1306). The value of our study lies in the dialogic and egalitarian nature of the collaboration; stepping out of our silos enabled us to embed facets of writing development within the early-career lecturer training programme and the discipline, delivered by the subject lecturer in a theoretically grounded and resource-efficient way. Therefore, our study constitutes a useful contribution to discussions on how universities could overhaul post entry/in-sessional disciplinary writing development and facilitate meaningful collaboration between key stakeholders in new roles. In terms of application, the next step would be to roll out the programme to a larger cohort of early-career lecturers, and potentially expand to other universities. Given the nature of decision-making in higher education institutions, this would likely require the development of some means of project evaluation (Fenton-Smith et al., 2017), which takes into account the perspectives and performance of students. Future research should look to explore the development of such evaluation tools.

Acknowledgements

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