Review Article

Academic writing

Brian Paltridge University of Sydney, Australia

This article reviews research and developments that are relevant to second language students writing in academic settings. First, it reviews research into writing requirements at undergraduate and postgraduate levels of study. It then discusses the particular socio-cultural context of academic writing, including the notions of genre and discourse community, and the politics of academic writing. The article then reviews descriptions of academic writing that draw on register studies, discourse studies, genre studies, and corpus studies. This includes cross-cultural comparisons of academic writing, disciplinary differences in academic writing, and critical views on the nature of academic writing. The article then reviews the development of approaches to the teaching of academic writing. The article concludes with a discussion of the assessment of academic writing and indications for future research in the area of second language academic writing.

1. Writing requirements in academic settings

Studies which have examined student writing requirements in English medium universities include the work of Rose (1983) who examined assignment topics given to undergraduate students at the University of California, Los Angeles, Horowitz (1986) who examined undergraduate and graduate writing requirements at Western Illinois University, Canseco and Byrd (1989) who looked at writing requirements in graduate business courses, Braine (1995) who looked at the writing requirements of undergraduate students in the natural sciences and engineering at the University of Texas at Austin, and Braine (2001a) who compared academic writing tasks at the University of Texas at Austin and the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and Zhu (2004) who examined writing requirements in business courses at a large research university in the United States (see Braine, 1995, 2001a; Paltridge, 2002a for summaries of this research).

Brian Paltridge is Associate Professor of TESOL at the University of Sydney. He is author of Genre, Frames and Writing in Research Settings *(1997),* Making Sense of Discourse Analysis *(2000), and* Genre and the Language Learning Classroom *(2001). His research interests include academic literacies, genre-based language teaching, and thesis and dissertation writing.*

A study carried out by Hale *et al.* (1996) for the redevelopment of the TOEFL test, looked at both the genres and text types students need a command of in undergraduate and graduate courses in eight US universities. They found the most common written genres were documented essays, summaries, plans/proposals and book reviews. They also found that students were sometimes required to write short tasks involving less than half a page of writing in response to a given question or other stimulus. This was especially the case in the physical/mathematical sciences and engineering. By contrast they found that students in the social sciences and humanities were more often required to write longer research essays. These essays most frequently asked students to write exposition and argument type texts and, in particular, cause and effect, problem-solution, classification/enumeration, compare/contrast, and analysis type texts.

The study carried out by Hale *et al.* provided the basis for a study carried out by Moore and Morton (1999) into the written genre and text type requirements of undergraduate and postgraduate students in Australian universities. Moore and Morton focussed, in particular, on disciplines where there were high enrolments of second language students. The most common genre in their study was the academic essay, representing just under 60% of the complete set of writing tasks at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. This was followed by case study reports, especially at the postgraduate level. These were followed by exercises which required the application of some discipline specific tool or model to a particular situation, research reports, reviews, literature reviews, research proposals, summaries, and short answers which required the reproduction of previously provided items of knowledge (such as from lectures or textbooks). These categories were not, however, completely discrete and separate from each other. In terms of text type, about a quarter of the tasks required evaluation-type texts. Following this, the most common text types were descriptions, summaries, compare and contrast, and explanation type texts.

A project is presently underway at the University of Warwick in the UK which is examining students' written assignments at all levels and in a range of disciplines with the goal of providing a data base for use by researchers and teachers to enable them to identify and describe academic writing requirements across disciplines and levels of study. This corpus includes contextual information on the students'

writing such as the gender and year of study of the student, details of the course the assignment was set for, and the grade that was awarded to the piece of work. There are plans to extend this corpus beyond the University of Warwick to include samples of academic writing from other UK universities, and in other areas of study (see Nesi *et al.*, forthcoming).

A large number of second language students are also enrolled in degrees that require the writing of a thesis or dissertation in English. Dudley-Evans (1999), Thompson (1999) and Dong (1998) describe a number of thesis types that occur in different academic disciplines. Dudley-Evans terms the typical 'IMRAD' (introduction – methods – results – discussion) type thesis a 'traditional' thesis. Thompson further refines this category by dividing traditional theses into those that have 'simple' and those that have 'complex' patterns of organization. A further kind of thesis is the 'topic-based' thesis. The topic-based' thesis typically commences with an introductory chapter which is then followed by a series of chapters which have titles based on sub-topics of the topic under investigation. The thesis then ends with a conclusions chapter.

Dong (1998) describes doctoral theses that are based on a compilation of publishable research articles. These are quite different from other sorts of doctoral theses. The research article chapters are more concise than typical thesis chapters with less of the 'display of knowledge' that is often found in a doctoral thesis. In terms of audience, they are written more as 'experts writing for experts', than novices 'writing for admission to the academy'. In this sense, they are quite different from the 'traditional' type theses described above (see Paltridge, 2002b; 2003 for further discussion of thesis types).

Graduate second language students often have difficulty in meeting the demands of the kind of writing required of them at this particular level (Casanave & Hubbard, 1992; Casanave, 2002). As Johns and Swales (2002) have pointed out, even the basic outline of a thesis or dissertation is a complex issue that needs to be negotiated among supervisors and students, and that sub-field, methodology, and choice of theory may emerge as strong determining factors in terms of what the thesis or dissertation might look like, rather than the part of the world in which it is written (Swales, 2004).

Graduate second language students are also often uncertain of what is required of them on the other pieces of writing they need to undertake in their studies. Casanave (2002) reports on the experiences of five masters students enrolled in a graduate TESOL program in the US. She found that none of the students, regardless of their mother tongue or previous educational experience, were prepared for the diversity of written genres they were required to engage in. Soe (2003), in an examination of the genre needs of students in a graduate TESOL program in

Australia, found many of the students he interviewed similarly uncertain of what the written assignment tasks they needed to undertake required of them.

As Swales (2001: 52) has argued, graduate writing 'is no longer a straightforward cumulative process, but more a matter of new starts and unexpected adjustments.' Induction into academic disciplines also involves processes more complex than just the acquisition of discipline-specific language (Starfield, 2001). It also requires an in-depth understanding of the context of production and interpretation of students' texts, as well as an understanding of the roles played by the people involved in the production of the texts, and the contexts in which the texts are produced, and assessed (Johns, 1997).

2. The context of academic writing

Many students, then, do not find it easy to write up their academic work into an acceptable form. This is made more difficult for students writing in English as a second language by their lack of familiarity with the conventions and expectations of academic writing in English medium universities (Ballard & Clanchy, 1997). As Dong (1997: 10) notes, academic writing:

involves learning a new set of academic rules and learning how to play by these rules. Often these rules change from discipline to discipline, and the audience and the purpose of writing vary according to each writing context. For non-native students, the mismatch of writing difficulties and expectations operating in their home countries compound their writing difficulties.

The research comparing second language and native English speaker student writing suggests that the writing of each group is different in 'numerous and important ways' (Silva, 1997: 218). There are often differences in general textual patterns, argument structure, use of background reading texts, reader orientation, patterns of cohesion, the construction of sentences, and lexical choices (Silva, 1997). The research has also reported differences in the composing processes of native and non-native speaker student writers (see Silva, 1993; 1997 for further discussion of this research; Hinkel, 2002 for a large corpus-based study of second language writers' texts). Silva (1997) argues these differences between native and non-native speaker student writers, and their writing, need to be acknowledged and addressed if second language students are to receive fair treatment, and an equal chance in academic success, Indeed, many students may never write the expert texts that are the focus of much EAP analysis. As Harwood and Hadley point out, dominant norms for expert writers may not be a dominant norm for second language student writers (see Harwood & Hadley, forthcoming, for further discussion of this).

There are many factors that influence decisions a student makes while writing an academic text. These include the purpose of the text, the academic and cultural context of the text, the extent to which

the writer is given advice on the positioning and organization of the text (Prior, 1995), the student's perceptions of the audience of their text (Johns, 1997; Casanave, 2004), the discipline in which the student is writing, the values and expectations of the academic community at which the text is aimed (Johns, 1997; Newman *et al.*, 2003; Swales, 1990), and the relationship between the text and other similar such texts. As Silva and Matsuda (2002) point out, writing is always embedded in a complex web of relationships between writers, readers, the text and reality. These relationships, further, are constantly changing. As they argue:

the writer's task is not as simple as constructing an accurate representation of reality; the writer also has to negotiate, through the construction of the text, his or her own view of these elements of writing with the views held by the readers (Silva & Matsuda, 2002: 253).

Academic writers, thus:

do not write in isolation but within networks of more and less powerfully situated colleagues and community members. They learn to forge alliances with those community members with whom they share values or whom they perceive will benefit them in some way and to resist when accommodating does not suit them (Casanave, 2002: xiii–xiv).

Work in the area of composition studies, or what is often called the *new rhetoric* (Freedman & Medway, 1994), is especially helpful to our understanding of the context of academic writing. Studies in the new rhetoric pay particular attention to the relationship between texts and the contexts in which they are produced, as well as the actions they fulfil within particular situations (Hyon, 1996).

A key figure in new rhetoric studies is Carolyn Miller and, in particular, her (1984) paper 'Genre as social action'. While written twenty years ago, this paper has had a major impact on discussions of writing in the new rhetoric. Miller describes genres as responses to social situations that are, equally, part of a socially constructed reality. That is, genres are part of the social processes by which knowledge about reality and the world are made. Genres, in this view, both respond to and contribute to the constitution of social contexts, as well as the socialization of individuals. Genres, then, are more than socially embedded, they are socially constructive. Miller (1984: 165) argues that genres 'serve as keys to understanding how to participate in the actions of a community' and that the failure to understand genre as social action turns activities such as writing instruction from 'what should be a practical art of achieving social ends' into an act of making texts that fit formal requirements', a view that has important implications for the teaching of academic writing.

Freedman (1989), a further important writer on genre in the new rhetoric (and now TESOL, see Freedman, 1999), provides an example of the relationship between genre and the 'place', or setting,

of a text. Freedman (1989) examined undergraduate law students' written assignments. She concluded that if certain of the texts that the students wrote for the law course were re-typed on the letterhead of a law firm and addressed to a client, the meaning of the texts would change fundamentally. The texts would then, she argues, take on the status and function of 'pieces of legal advice' and the readers' interpretation of the texts would be significantly different from the way in which they would have been read by their university instructors. Freadman (1994) provides further examples of the relationship between genre and the place of the text, arguing that what gets said in a particular genre, and the kinds of relationships that are produced by what is said, are largely determined by this notion of 'place'. That is, the content of a text functions differently, and may mean something very different, according to the different place and setting of the text.

Studies in the new rhetoric also consider how aspects of genres change through time, rather than focussing on formal characteristics of the texts in isolation. Bizzell (1992), for example, explores the social actions of genres in academic communication, whilst Bazerman (1988) examines developments in scientific writing in response to changes in scientific knowledge.

The notions of *discourse community* (Borg, 2003; Swales, 1990; 1998; Flowerdew, 2000; Woodward-Kron, forthcoming) and *communities of practice* (Lave & Wenger 1991; Wenger; 1998), which have been taken up by writers in the area of academic writing such as Swales (1988; 1990) and Johns (1997), have also been taken up by researchers in the new rhetoric. Bizzell (1992), for example, asks how a person becomes initiated into and accepted in a discourse community. Freedman (1989) suggests that this happens collaboratively. In her view, instructors, teaching assistants, and professors all play a part in the 'initiation rite' of becoming part of the new discourse community. Writers such as Starfield (2001; 2004) point out, however, that many discussions of discourse communities do not take up issues of power and power relationships and how the social structures that are reproduced by daily interactions in the academy neglect potential implications for student success, and failure. She suggests that an international English for academic purposes teaching and research community appears 'less a given than a goal to strive for' (Starfield, 2001: 133).

Researchers in the area of composition studies have also discussed a number of other issues that have more recently been taken up in second language academic writing classrooms. Amongst these is the relationship between academic texts and the audience of the texts. A key person in bringing this work to the attention of second language teachers is Ann Johns. Her articles 'L1 composition theories: implications for developing theories of L2 composition' (Johns,

1990) and 'Written argumentation for real audiences: suggestions for teacher research and classroom practice' (Johns, 1993), have brought many important insights into the teaching of academic writing to second language learners that had not, until that time, always been considered.

Swales and Feak in their (1994) *Academic writing for graduate students*, also argue for the importance of audience in the teaching of second language academic writing. As Swales and Feak point out, even before students begin to write, they need to consider their audience. They need to have an understanding of their audience's expectations and prior knowledge, as these will impact upon the content of their writing. If the audience knows more than the writer, as is often the case with academic writing, the writer's purpose is usually to display familiarity and expertise in the particular area, beyond simply reporting on the research and scholarship of others (see Burgess, 2002 for further discussion of audience and academic writing).

Another issue is the changing nature of the university itself. The 20th century saw dramatic changes in academic values and disciplinary knowledges, especially with what has been termed the 'postmodern turn' in the new humanities and social sciences (Best & Kellner, 1997). In many areas of study, there has been a major paradigm shift from a modern to a postmodern world. This has important implications for teaching academic writing. Teachers, for example, may find themselves working with students in an area of study where views of knowledge and sets of values are now dramatically different from those that were held when they themselves were students. Equally, students may find the sets of values that underlie their area of study in an English medium university dramatically different from those in the same area of study in their home country (see Swales *et al.* 2001, Paltridge, 2002c for further discussion of this).

Student populations, further, have changed, especially with what Harklau *et al.* (1999) and others have called 'generation 1.5' students; that is, students who have graduated from secondary school and enter university but who are still in the process of learning English. This includes migrant students and local residents born abroad, as well as indigenous language minority students, who are becoming a major constituency in university programs across the world. These students have characteristics, and needs, that are different from those of international students and different from those of local native speaker students. Some of these students may give the appearance of being native speaker students yet in many ways, are not (see Harklau *et al.* 1999; Harklau, 2003 for further discussion of this issue).

Even the notion of academic literacy is changing. There are those who would view academic literacy as a singular phenomenon, comprising a set of skills to be acquired and problems to be fixed. A different view would see the development of academic literacy as a socialization process through which we explain 'university culture' to our students so they can learn its requirements through a kind of apprenticeship. An *academic literacies* approach, in the plural sense, sees learning to write in the academy as learning to acquire a repertoire of linguistic practices which are based on complex sets of discourses, identities, and values (Lea & Street, 1998; 1999; Starfield, forthcoming; Street, 1999). Here, students learn to switch practices between one setting and another, learning to understand, as they go, why they are doing this, and what each position implies (for a book which deals with these issues in practical terms, see Creme and Lea, 2003).

As Johns (1997), Samraj (2004) and others have observed, there is no such thing as the one-size-fits-all academic essay that can be written in all areas of study (see Harwood & Hadley, forthcoming; Lea, 1994; Lea & Street, 2000 for further discussion of this). Hyland (2002a) argues that we need to revisit the notion of specificity in the analysis and teaching of academic writing and focus on the texts, tasks, language features, skills, and practices that are appropriate to the purposes and understandings of particular disciplinary communities. By ignoring specificity, he argues, we 'run the risk of creating an unbridgeable gulf between the everyday literacy practices that students bring with them from their homes and those that they find in the university' (Hyland 2002a: 392). A focus on specificity also means we are less likely to focus on decontextualised forms and genres in our teaching, as well as make us more able to show students 'the complex ways in which discourse is situated in unequal social relationships and how its meanings are represented in social ideologies' (Hyland 2002a: 393).

As Zamel and Spack have argued, 'it is no longer possible to assume that there is one type of literacy in the academy' (1998: ix) and that there is one 'culture' in the university whose norms and practices simply have to be learnt in order for our students to have access to our institutions. Writing in the academy requires a repertoire of linguistic practices that are based on complex sets of discourses, identities, and values (Lea & Street, 1998).

The politics of academic writing is taken up further in the work of Clark and Ivanic (1997), Pennycook (1997a), Benesch (1999, 2001b), Santos (2001), and Canagarajah (2001, 2002a, 2002b), and Casanave (2004). Drawing on the work of Halliday and Hasan (1989), Clark and Ivanic examine the context of situation and context of culture of academic writing. They discuss how the genres, discourses, value and beliefs, power relations, and literacy practices of the socio-cultural context in which the student is writing impact on the particular situation and text that the

student is writing. They then lead this discussion from the 'what is' of academic writing to 'what might be' (Benesch, 2001b) of academic writing. Santos (2001), on the other hand, strongly resists this move, arguing for the need to help students accommodate to, or assimilate, dominant academic discourses in order to succeed in the academy.

The issue of *critical thinking* as a requirement for students writing in academic settings is taken up by authors such as Pennycook (1996a) and Canagarajah (2002a) who point out that critical thinking is a culture-specific western idea, even though it is presented in the literature as a universal norm. This notion, further, is often in direct conflict with second language students' cultural backgrounds and past educational experiences. Angelova and Riazantseva (1999), for example, report on a Russian student who said that where she came from it was dangerous to criticize people in authority as this would be seen as an act of subversion, and should be avoided. Their Indonesian students made similar comments. Scott (1999) reports on a Korean student who describes the notion of critical thinking as an ongoing strug-gle. Others, such as Jones (2001) and Canagarajah (2002a), argue that second language students are as capable of critical thinking as native speaker students and that the stereotype of Asian learners, as being 'passive and unable to think critically is flawed' (Jones, 2001, 175) (for alternate views of the nature of critical thinking see e.g. Atkinson, 1997; Ramanathan and Kaplan, 1996).

The equally culturally situated notion of *plagiarism* is also discussed by Pennycook (1996a) who argues that plagiarism is not a simply black and white affair which can be prevented by threats, warnings, and admonitions. In his view:

All language learning is to some extent a process of borrowing others' words and we need to be flexible, not dogmatic, about where we draw boundaries between acceptable or unacceptable textual borrowings (Pennycook, 1996a, 227).

Plagiarism and the question of textual borrowing are further discussed by Casanave (2004), Bark and Watts (2001), Bloch (2001), Canagarajah (2002a), Currie (1998), Pecorari (2001, 2003), Shi (forthcom-ing) and Starfield (forthcoming). Canagarajah (2002a) argues for a nonethnocentric view of plagiarism which considers the cultural and educational practices and rhetorical traditions second language students are coming from. As he puts it, all texts are intertexts and behind all knowledge 'lies not physical reality but other texts, followed by other texts' (Canagarajah, 2002a: 155). We, thus, need to teach students how 'to borrow other people's texts and words' so they will be able to achieve their rhetorical and intellectual goals (Canagarajah, 2002a: 156).

The issues of writer identity and reader/writer power relations in academic writing are discussed by Clark and Ivanic (1997), Ivanic (1998), Ivanic and Simpson (1992), Prior (1991; 1994; 1995), Hirvela and Belcher (2001), Hyland (2002b), Leki (2000), and Starfield (2002; 2004; forthcoming). As Starfield (2004: 69) points out, 'whether consciously or not, [student] writers textually convey a sense of who they are . . . as well as their understanding of who their potential reader is.' Students are positioned by the person who has set the assessment task and who has control over them in terms of what they might say and how they will value what they say (Ivanic & Simpson, 1992). All of this sets up unequal social and identity relations in the student writer–reader relationship (Starfield, 2004). Kubota (2003) extends this discussion to gender, class, and race, arguing that often little attention is given to these categories in discussions of second language writing. She argues for an approach to understanding these categories that avoids fixed and static views of how people write in their first and second languages. Belcher (2001) and Casanave (1992) also provide important discussions of gender and second language writing, with Belcher asking why is it that we are often so oblivious to gender in second language writing when so many people writing about the field are women, and so many second language writing teachers are women.

Canagarajah (2001) presents strategies for second language students to negotiate academic discourses arguing that second language students can, and should, go beyond reproductive and determinist views of academic writing. This entails a shift in view of writing as an autonomous activity to one that is situated, from a view of writing as an individualistic activity to one that is social, and a shift from a view of writing from one that is formal to one that is ideological (Canagarajah, 2002a).

The use of academic genres, then, is not an ideology-free, objective process, which can be 'sepa-rated from the social realities and processes which it contributes to maintaining' (Threadgold 1989: 103). For Threadgold (1989: 107), genres are not just linguistic categories but 'among the very processes by which . . . ideologies are reproduced, transmitted and potentially changed'. Thus, as academics and their students use academic genres and engage in the activities of the academy, they both constitute and reproduce social structures and social relations within the academy.

This situated view of academic genres is highly relevant for discussions of academic writing in that it takes us beyond the language and form of the text to a consideration of the ways in which academic texts are embedded in the communicative activities of the academic community. It also gives us insights into the ways students both acquire and use genre knowledge as they participate in the knowledge-producing activities of their areas of study (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995).

There is, then, a need to go beyond the text into the social and cultural context which surrounds academic genres, in order to fully understand their purpose and use (Freedman 1999; Paltridge, 2004a; Starfield, 2001). Students need to be aware of this as much as they need command of the language required for writing in academic settings. Students need to consider general discourse community expectations and conventions for their texts, as well as the particular expectations, conventions and requirements of their particular area of study (Dudley-Evans, 1995). They need to consider the intended audience for their text, how their audience will react to what they read, and the criteria they will use for evaluating and responding to what they have read. Students need to consider the background knowledge, values, and understandings it is assumed they will share with their audience, including what is important to their audience and what is not (Johns, 1997). They may then consider to what extent they may negotiate, or resist, these expectations, and what this may imply.

3. The analysis of academic writing

The history of the analysis of academic writing is described by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), Robinson (1991), Dudley Evans and St John (1998), and Swales (2001). A bibliography of much of this work is provided by Robinson (1991). Ways in which these analyses have been taken up in the teaching of academic writing is discussed in Paltridge (2001a). Issues to consider in the analysis of academic writing are discussed by Lauer and Lauer (1988) and Hyland (2002c; 2003a). The early days of ESP based analyses of academic writing are discussed by Swales (1985, 2001). Much of the early work in this area is based on the analysis of scientific research reports. Only more recently has research turned to the analysis of student texts and other written genres students are required to produce in academic settings.

Much of the work in the analysis of academic writing has followed parallel developments in the field of linguistics. Thus, early descriptions were mostly of a structural nature, drawing their model of description from similar views in linguistics. Examinations of academic writing in the 1960s and early 1970s, for example, were based on *register analysis* (Halliday, Macintosh & Strevens, 1964); that is, the view that certain patterns of grammar and vocabulary occur in particular registers, or situations. The shift to an examination of *rhetorical functions* (Trimble, 1985) in academic texts in the 1970s following similar moves in linguistics. These analyses looked at organizational patterns in texts such as compare and contrast, cause and effect, definition, and problem-solution, and the linguistic means by which these patterns are expressed in discourse. EAP analyses in the 1980s took the examination of linguistic items to a further level

by looking at the function of linguistic forms in particular genres. An important example of this work is Tarone *et al.*'s (1981) article which looked at the use of the passive in astrophysics articles in terms of the rhetorical or communicative purpose it performs. This article was also the first piece of research to add the notion of genre to its analysis. That is, it looked at the use of language in the same type of text, on the same topic, in the same journal and in the same area of study, as opposed the use of language in scientific writing in general (Flowerdew, 2001).

The notion of genre was further developed in the 1990s by writers such as Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993) who focussed on text specific analyses at the level of discourse and language. An important development here is the development of *move analysis* (Swales, 1990) which describes the stages that a text moves through in order to achieve its goals (Martin, 2001). Dudley-Evans and St John describe *genre analysis* as 'the study of the structural and linguistic regularities of particular genres or text types and the role they play within a discourse community' (1998: xv). Genre studies, then, explore genre-specific patterns of language use in terms of communicative purpose, content and form (Dudley-Evans, 1989); that is, the abilities, knowledge, and skills that learners need in order to perform particular genres (see Bhatia, 1993; Dudley-Evans, 1989; Johns, 1997; 2003; Jordan, 1997; Paltridge, 1997; 2001b; Swales, 1990; 2004, for discussions of genre analysis and academic writing).

More recently, genre analysis has moved from purely textual descriptions to ones that have more of an ethnographic orientation and explore both the discourse community members and the situation in which the texts are produced (see e.g. Bazerman and Prior, 2004; Berkenkotter and Huckin, 1995; Paltridge, 2004b; Swales, 1998). Relations between text and contexts, thus, 'have become much richer and more complex' with discourse seen as being shaped by context, as well as shaping context' (Swales, 2001: 49). Barton *et al.* (2002) present examples of approaches to the analysis of second language writing that brings together the work of ESP genre analysts and composition studies researchers. Each chapter in this collection provides a description of a particular approach to analysis, a case study which uses that approach, and a discussion of the value of the approach to the field of academic writing. Bazerman and Prior (2004) provide a range of approaches to analysing written texts and writing practices, a discussion of basic concepts underlying each approach, together with examples of how the approach can be applied.

Developments in *computational linguistics* have also been paralleled in the analysis of academic writing with studies such as Hyland (1997) looking at hedging in research articles, reporting practices (Hyland, 2001), and directives (Hyland, 2002e) in

academic writing, and Swales *et al.* (1998) examining the use of the imperative in research reports. Other areas that have been examined in corpus studies include the frequency of vocabulary items in university texts (Xue & Nation, 1984), the specialized vocabulary of English for academic purposes (Coxhead & Nation, 2001), citation practices in doctoral theses (Thompson & Tribble, 2001), student writing across academic disciplines (Nesi *et al.*, forthcoming; Samraj, 2004), description and critical analysis in academic writing (Woodward-Kron, 2002), lexical bundles in student academic writing (Cortes, forthcoming), the generic structure of second language students' dissertation acknowledgements (Hyland, forthcoming a), and profiles of highly rated second language students' compositions (Jarvis *et al.*, 2003) (see Flowerdew, 2001 for a collection of articles on corpus-based analyses of written academic discourse; Hinkel, 2002 for a large scale corpus study of second language writers' texts). As Biber and his colleagues have observed, patterns of use that are revealed in corpus studies 'often run counter to our expectations based on intuition' (Biber *et al.* 1994: 169). There is, further, often a mismatch between the language presented in published English language teaching materials and the observations that are made of language use in corpus-based studies (Kennedy, 1992). Corpus studies, thus, have much to offer descriptions of genres and their application in academic writing classrooms (see Thurston & Candlin, 1997; Weber, 2001, Harwood & Hadley, forthcoming, for examples of corpus studies providing the basis for the teaching of academic writing).

The area of research known as *contrastive rhetoric* (see Casanave, 2004; Connor, 1996; 2002; 2003; Leki, 1991, 1997; Mauranen, 2001; Ostler 2001) compares written and spoken genres in different languages and cultures. Many studies in this area have focused on academic writing. Contrastive rhetoric has its origins in the work of Kaplan (1966) who examined different patterns in the academic essays of students from a number of different languages and cultures. Although Kaplan has since revised his strong claim that differences in academic writing are the result of culturally different ways of thinking (see e.g. Kaplan, 1987; 1988; Panetta, 2001) many studies have found important differences in the ways in which academic texts are written in different languages and cultures. Other studies, however, have found important similarities in academic writing across cultures (see e.g. Kirkpatrick, 1995; 1997; Kubota, 1992, 1998; Mohan & Lo, 1985). Kubota (1997: 460) argues that studies in the area of contrastive rhetoric 'tend to view language and culture as exotic and static rather than dynamic, and overgeneralise the cultural characteristics from a few specific examples.' Kubota (1992) argues that just as Japanese expository writing, for example, has more than one rhetorical style, so does English, and that it is misleading to try to reduce rhetorical styles to the one single norm (Kubota, 1997).

Leki (1997: 239) argues that contrastive rhetoric 'oversimplifies not only other cultures and rhetorics but also English.' She points out that while ESL students may often be taught to write in a standard rhetorical way, professional writers do not necessarily write this way in English. She argues that many stylistic and rhetorical devices that are said to be typical of Chinese, Japanese, and Thai writing, for example, also occur, in certain contexts, in English. Equally, features that are said to be typical of English writing appear, on occasion, in other languages as well. Contrastive rhetoric, she argues, can most usefully be seen, not as the study of culture-specific thought patterns, but as the study of 'the differences or preferences in the pragmatic and strategic choices that writers make in response to external demands and cultural histories' (1997: 244). Scollon (1997) suggests that less attention should be given to the structures of texts in contrastive rhetoric research, and more to rhetorical studies, in their broader sense. Leki (1997) argues that more attention should be given to the ideological implications of contrastive rhetoric research. Canagarajah (2002a: 68) argues that contrastive rhetoric research needs 'to develop more complex types of explanation for textual difference' if it is to enjoy continued usefulness in the teaching of academic writing. Genre analysis, he suggests, is able to help provide some of this explanation, as long as it keeps away from normative, rule-governed, and 'value-free' descriptions of genre conventions.

The issue of *disciplinary discourses* has been taken up by researchers such as Hyland (2000) who examines the relationship between the cultures of academic communities and their discoursal practices, and Currie (1994) who looks at the question of 'what counts as good writing' in different areas of study. Hyland shows how close textual analyses provide insights into the social practices and institutional ideologies of different academic communities. Writers such as Prior (1998), Casanave (1995), and Lillis (2001) have carried out ethnographic examinations of contextual issues in the production of academic writing. As Prior's work reveals, disciplinary enculturation is very much a case of ongoing negotiation between students and their professors, mentors, and peers, rather than just a case of learning the language and culture of the academy.

Lillis (2001) looks at the experiences of non-traditional students in the academy as a way of exploring broader issues of access, regulation, and desire. As she argues, detailed attention 'to specific instances of students' writing helps illuminate the nature or writing practices within the academy and, consequently, to raise important questions for all of us who engage in them' (Lillis, 2001: 2). Lillis asks

questions that have important implications for second language writers. These include:

Why do we write as we do? Who gets to write in these ways? Who benefits from such writing? What meanings are we valuing and how? Who does the academy construct as belonging, and how? On what terms do 'outsiders' get to be 'insiders' and at what costs? How do we want to write, and why? (Lillis 2001: 2)

As Hyon (1996) has pointed out, attention is not always given to the ideological dimensions of academic genres in second language classrooms. Benesch (1993: 705), however, argues that:

all forms of ESL instruction are ideological, whether or not educators are conscious of the political implications of their instructional choices. These choices can encourage students to think critically about their education and about society, or they can discourage questioning the status quo in and out of school.

In her view:

the good intentions and hard work of EAP researchers may make life harder for both ESL faculty and students because of EAP's accommodation to traditional academic practices which limit the participation of nonnative-speaking students in academic culture (Benesch, 1993: 713).

Benesch suggests that an alternative to accepting this 'ideology of accommodation' is to take on an 'ideology of resistance' and a pedagogy of *critical English for academic purposes* (Benesch, 2001a) that gives students 'opportunities to discover and critically examine the conventions of the academic discourse community' (Clark, 1992: 137).

As Hyland and Hamp-Lyons (2002: 10) point out, however:

EAP has yet to seriously confront these issues. While there is greater awareness of the relationships between language and power and of the inequalities which support the prestigious literacy practices we teach, effective classroom responses are often constrained by the institutional context in which we work. EAP teachers are frequently employed as vulnerable, short-term instructors in marginalised 'service units' and ways of facilitating change in such environments remain to be explored.

A *critical perspective* on the analysis of academic writing, then, might explore the connections bet–ween discourse, language use, and the social and political contexts in which these occur (Pennycook, 1997b). It needs to do this in a way that deals critically with the norms and expectations of parti–cular discourse communities, raises issues of social, economic and political concern, yet, nevertheless provides students with the tools they need to succeed (Pennycook, 1997b). A critical perspective on acade–mic writing might explore issues such as gender, ethnicity, cultural difference, ideology, and identity and how these are reflected in particular texts (Pennycook, 1997b). This perspective, thus, goes beyond description and explanation to 'decon–structing' and 'challenging' texts. The emphasis might include tracing underlying ideologies from the linguistic features of a text, unpacking particular biases and ideological presuppositions, and relating

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the text to other texts and to the readers' own experiences and beliefs (Clark, 1995) (see Norton & Toohey, 2004 for further discussion of critical pedagogies and language learning).

4. The teaching of academic writing

Authors who have discussed the teaching of academic writing include Cotterall and Cohen (2003), Ferris (2001), Hewings & Hewings (2001), Johns (1990, 1993, 2003), Johns and Swales (2002), Paltridge (2001a), Raimes (1991, 1998), Reid (2001a), and Silva (1990). Important books on the teaching of second language writing include Grabe & Kaplan's (1996) *Theory and practice of writing*, Ferris and Hedgecock's (1998), *Teaching ESL composition*, Hyland's (2002c) *Teaching and researching writing*, Hyland's (2003c) *Second language writing*, Hyland's (forthcoming b) *Genre and second language writing*, Johns's (1997) *Text, role and context: developing academic literacies*, Kroll's (2003a) *Exploring the dynamics of second language writing*, Leki's (1992) *Understanding ESL writers*, Silva and Matsuda's (2001a) *On second language writing*, Silva and Matsuda's (2001b) *Landmark essays on ESL writing*, and Wennerstrom's (2003) *Genres of writing*. Ferris's (2002) *Treatment of error in second language student writing* and Ferris's (2003) *Response to student writing* provide important scholarly-based discussions of ways of responding to students' second language writing. Examples of academic writing programs in different parts of the world are described in Leki's (2001) *Academic writing programs*. Links between academic reading and writing are discussed in Belcher and Hirvela's (2001) *Linking literacies: perspectives on L2 reading-writing connections*, Ferris and Hedgecock's (1998) *Teaching ESL composition*, Hirvela's (forthcoming) *Connecting reading and writing in second language writing instruction*, and Grabe's (2003) 'Reading and writing relations: second language perspectives on research and practice'.

There have been a number of key developments in the teaching of academic writing. These developments have been very much 'products of their socio-historical moment' (Moore, 2004: 98) as they have reflected prevailing views of language, learning, human behaviour, and the politics of academic writing. While these have occurred in more or less historical progression, none of them have completely faded away as another approach has emerged. Many academic writing courses today draw on each of the developments rather than just the one single perspective (Johns, 2002).

The teaching of second language writing from the mid 1940s to the mid 1960s was based on the notion of *controlled composition*. Controlled composition viewed language as a set of fixed patterns that a writer manipulates in order to produce new sentences. This was followed in the mid 1960s by a movement that is often referred to as *current-traditional rhetoric*

(Connors, 1997). This approach moved beyond the sentence and took textual manipulation to the discourse level. It focussed on the teaching of *rhetorical functions* (Trimble, 1985) such as descriptions, narratives, definitions, exemplification, classification, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, and generalisations. In the 1970s, many teachers began to feel that the teaching of academic writing was ignoring individual thought and expression and that students were 'being restricted in what they could write and how they could write about it' (Jordan, 1997: 164). This gave rise to what is generally termed the *process approach* (see White & Arndt, 1991) to teaching academic writing where teachers aimed to guide rather than control learners and to let content, ideas and the need to communicate determine form, rather than commence with the form of a text. This approach had its origins in research into the processes of first language writing and was introduced into second language writing by Zamel (1976) who argued that advanced first and second language writers are similar and that second language writers could benefit from instruction than focuses on the process of writing (see Johns, 1990; Matsuda, 2003a, 2003b; Sasaski, 2000; Silva, 1990, 1993 for reviews of first and second language process writing research). Not all teachers were happy with the process approach, however. Horowitz (1986), for example, argued that the process approach gave students a false impression of what is required of them in university settings and, in particular, its very particular sociocultural context and expectations. He also argued against what he saw as an almost total obsession with personal meaning in process writing and proposed a shift from the writing process to the *needs* of learners and the content and demands of academic writing (see Atkinson, 2003; Matsuda, 2003b; Paltridge 2001a, Silva, 1990 for discussions of these developments).

Needs analysis, while dating back to the early days of language teaching and learning, came into its own in the 1980s (Richards 2001) and is still strongly important in the teaching of academic writing today. Needs analysis is discussed by Braine (2001b), Brindley (1989), Dudley Evans and St John (1998), Hutchinson and Waters (1987), Jordan (1989), Leki (2000), Richards (2001), Robinson (1991), and West (1994). Needs analysis starts with the question: why do the learners need to learn English? It considers the target learning situation in terms of tasks, knowledge, and language requirements, and the learning situation in terms of the particular group of students, the teachers, the institution, and the larger social context of the learning. It considers issues such as *necessities* (what the learners needs to know to operate in the target situation), *lacks* (the gap between the learners' present language abilities and what they need to able to do with language in the target situation) and *wants* (the learners' views

on what they need). Needs analysis, then, involves both subjective and objective measures of assessment (Brindley, 1989). Jordan (1989) discusses the steps involved in needs analysis including ways of collecting information about needs, and information about learners. As Braine (2001b: 196) observes, the design of English language programs 'without some consideration of learners' needs is almost unthinkable today.' Notwithstanding, needs are often 'complex, difficult to sort out, and may require a variety of responses' in that there are often 'competing needs and vested interests in defining and meeting [students'] needs' (Leki, 2000: 104). Needs analyses carried out at one institution, further, may not be easily transferable to another (Reid, 2001a).

The 1980s also saw the development of *content-based instruction*, drawing on Mohan's (1986) argument that language should not be taught in isolation from content and that 'authentic content provided the richest and most natural context for language teaching to occur' (Brinton & Holten 2001: 239). This approach is still important in the teaching of academic writing today (see Crandall and Kaufman (2002) for current examples of content-based academic writing courses). The objectives in content-based courses are drawn from the language, content, and study skills needed in a particular academic context. The curriculum, thus, is content driven. It focuses on incidental and instructed learning, with written texts being central. There is, generally, a continuum of content driven courses, where students are enrolled in a content course, through to language driven programs, where language classes make frequent use of content for language practice (Snow, 1998).

Often content-based academic writing courses are theme-based, focussing on particular content, topics, and language items in relation to particular themes. They may also be linked courses, in that they link language with courses in particular areas of study, such as essay writing for economics students, and dissertation writing for science and technology students. Sometimes content-based courses are used to provide an *immersion* experience for learners, aiming to provide them with a second or foreign language semester. Content-based courses often incorporate the teaching of analytical skills such as information management, critical thinking, data gathering, text analysis and text construction (see e.g. Brinton & Master, 1997). Writing in content-based courses is seen as both a means of thinking and learning and as a way of helping learners show they are learning (Crandall & Tucker, 1990). Approaches that have been made popular in first language settings are often drawn into ESL content-based courses. These include cooperative learning, whole language learning, literature-based teaching, task-based learning, case studies, and learners teaching the class about the own culture (Snow, 1998).

There are some key issues have arisen in content-based instruction. One of these is the role of the language teacher in relation to content. That is, who is the expert and whose job is what? Another issue is deciding on what content to include in content-based courses. Another important issue is the place of grammar in content-based courses. Very often content-based courses have a low focus on the formal features of language. Brinton and Holten (2001) discuss this issue, concluding that teachers are remiss if they do not meet students' grammar needs and that content based-curricula need to pay more systematic and principled attention to language instruction. Byrd and Reid (1998), Ferris and Hedgecock (1998), Muncie (2002), Hinkel (2004) and Turner (forthcoming) make helpful suggestions for focussing on grammar in academic writing settings that apply well to content-based instruction.

A further issue is how to deal with content in content-based courses. Leki and Carson (1997) argue that content-based courses based on sets of high-interest readings which do not require students to demonstrate knowledge of and write with responsibility for source texts do not adequately prepare students for real academic classes. As they point out, what is valued in the writing class is often different from what is valued in the academic classroom. Ultimately, writing classes need to prepare students for the needs and demands of writing in academic settings.

The 1980s and 1990s saw the development of the *genre approach* to the teaching of academic writing as an attempt to equip students for the needs and demands of writing in academy settings and to give them access to genres of power in the academy (Swales & Hyon, 1994). The genre approach was also a response to the liberal individualism of process writing (Hyland, 2003b) and its emphasis on personal experience, creativity, expressivism, and fluency (Reid, 2001b) (see the 2003 special issue of the *Journal of second language writing* for discussions of writing in the *post-process* era).

The genre approach is discussed by Swales (1990; 2004), Johns (1997; 2002), Flowerdew (1993), Badger and White (2000), Feez (1998), Hyland (2002d; 2003b; 2003c), Hyon (1996), Reid (2001a), Paltridge (2001b), and Wennerstrom (2003). The genre approach to teaching academic writing focuses on teaching academic genres, such as essays, assignments, and other pieces of in and out of class writing that students need to be able to produce in academic settings. This might include a focus on language and discourse features of the texts, as well as the social and cultural context in which the text is produced.

In the area of postgraduate writing, Swales and Feak's (1994) *Academic writing for graduate students* and their (2000) *English in today's research world* are especially important texts. Although not written as research monographs, these two texts are strongly influenced by research into postgraduate written genres such as research reports and theses and dissertations. *English in today's research world* pays particular attention to genre networks; that is, the sets of genres that postgraduate students need to be able to produce, and participate in, in the course of, and beyond, their study.

Flowerdew (1993) argues for a drawing together of genre and process approaches to teaching writing. He proposes a procedure that focuses on the process of learning about, and acquiring genres, rather than one that focuses solely on the end product, or specific variety of genre. He, thus, argues for an 'educational' rather than 'training' approach to the teaching and learning of genres. Badger and White (2000), take a similar view, examining the strengths and weaknesses of product, process, and genre approaches to writing. They argue that these approaches are complementary, rather than in opposition, to each other, and present an approach that is informed by each of them. Hyland (2003b) argues that the genre approach complements process views by adding a focus on text and context, and emphasizing the role of language in written communication.

One further and important development in the teaching of academic writing is what is sometimes called a *critical perspective* on academic writing (see e.g. Benesch, 1999; Canagarajah, 2001a; 2002a; Casanave, 2004; Harwood & Hadley, forthcoming; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Pennycook, 1999; 2001). This development arose, in part, as a result of what some researchers have argued is the accommodationist view of the teaching of academic writing (see e.g. Benesch, 1993; Luke 1996), an argument that was first taken up in critiques of the teaching of first language writing (see e.g. Comber & Simpson, 2001; Cope and Kalantzis, 1993; Luke, 1997; Muspratt *et al.*, 1997; Pennycook, 1996b; 2001) then followed through to the teaching of second language academic writing. In a critical perspective, classroom tasks aim to make visible the social construction and transmission of ideologies, power relationships, and social identities as a way of helping students make choices in their academic writing that reflect who they are, and who they want to be. Critical academic writing classrooms, then, engage students in the types of activities they are likely to carry out in their academic classes, while at the same time inviting students to question, and in some cases, transform, these activities (see Benesch 2001a, Canagarajah, 2002a for detailed suggestions on how a critical perspective on academic writing can be taken up in second language classrooms, Harwood & Hadley, forthcoming, for a *critical pragmatic* view of academic writing which focuses on difference and access).

The development of new technologies, such as computers and word processing have also had an impact on how students write and how academic

writing is taught. Email exchanges and electronic networking such as the use of email-lists, discussion groups, and bulletin boards are now widely used in academic settings. The Internet and the World Wide Web have also become an important source for student writers. There are also now a number of online writing labs and online style guides available to student writers (see Pennington 1996; 2003; Hyland, 2003c; Warschauer, 2003 for further discussions of new technologies and second language writing). As Pennington (2003: 306) argues:

> no teacher can afford to remain on the sidelines of these developments, which have transformed and are continuing to transform literacy, language, and all communications in significant ways.

Important books which investigate the experiences of second language students learning to write in academic settings include Casanave's (2002) *Writing games: multicultural case studies of academic literacy practices in higher education*, Harklau *et al.*'s (1999) *Generation 1.5 meets college composition: issues in the teaching of writing to US-educated learners of ESL*, Lillis's (2001) *Student writing: access, regulation, desire*, and Prior's (1998) *Writing/disciplinarity: a sociohistoric account of literate activity in the academy*. Other important research in this area includes the work of Belcher (1994), Casanave (1992), Harklau *et al.* (1999), Ivanic (1998), Leki (1999), Li (1996), and Schneider and Fujishima (1995).

Leki (1999) presents a study that provides important insights into the experience of a second language learner struggling to become a successful writer in the academy. She describes the educational and literacy background of the student and the student's 'attempts to beat the system' (Leki, 1999: 30). She shows how the student created a public image of himself as a serious, hard working student, but also, privately, as a wily manipulator of the system. Notwithstanding, the student found himself drowning in the university experience, with no real place to turn. Leki's account points to the often ill served needs of second language learners in academic settings and raises important issues for teachers and researchers in the area of second language academic writing.

5. Assessing academic writing

There are a number of book length accounts on the assessment of second language writing. These include Hamp-Lyons's (1991) *Assessing second language writing in academic contexts* and Cushing Weigle's (2002) *Assessing writing*. The assessment of second language academic writing is also discussed by Brindley and Ross (2001), Casanave (2004), Cumming (1997; 2002), Douglas (2000), Ferris and Hedgecock (1998), Hamp-Lyons (1990; 2001; 2003), Hamp-Lyons and Kroll (2001), Hyland (2003c), and Kroll (1998).

Hamp-Lyons (2001) describes the history of second language writing assessment in a number of phases: direct testing (such as using essays as a means of writing assessment), multiple choice testing, and portfolio assessment (see Kroll, 1998; Hamp-Lyons & Condon, 2000; Song & August, 2002 for discussions of portfolio assessment). Hamp-Lyons then outlines a fourth, and current, phase in ESL writing assessment. This phase focuses on technological, humanistic, political, and ethical aspects of writing assessment. Hamp-Lyons discusses the tension between technology and humanism, saying that it is easy to forget that tests 'are about people and that people as individuals are affected by tests and the outcomes of tests' (2001: 124). Hamp-Lyons (2001) and Cumming (2002) discuss the ethics of language testing and test fairness, arguing that the language tester has the responsibility 'to use all means available to make any language test she or he is involved in as fair as possible' (Hamp-Lyons, 2001: 124) and that writing tests should not be biased against people that might take them so that all test takers will 'have an equal opportunity to perform on the test' (Cumming, 2002: 79).

The ethics of language testing is further discussed by Shohamy (1998, 2001) who describes a number of characteristics of *critical language testing*. Shohamy (1998: 331) discusses 'the conflict between professionalism and morality, between fairness and validity, the politics of gatekeeping, and the unequal power relations between test makers and test takers'. Critical language testing, she argues:

> broadens the field of language testing by engaging it in a wider sphere of social dialogue and debate about the forms and practices of language testing and its relation to language teaching and language learning (Shohamy, 1998: 333).

Cushing Weigle (2002) discusses the future of second language writing assessment by looking at two main areas: the impact of technology on second language writing and second language writing assessment, and critical views on second language writing assessment. She points out how new technologies are 'affecting the nature of writing itself, in terms of the writing process, the norms and standards for written texts, and the development of new genres of writing' (Cushing Weigle, 2002: 231). Technology is also being used in the scoring of second language writing by computers and, with the growth of the internet, has increased global access to information and the dominance of English as an international language. Technology has also created divisions between people who have access to new technologies and those that do not. As Cushing Weigle argues, there are social and political consequences of new technologies in the assessment of second language writing that need to be considered.

Hamp-Lyons and Kroll (2001) describe a number of further issues in second language writing

assessment. These include the gap between the writing requirements of the academy and the writing students are asked to produce in testing situations, the development of writing prompts and scoring procedures, the selection and training of assessors, and test constraints of reliability, validity, and time. Brindley and Ross (2001) discuss issues in achievement assessment, and proficiency assessment in relation to public examinations such as the TOEFL and IELTS tests. They discuss the use of test scores as university admissions criteria, validity of EAP proficiency tests, and the challenges of performance testing. They then discuss the use of assessment in the academic English curriculum, the role of technology in academic English test design and delivery, and ways of assessing gains in academic English programs. As they conclude, a good deal more empirical work is still required 'in order to unravel the complexities of language use in academic contexts [and] to bring about a closer connection between assessment and learning in academic contexts' (Brindley & Ross, 2001: 166).

6. Indications for future research

Second language students, as with all university students, are required to produce a range of written genres during their academic studies. Exactly what they 'need to know' in order to succeed in the production of these texts is not, however, always clear. Making this knowledge explicit can provide learners with the knowledge and skills they need to communicate successfully in particular academic settings. It can also provide learners with access to socially powerful forms of language (Delpit, 1988). This is by no means a simple task when what is valued in one area of study may be very different from what is valued in another.

Johns (1997) and Canagarajah (2002a) recognize this difficulty by suggesting that we train our students to 'act as researchers' (Johns, 1997) and as 'ethnographers of communication' (Canagarajah, 2002a) as a way of helping them write texts that consider the institutional and audience expectations of their particular field of study. Students can be trained, they argue, to unpack the knowledge and skills that are necessary for membership of their academic community. We should give them, they argue, the skills to ask questions of the texts they are required to produce, of the context the texts are located in, and the people who will be reading and judging the effectiveness of their texts (Johns, 1997). Students may then decide to produce a text that fits in with these expectations, or they may write a text which challenges, or resists, what is expected of them.

We need, then, to unpack the historical, social, and ideological underpinnings of written academic genres, and how these impact on what students write and do in their use of written academic genres. We also need further analyses of the use of language in particular academic *communities of practice* (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) that look at the socio-political context of texts and ask what the features of that context are that impact on language use, and how this can be revealed to our learners.

Many more corpus studies which look at function and purpose, rather then frequency alone, are needed to better inform our teaching of genre specific language. And we need to better understand the settings of written academic genres as well as how we can focus on complex social relations, expectations, and assumptions in ways that are useful and accessible to our learners.

We also need a better understanding of the *multiliteracies* requirements of our students' academic worlds (Canagarajah, 2002a ; 2003), of the expanding use of electronic, visual, and multi media in their academic lives (Warschauer, 1999, 2003), and in the workplaces our classrooms are preparing our students for. Studies such as Dias *et al.* (1999) show that the writing of the academic classroom and the workplaces students are being prepared for are often worlds apart.

We need a better understanding of the expanding range of written genres that students need to produce in academic settings. Casanave (2002), for example, has shown that students are often required to produce written genres that they have not been prepared for in preparatory academic writing classes. We need to see to what extent findings from the analysis of expert writers' texts can feed back into writing programs for students working at less advanced levels. Some students may never produce the quality, or kind, of text some of these studies describe. To what extent, then, does this matter, or not? (see Silva, 1997 for a discussion of this). We also need a better understanding of the impact of new technologies on the development of second language academic writing (see Pennington, 2003, Warschauer, 2003 for further discussion of this).

Many studies in the area of contrastive rhetoric have focused on cultural differences in academic writing. Kubota (2000) has called for studies into 'critical contrastive rhetoric'. By this she means studies which examine cultural differences in language and communication but do not essentialise and oversimplify the notion of culture and cultural differences as if they were neutral and permanent truths (Kubota, 1999). Hirose (2003:205) argues that new approaches to contrastive rhetoric research are needed to help dispel some of the misguided stereotypes of first and second language writing 'so prevalent in the contrastive rhetoric field'.

We especially need second language acquisition studies that move beyond traditional descriptions of grammar to functional descriptions of grammar, pragmatics, and discourse, and examine how these are acquired over time within the context of learning to write academic genres. These studies need to be based

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on complete rather than isolated samples of learner language and they need to examine learners in the process of learning, rather than single moment studies of learners' grammatical abilities and performance (Perrett, 2001). As Leki (2003) has pointed out, there is often little interface between findings in the area of second language acquisition and discussions of second language writing.

We need to look for patterns of interaction in academic writing classrooms that foster language learning and we need to look at the social nature of learning particular written academic genres (Perrett, 2001). We need both quantitative and qualitative studies to help us understand what is happening in these classrooms and what goals are being achieved that will help us to evaluate, assess, and refine our classroom practices. We need to understand what are the best ways of providing explicit instruction in the teaching of academic writing or, is there no one best way? We need to better understand the place of linguistic accuracy in second students' academic written English (see Turner, forthcoming). And we need to understand how the relationship between language and context can best be drawn to learners' attention.

We also need further case study research to help us better understand the experiences of second language students learning to write in the academy. As Harklau (2003: 155) has pointed out, 'learning to write in a second language is not simply the accrual of technical linguistic abilities.' It includes 'how one sees oneself and is seen by others as a student, as a writer, and as an ethonolinguistic minority'. Case study research which provides us with 'literacy autobiographies' and 'portraits' of our learners' experiences (Casanave, 2002; 2004) can help us better understand these issues, and how we might respond to them.

A further useful development in the analysis of academic writing which could be further expanded is Swales (1998) notion of *textographies*; that is studies which look at the texts themselves, as well as the context of production and interpretation of the texts (see Swales, 1998; Canagarajah, 2002b; Paltridge, 2004a).

In the area of curriculum development we need ongoing evaluation and refinements of approaches to teaching academic writing, considering issues such as the relationship between theory and the way its taken up in the classroom, the role of teachers as curriculum developers, the role of learners in curriculum development, the place of needs–based programming in curriculum development, and accountability of academic writing programs.

In the area of second language assessment we need to examine the impact of new technologies on second language writing assessment and how tests of second language writing address ethical issues in language testing. We need to examine the reliability of procedures for assessing second language academic writing, the selection of tasks in academic writing tests, the constructs of second language academic writing proficiency and achievement as well as make second language writing assessment more relevant to our educational purposes (Cumming, 1997).

Finally, as Leki (2003) argues, we need to be open to more cross-disciplinary conversations in our discussions of academic writing in order to create more extensive theories, and to intensify our critiques. In Matsuda's (2000, 2003c) view, second language writing researchers need to pay more attention to metadisciplinary issues, engage in meta-disciplinary discourses, as well as what happens in first language writing instruction (see Leeds 1996 for a set of essays that have been influential in first and second language writing instruction). A critical understanding of second language writing theory, research, and instruction, he argues, requires a knowledge of what occurs in the area of first language composition studies. As Kroll (2003b) has argued, the fields of composition, rhetoric and second language learning clearly intersect. Not making these connections, Matsuda (2000) argues, will be detrimental both to the field, and to our students.

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