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ABSTRACT

The process of setting objectives for the reading component of an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course at Suva University in Fiji is described. The course is taken concurrently with a history course whose reading component is integrated into the EAP curriculum and whose specified objectives were to be facilitated by the EAP instruction. The history teachers were not generally available for consultation but did provide a list of their own instructional objectives. The process described occurred in three stages. The first involved study of the assigned text to clarify objectives and expectations. From this stage, three kinds of objectives emerged: broad; those related to reading strategies; and those related to text type. The second stage focused on assessment of current assignments and development of assignments related to those objectives. In stage three, the readings were analyzed to determine whether students would require skills other than those already stated. This involved a genre analysis of history research articles to determine the basic patterns of text organization and language used. The objectives and assignments resulting from the first two stages are presented and the text analysis is summarized. A sample of genre analysis and a brief bibliography are appended. (MSE)

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SETTING READING COMPONENT OBJECTIVES  
FOR AN INTEGRATED EAP COURSE

ED 372 654

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INTRODUCTION

If a course in English for Academic Purposes is to be taught parallel to, and integrated with one or more content courses, it presents opportunities that are not usually available to the course designers when a pre-session 'common core' course is planned. Rather than being forced to set broad objectives to accommodate the needs of students preparing to study in a wide variety of subjects, the planners can focus their objectives on the specific needs of students studying in a particular content area. They can select relevant and authentic reading texts and, as far as the situation allows, work in cooperation with the content course teachers. It is a great advantage if the course designers are familiar with the 'communicative purposes' and 'established genres' of the academic discipline concerned (Swales 1990, p. 46). If they are not however, the planning of the course in consultation with the content course teacher offers them an opportunity for learning that should ultimately benefit the students.

This paper reports on a three stage process of setting objectives for the reading component of a foundation year EAP course at the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Suva, Fiji. The course is taken concurrently with introductory social science courses including a history course with which the reading component of the EAP course is integrated. A full written statement of the objectives of the teachers of the history course was available to the EAP course planner although time for consultation with them was limited.

Background

For almost all students entering USP from the thirteen island nations in the South Pacific region served by the University, English is a second or in some cases, a third or fourth language. Although secondary education is conducted mainly in English, each year about one third of the students in the Foundation year of the University, at which English is the language of instruction, have difficulty with the reading,

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writing, listening and speaking tasks they face in their academic work.

Research has shown a close correlation between the level of English proficiency of these students and their overall success in the foundation year (Deverell 1989, p. 10). Those whose scores in a proficiency test indicate that they are likely to have serious difficulties are therefore required, during the first semester, to attend classes in the University's English Resources Unit (ERU) for three hours each week. (The test includes sections of reading comprehension of passages taken from foundation level science or social science textbooks and of basic science or social science vocabulary as well as sections on general vocabulary and usage.) Together with students whose test scores are satisfactory, the students attending the ERU classes also take the four required courses in either the science or the social science Foundation programme and a 'common core' study skills course. Thus the ERU classes in English for academic purposes can be described as adjunct, in that students are enrolled concurrently for credit in academic courses (Adamson 1990, p. 78). The ERU work, however, does not constitute a credit course.

The task assigned to the ERU staff is to help students develop the language skills they need to cope with their work in the credit courses. It is essential that students perceive the non-credit classes to be supportive and directly relevant to their needs and thus worth the investment of three hours each week. The reading component of the EAP course is therefore integrated with the course entitled, *Introduction to Pacific History*, from which all readings were selected. However, emphasis is not placed upon the reviewing of course content but upon developing the academic skills needed to master such content. (Adamson, 1990, p. 78).

#### THE PROBLEM

In setting objectives for the reading component the problem was to identify the reading skills students needed in order to proceed successfully with the history course. It was proposed that a study of the stated objectives of those teaching the history course would provide a firm basis for selecting the most relevant broad objectives. A study of the topics they set for tutorial discussion and for reading and writing tasks was expected to suggest more specific objectives for the EAP course. Further to this, an analysis of the required readings in the history course would be likely to show that objectives related to the structure of particular genre should be included. The following questions were therefore posed:

1. What are the stated aims of lecturers in the credit course? In other words, what do they expect students to do with the readings?

2. What expectations of reading skills are reflected in topics set for discussion and writing assignments? Do these suggest any additional objectives?

3. What further objectives arise from an analysis of the texts students are required to read in the history course.

#### PROCEDURE

The course *Introduction to Pacific History*, is offered in the distance education (correspondence or extension) mode as well as on campus. To cater for the needs of extension students, the Reader compiled for the course (Routledge and Meleisea, 1986a) and the Assignment Booklet (Routledge and Meleisea, 1986b) include the following material:

- an introduction which sets out the aims of the course and lecturers' expectations of student performance;
- about thirty pages of readings for each of twelve units;
- introductions to each unit which cover similar ground to lectures given on campus;
- topics to be prepared for discussion in tutorials and for written assignments; and
- a sample examination paper.

#### Stage One - Stated objectives

The introduction to the reader was studied to identify history lecturers' objectives and expectations. Points were clarified where necessary by listening to the introductory history lecture on campus and in personal conversation with lecturers. The pressures of time on history lecturers teaching large Foundation classes precluded the possibility of involving them in any type of team planning.

#### Stage Two - Assignments

Tutorial assignments, written assignments and examination questions set over two years were analyzed, to find out if their demands coincided with those of the stated objectives and/or suggested further objectives.

### Stage Three - Reading texts

The reading texts were analyzed to determine whether students would require skills additional to those already stated, in order to read them effectively. A 'genre analysis' of a sub-genre of history research articles was carried out, to discover the pattern of organization upon which they were based and some of the language forms typically used (Swales 1981 and 1990). However, no detailed linguistic analysis was possible within the time frame available. The purpose was pedagogical and the definition of genre used was that of Swales (1990, p. 58) as follows:

A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style.

### RESULTS

Stages One and Two  
Stated objectives and assignments

Relevant general objectives stated by the history lecturers, as well as those they set down specifically for reading skills, are listed below (adapted from Routledge and Meleisea 1986a, pp. 13 and 17-19.) Under each objective, examples are given of tutorial discussion topics, writing topics and examination questions they set which reflect the particular objective. Some examples reflect more than one objective but they are placed where they seem to fit best.

#### General objectives

Students will be expected to:

1. become acquainted with some of the basic facts of the recent history of the Pacific;

#### Tutorial topic

Note all the details mentioned of everyday life in traditional Tonga and Fiji and then write a connected statement on the subject.

#### Examination question

Island societies ... had their own systems of government before the European systems were introduced. Explain what this statement means with reference to a society of your choice.

2. understand that many different interpretations of the past are possible but that the course will, "look at the story from the point of view of islanders themselves";

Tutorial topics

Think about the effect on history writing of a society formulating its own idea of the past rather than confronting it objectively.

Compare the remarks about ... in the first extract with those of the other writers on the same subject.

3. consider the kind of interpretation that is most interesting and relevant to themselves, thinking about ideas as they are related to the past of their own communities;

Tutorial topics

Think about Garrett's statement that chiefly leaders defined the context of mission activity as it applies to your own society.

What is the linguistic situation with respect to the Fijian Language? Compare this with that of your own mother tongue.

4. develop skills of analyzing, evaluating and interpreting;

Tutorial topics

What is the relationship between the Lapita material culture and (i) Melanesian cultural forms (ii) ... and (iii)... ?

Written assignments

Why is it important for Pacific Islanders to write their own history?

How does excessive national pride affect history writing?

Discuss the reasons which resulted in the colonization of one Pacific Island of your choice.

To what extent did missionary influence affect the traditional political structures in one Pacific Island of your choice?

Examination questions

Missionaries were agents of change. Explain what this statement means, giving examples from a country of your choice.

Choose one group of Europeans from the list below and write about who they were and their influences on the societies they came into contact with.

(a) beachcombers (b) traders (c) explorers.

What factors contributed to the beginning of labour recruiting in Melanesia and what are some of the effects on both the societies the labourers went to and those they came from?

5. Follow a sustained line of argument and present their own ideas about its force or validity;

Tutorial topics

Note how the steps in Sayes' argument are supported from a variety of different sources.

Read carefully everything that is said about oral evidence.

What do you think ...[is] meant by the term 'reliable source'? Do you agree that there is such a thing.

Think about the problems of testing for reliability and the role of historians themselves in the process.

Examination question

Describe the relationship between evidence from archaeology, linguistics and oral traditions in the writing of Pacific history.

6. and develop a permanent interest in the past of their own societies.

Tutorial topics

Remember that although the readings in the unit concentrated on Fiji, this was only by way of example. Think about similar possibilities within your own community.

What different kinds of evidence have been used by X ... in his ... study. Think about the possibilities for the history of your own people.

## Reading objectives

1. Historians must be conscious of change. They must note the relationship of events through time ... You should notice the date at which authors ... wrote down their opinions ... and be aware of their identity and of the circumstances in which they wrote.

### Tutorial topics

Has the attitude of Pacific Islanders towards Europeans changed in the time since Stella et al. wrote?

What is the current view about ...?

Why does Denoon think that History writing will always be necessary? Do you think he is right?

2. Readings should be thought about critically ... not to be taken as definitive statements ... form your own opinions based on ... thought and supported by evidence.

### Tutorial topics

Read the paragraph. Think about the extent to which the statement is a generalization ... how true is it of the modern state in the Pacific Islands. How much do Pacific Island States differ in this respect from states in other parts of the world?

What are some of the problems of defining the geographical boundaries of Melanesia and of generalizing about Melanesian political systems?

Consider the way in which different kinds of evidence were used to build up knowledge about... Why is the exact place at which an artifact is encountered in an excavation important to the archaeologist?

3. Readings and units should not be considered as separate entities ... There are themes which recur.

### Tutorial topic

Read the paragraph. The ideas it advances will be considered in later units. In the meantime think about ....

4. You must expect to meet many new words and be aware that the expanding of your vocabulary will be an important part of completing the course.



## CONCLUSIONS

### Stages one and two

#### A. Broad objectives

It is clear that the above objectives and expectations of the history lecturers can be usefully adopted, with some adaptation, as broad objectives, by the English lecturer teaching reading skills. The history lecturers recognize that the, " skills of analyzing, evaluating and interpreting are not easily come by," and that during the course of the semester the students will, "become better able to follow a sustained line of argument and to present [their] own ideas about its force or validity". (Routledge and Meleisea, 1986a, p.2.) Students experiencing language difficulties, however, need more support in developing these skills than history lecturers dealing with large numbers have the time or perhaps the expertise to offer them.

#### B. Reading strategy objectives

When the broad objectives derived from the history course are considered it is clear that the main reading strategies students need to develop are what Pugh (1975, p.4) refers to as 'receptive' and 'responsive'. He describes the purpose of receptive reading as, "discovering accurately what the author conveys, the usual visual behaviour being linear and sequential movement through the text ... though accompanied by occasional references back. Extremely close attention to the visual task is typical." This is the type of reading needed to carry out important general objectives mentioned above, such as following a sustained line of argument, and identifying the evidence presented in support of that argument. The history lecturers say, in their introduction, that they have selected the reading material carefully, sometimes taking abstracts from longer pieces, and that "all of it" is important for students to study. (Routledge and Meleisea 1987a, p.3.)

"Responsive" reading, Pugh describes as "using what an author conveys as a prompt to reflective, relational or creative thinking." Again, "linear and sequential movement through the text is usual accompanied by some reference back." However, in this case, "extremely close attention to the text [is] interspersed with periods ... where there is no visual attention." (1975, p.4) This is the type of reading which is appropriate when students are required to: for example, analyze, evaluate and interpret; present their own ideas about the validity of an argument; consider which interpretations are most relevant to themselves and to relate ideas to the history of their own communities; and recognize recurring themes.

### C. Text-type objectives

The topics for discussion and writing make more explicit, specific rhetorical types which need to be recognized when following an argument in the readings and analyzing, evaluating and interpreting. For example, twelve of the topics call for recognizing cause and effect, eleven for comparison, while generalization and definition need to be recognized frequently. Costello's work confirms that linguistic signalling of cause and effect, and of comparison and generalization is a significant elements in the language of history (1982, p. 63-64).

## RESULTS

### Stage Three

#### Analysis of the reading texts

The readings can be divided into three broad textual categories. In the first grouping are narrative texts which include a collection of origin myths from Pacific Island cultures, and sections of historical narrative extracted from history textbooks or journal articles. In a second group, passages of historical narrative are interspersed with comment and analysis involving the various text types already mentioned, such as cause and effect and comparison. The third group consists of a sub-genre of history research articles which have a particular form or structure.

Four distinct sections appear in the introductions to these articles as follows:

- a description of a situation;
- a statement of the view of a previous writer or writers about an aspect of that situation;
- a statement of the author's view, which disagrees with the previous view.
- an announcement that evidence or argument will be presented for the author's view

(An example is given in the Appendix.)

There is variation in the amount of detail given about the situation, and in the degree to which the justification for the claims of previous authors' is explained and either conceded or rebutted but the basic structure remains. Clearly the four sections correspond to a considerable extent, although not entirely, to the four 'moves' in Swales', 'Create a Research Space (CARS)' model (1990 p. 141).

The introduction is typically followed by a long section of argument and presentation of evidence to support the author's view, followed by a brief conclusion confirming the view stated in the introduction.

Typical lexical signals associated with the first section, that is the description of the situation - are words and phrases indicating place, time and political and economic state. Some examples follow.

place - geographical location  
midway down an island chain  
most easterly point  
in the centre of the frontier zone  
the windward parts of the adjacent islands

time - historical period  
at its zenith  
at the time of European contact  
early last century  
towards the end of the eighteenth and in  
the first half of the nineteenth century

political and economic state  
confederation  
power configuration  
pyramid of groups capped by the lineage  
the paramount  
hierarchical societies  
territorial control  
economic exploitation  
subsistence economy

Phrases used to introduce a criticism of the previous view include the following:

... an attitude of mind that ... fails to  
give sufficient recognition to ...

...such a view ignores the ... realities  
and the weight of evidence

recently this view point has been  
challenged... it has been argued that ...

While it cannot be denied that ... the  
extent ... has sometimes been obscured.

It may be argued that ... but it should  
not be forgotten that...

The explanation for ... appears to be more  
complex and more subtle, depending  
not primarily upon ... but upon factors  
...

A typical signal of the "announcement" that evidence will be presented is, "The present paper argues that ..."

## CONCLUSIONS

### Stage Three

#### Structure of genre

It is clear that further objectives need to be stated in terms of introducing students to the pattern of the particular sub-genre of the history research article that they will be required to read, and to some of the linguistic manifestations that are typically associated with it. Although it can be assumed that students at this level will be familiar with the narrative forms of the readings in the first grouping, particularly the myths which are part of their cultural traditions (Bensoussan 1990, p. 62), they will not be familiar with the structure of the research articles. They will need to develop an appropriate framework or formal schema (Rumelhart 1981, 3-24) for reading such articles. Because all the articles deal with aspects of the history of their own countries the students are likely to have prior knowledge structures or schemata which will help them to deal with the readings at the content level. Their reading will be greatly enhanced, however, if these content schemata can be combined with formal schemata in an interactive process. (Carrell 1987, p.49 and Swales 1990, pp. 10 & 84)

Although a more detailed linguistic analysis of this sub-genre of history research articles is a desirable long-term goal the above analysis is useful in the meantime for the pedagogical purpose for which it was intended.

## DISCUSSION

The intended audience for the history research articles described above must be the authors' peers who are members of an established 'discourse community' (Swales 1990, p.9). By learning to recognize the form of such articles and the 'communicative purpose' (p. 10) of the authors, Foundation history students are beginning to be initiated into a knowledge of the writing conventions of a particular discourse community, the members of which 'share some set of communicative purposes' (Ibid, p. 58)

South Pacific historian J.W. Davidson states that "the possibility of writing definitive history is reached through the process of progressive approximation" (1967, p. x). In the light of new evidence from archaeology, linguistics, oral traditions and of the increasing interest taken by Pacific people in writing the histories of their countries from their own points of view, various aspects of Pacific history are being rewritten. In the words of David Routledge (1990, p. 38-39), one of the lecturers in the history course, "Origin-myths, social charters, genealogies and even much more informal stories of a fictive kind ... are now recognized to be ore for the historian armed with appropriate tools for extraction ... oral evidence and non-textual sources of many kinds play an increasing role in shaping interpretation" (p. 39). In other words, progress is being made towards new 'approximations'.

Davidson's concept of 'progressive approximation' throws light on the communicative purpose of the writers of a sub-genre of the history articles included in the readings for the course. This purpose is in turn reflected in the form or structure of the articles. The second section setting out the previous view can be seen as a previous 'approximation', while section three, stating the author's view, represents a further step in 'the process of approximation'. The major initiators of the student into the discourse community of historians must of course be members of that community - the history lecturers. Nevertheless, in so far as English teachers are familiar with the communicative purpose of an established genre in that community and the form that the genre is likely to take, they may play a useful role in the initiation process.

A number of the general objectives of the history course discussed in this paper and adopted by the EAP course designer tie in with the communicative purpose of the history article discussed above. These are those which aim to teach the student to think critically about the opinions of authors; consider various interpretations; and look critically at the evidence presented. An approach to learning which demands that students think critically about what they read, is likely to be unfamiliar to many of the students taking the history and EAP courses. Experience has shown reluctance to criticize as a typical characteristic of most beginning university students. This is partly due to a lack of confidence in both their language skills and their knowledge of the subject but also to a lack of clarity about what is expected of them. Another reason is probably cultural. It is not that criticism is not offered in Pacific cultures, rather that there are definite conventions about how and when and to whom open criticism should be addressed. Criticism is probably more often presented indirectly. Student writing and speaking sometimes reveals that they are searching for the conventions and language forms in which they can appropriately criticize what they read. Their attempts tend to be either abrasive or too apologetic or incorrect in language and tone as the following extracts from a student written assignment show.

(The central argument of the article the student has been asked to read and respond to, is that aid erodes integrity.)

I personally agree to most of Professor X's points but Professor X should realize that ... I will point out the points which contradict to my perspective and also the points which I strongly agreed. ... He personally overstated that only a portion of the country (the civil servants) will get fatter and less effective. This is just to cite a specific personal attack of his writing. I personally feel that this is a generalized statement. It depends on the people who handle aid. If they are loyal, have integrity ... then Professor X's thought is a fallacy. This is a very good point to argue personally because I am a civil servant and I am not getting fatter and fatter. Also I am very effective in the work I do. This is how [Tavita] (I have substituted a name for his own) perceives the situation.

Reading a number of the history research articles described above and having English (or History) lecturers point out the structure of them explicitly, should build up the students' schemata so that they are eventually able to recognize similar patterns in other reading. In responding critically to what they read, in either oral or written form, they should, when provided with such "flexible prescriptions" (Dudley-Evans 1987, p. 3) also become increasingly able to use correct language forms and an appropriate tone.

APPENDIX

EXAMPLE OF ANALYSIS OF  
HISTORY RESEARCH ARTICLE

Sayes, Shelley Ann. (1984). Changing paths of the land:  
early political hierarchies in Cakaudrove, Fiji.  
*Journal of Pacific History*. 19.

Cakaudrove, a *matanitu* or confederation of chiefdoms was typical of the power configurations which existed in eastern Viti Levu and the windward parts of Fiji at the time of European contact early last century. At its zenith, a time period which included the 1830s and 1840s it comprised the majority of southern Vanua Levu from, and including most of Savusavu Bay eastward to Udu Point together with Taveuni and the adjacent islands of both, as well as the islands of Southern Lau. By 1830 the capital was Somosomo village on the island of Taveuni.

(same paragraph)

The political organization of Cakaudrove approximated the Polynesian model- extensive pyramid of groups capped by the lineage and following a high chief. The head of the *Vanua Cakaudrove*, the *Tui Cakau* who was a member of the *i Sokula* lineage was the paramount of the *matanitu*. Subordinates of the *Tui Cakau* thought of them (and other members of the *i Sokolu* lineage) as sacred, the descendants and representatives of the ancestor gods and as such gods themselves. This ideology asserted they ruled by right, not by might; and Fijian paramounts are believed, still to hold their position because their right has been prescribed. To prove this the Bible may be quoted: 'For there is no authority except from God, and those [governing authorities] that exist have been instituted by God.'

SITUATION  
PLACE named  
Features of  
PLACE -  
Political  
TIME  
general period  
  
exact dates  
Extent of PLACE  
Geographical

Features of  
PLACE  
- capital

- Political  
organization

Ideological  
base

Early observers, mainly missionaries, accepted the sacredness of *turaga* (chiefs) which logically involved the assumption that they belonged to high ranking lineages of high standing. Paradoxically, they did not accept that the Fijian polity was capable of achieving and maintaining complex political hierarchies before European contact.

PREVIOUS VIEW I  
OBSERVERS

PARADOX

(same paragraph)

This reluctance was inherited by later researchers though recently the viewpoint has been challenged.

PREVIOUS VIEW II  
LATER RESEARCHERS

(same paragraph)

The European presence was not responsible for the emergence of powerful *turaga*; their emergence must be seen in the context of a constantly changing balance of power.

PRESENT  
WRITER'S VIEW

The present paper argues that *matanitu* existed in Fiji before the contact period and that the balance of power had never been static.

ANNOUNCEMENT

...

Then follows the main body of the argument.

### Conclusion

Before regular contact with Europeans, it is clear that Fijian polity was quite capable of supporting complex political hierarchies. Evidence for pre-contact political relationships indicates that *matanitu* had existed in different configurations and that the power balance was changeable. Even if contact did help a new power to emerge, such an emergence took place in the context of a constantly changing balance of power. Power relationships were never constant; powerful *turaga* were forever engaged in defending, maintaining or increasing their power.

REAFFIRMATION  
OF  
AUTHOR'S  
VIEW



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