

# Reflexive pedagogy for reading across the curriculum: The University of KwaZulu-Natal Faculty of Education experience

EMMANUEL MFANAFUTHI MGQWASHU

University of KwaZulu-Natal

*This article is a qualitative evaluation of the role of reflexive pedagogy; a pedagogic approach used in a first year, academic literacy compulsory module for all first year Bachelor of Education (B. Ed) students offered by the School of Language, Literacies, Media and Drama Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The module is called Academic Learning in English (ALE). Its objective is to assist students in the process of enhancing their skills in reading and writing so that they become effective learners in the university environment. Located within the philosophy of subjectivist epistemology and qualitative methodology, the article uses semi-structured interview questions, students' assignments and one lecturer's written comments on these assignments and the module worksheets as the sources of data. These are used to carry out the qualitative evaluation of reflexive pedagogy. The findings indicate that, as educationists, and for the realisation of the post-apartheid ideals in South Africa, reflexive pedagogy has the potential to undo school classroom practices that evolved in western education systems to reward the elite and marginalise the majority.*

**Keywords:** Reflexive pedagogy, reading across the curriculum, subjectivist epistemology, qualitative evaluation, genre, ability gap, epistemological access.

## Introduction

Reading within the context of formal learning, and indeed in general, requires more than just the ability to decode letters and words. On the contrary, the reader's challenge includes using knowledge of other texts and of the world in order to question what they read. Not only do readers require knowledge of these extra textual details, they also need to make inferences and draw conclusions within the texts they read. Within the context of higher education, the expectation goes beyond just these abilities, but extends further to include students' ability to take a different position derived from values and attitudes related to what counts as knowledge, and how it can be known within various disciplinary discourses. I argue elsewhere that:

*...academics as groups within respective disciplines tend to employ certain forms of language which operate as "given" and, as a consequence, endow a particular set of linguistic codes (constructs) with all the objectivity of disciplinary "facts". These linguistic codes (constructs) become the criteria in terms of which students are assessed, since most disciplines tend to assume that students understand what they are objectively supposed to understand. (Mgqwashu, 2000:63)*

As far as assessment is concerned, students are expected to manipulate language academically, a skill which presupposes a constellation of acquired abilities. As I hope to illustrate later, these abilities, it may be argued, can be learned only if interaction between students and lecturers is underpinned by principles of reflexive pedagogy, that is, an explicit teaching practice driven by a view that pedagogic communication needs to signal the discourse's constructedness. This is fundamental for epistemological access in higher education for it involves developing students' awareness of the fact that, as Montgomery, Martin and Stuart, 1992:7) put it: "Meaning [within different disciplines] is a function, not of particular words or wordings, but rather of the discursive formation in which... expressions occur". When language is in use (whether in writing or in speaking), discursive formations function as sets of regulative principles that underlie actual disciplinary discourses. Within this context, what constitutes meaning in disciplinary content becomes an effect upon the human subject, but not a stable property.

Pedagogic practice in most universities, however, does not lend itself to principles underpinning reflexive pedagogy, a practice designed to facilitate epistemological access. The latter is seen by most academics as too elementary, and is therefore rejected because it clashes with their pedagogical philosophy that students are already favoured by the expertise lecturers bring into the teaching context. What this philosophy ignores, regrettably, is the fact that learning implies acquiring both knowledge itself, and the code of transmission used to convey a particular body of knowledge. Assuming that students will understand academic discourse without explicitly reflecting on its constructedness through the explicit teaching of reading, is to ignore the fact that language is not just a collection of words, but provides us with a system of what Bourdieu (1994:8) calls “transposable mental dispositions”. Given the demographic changes experienced by South African universities in the past thirty five years, it would be suicidal (or academically/educationally irresponsible) to maintain a teaching practice that is essentially content-centred and oblivious to the urgency to facilitate epistemological access.

Reflexive pedagogy, the key to facilitating such access, should not be seen as a practice with the potential to “water down” the “noble” aims of university education which according to Zembskie (1997), is producing knowledge in its highest forms, but as a practice that allows practitioners of pedagogical communication methodically and continuously to reduce to a minimum the misunderstanding arising from the use of an unfamiliar code. Failure to acknowledge this fundamental democratic right has the potential to lead to a situation where, even though Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have an open door policy and all students across racial and socio-economic lines can study anywhere they like, very few will stand a chance of achieving their goals of further education and professional careers.

Drawing on my research (Mgqwashu, 2007), literature (Cross, 2009; Sternberg, 2007; Fraser and Killen, 2005; Rose, 2005), and personal experiences as an educator, I intend in this article to offer a qualitative evaluation of reflexive pedagogy as used to facilitate epistemological access in my own teaching within the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Faculty of Education. I do this within the context of a first year, academic literacy compulsory module for all first year Bachelor of Education (B. Ed) students offered by the School of Language, Literacies, Media and Drama Education. This module is called *Academic Learning in English* (ALE). As I hope to show in this article, it seems to me that as educationists, and for the realisation of the post-apartheid ideals, we are faced with a challenge to undo school classroom practices that evolved in western education systems to reward the elite and marginalise the majority. Such practices manifest in progressive approaches that emphasise learner-centeredness and discovery learning or, even worse, traditional approaches that favour teacher-centeredness and rote learning. Research (Rose, 2005) shows that both approaches have failed to change outcomes. The reason for this is that they are premised on an incremental learning model, which is theoretically legitimated by Piaget (1928), with the notion that learning occurs from the ‘inside out’. As a result, students within formal education systems are continually evaluated to assess readiness for advancement. While traditional approaches legitimate streaming into different ability classes, progressive approaches inform individuated learning activities, thereby constructing students as autonomous learners with inherent skills and talents akin to the demands of formal education. The commonality between these approaches, however, is that both focus on the completion of a series of tasks and end with summative assessment. In the process, they ignore various ability levels among students. Given the fact that students come from different economic and educational backgrounds, the rate of development is unequal, and so both approaches ensure that ability gap never closes.

The majority of students brings this ability gap into higher education, and my contention in this article is that the basis of this inequality in most lecture halls and tutorials, and hence in the society, lies in students’ differing capacities to learn independently by reading. The difference between the students who qualify for university education and those who do not, but gain access through other means, for example, admissions and/or placement tests, hinges on their ability to engage with reading independently. For Sternberg (2007: 8), the “essence of the problem in using merit-based approaches has been that certain groups consistently perform more poorly in traditional admission tests than do other groups...”. It is for this reason that the central thrust of my argument in this article is that, in addition to the limitations in

secondary education, this difference in ability is a consequence of the kind of primary socialisation in the home in terms of the extent to which each child experiences parent-child reading from an early age. Research (Bergin, 1999) shows that “children in literate middle-class families experience an average of 1000 hours before starting school, whereas those from oral cultural backgrounds may experience little or none” (in Rose, 2005, 3). To emphasise my point, I refer to Hood and Wood (2004:103) who assert that

*... literacy development does not begin when a child first enters school and conventional literacy instruction is initiated. Instead... [it] begins from birth and seems to represent a continuum of development. The literacy experiences that occur before children enter school should involve social interactions where children learn about print in a meaningful way.*

The majority of students enrolled for the compulsory module discussed in this article come from cultural backgrounds that value speaking more than reading, and are from the bottom of the economic scale. Most of them come from ex-Department of Education and Training (DET)<sup>2</sup> schools that are based either in rural areas or black townships, where the culture of reading in most families is virtually non-existent. As Hart’s (1995) study indicates, the majority of such students lack the necessary pre-junior primary, primary, and secondary levels reading skills prior to entering the higher education sector. In addition, and to exacerbate the problem further, this lack of explicit attention to the teaching of reading across the curriculum in formal education means that, throughout primary and secondary education, these students never have the opportunity to develop skills to *independently learn from reading*, a skill necessary to access knowledge in higher education. This form of disadvantage is compounded by the fact that English, the medium of instruction in most South African institutions of learning, is rarely spoken in rural and black township communities.

It is for this reason that this article emphasises the centrality of *the ability to learn from reading* in formal education and presents a qualitative evaluation of reflexive pedagogy’s role in developing such ability. In the process of theorising module content, designing lectures and tutorial worksheets, and teaching, as I hope to demonstrate, reflexive pedagogy informs my considerations with regard to *the explicit teaching of reading across the curriculum*. Cross’s (2009: 15) research findings reveal that the lack of explicitness in the teaching of reading is problematic, for it denies epistemological access for the majority of students in HEIs:

*Another obstacle to affiliation is identified by certain students as being the blurred or implicit character of the norms. The studies conducted by Coulon revealed that this implicit character of working norms of the academic institution makes the university’s community particularly opaque for non-initiated students coming from ordinary circles. Ignoring implicit codes and “good manners” which enhance success, these “culturally displaced” students maintain social and intellectual resources maladjusted to the situations.*

Since the majority of the assessment tasks in formal education, especially at secondary and tertiary levels, are actually designed to *evaluate whether or not students have learnt from reading* (Rose: 2005), failure to pay attention to the explicit teaching of reading across the curriculum from primary to higher education means that our classrooms perpetuate inequalities. Sternberg (2007: 9) puts it more succinctly: “indeed, it is important to realise that the so-called ability tests are achievement tests for skills that were supposed to have been learned a few years earlier”.

It is within the context of these concerns that this article offers a qualitative evaluation of the role reflexive pedagogy, a pedagogic practice adopted in ALE, plays in ensuring epistemological access for first year students. The focus of this qualitative evaluation is more specifically on the role this pedagogic practice plays in facilitating access to knowledge crucial for educational success within HEIs. The potential benefits of reflexive pedagogy to students in terms of learning to read and write academically, and whether or not it can ensure access to knowledge to close the ability gap amongst first year students, are the main thrusts of the qualitative evaluation discussed in this article.

Against the background presented above, it can be seen that it is crucial to qualitatively evaluate the role played by a teaching practice that draws students’ attention to ways in which authors’ purposes influence text structure in creating conditions for epistemological access. Data in this article suggests

that this needs to be the primary concern in higher education in order to achieve the kinds of educational outcomes needed to build a democratic South Africa. Such a qualitative evaluation is timely, for as Sternberg (2007:10) affirms, any “institution can admit students from underrepresented minority groups, but unless it teaches in a way that fits the way they learn, the admission decision may actually thwart rather than abet the intended goals”

## Strategies to investigate the phenomenon

Fink (1995 2) defines evaluation as:

*...a diligent investigation of a program's characteristics and merits. Its purpose is to provide information on the effectiveness of projects so as to optimise the outcomes, efficiency, and quality. Evaluations achieve this purpose by enabling you to analyse a program's structure, activities, and organisation and to examine its political and social environment. Evaluations can be used also to appraise the achievement of a project's goals and objectives and the extent of its impact and costs.*

In the context of this article, my primary aim is to provide data on the role of reflexive pedagogy in ALE's declared objective: to assist students in the process of enhancing their skills in *reading and writing so that they become effective learners in the university environment*. This pedagogic approach attempts to achieve this objective by introducing students, in an explicit way, to the process of academic reading and writing, and by developing their capacity to produce coherent, cohesive and logical texts (orally and in writing) within the context of an intellectually challenging examination of themes which are of contemporary academic interest in education. Nevo (1986:18) rightly points out that:

*...(a) almost everything can be an object of evaluation, and evaluation should not be limited to the evaluation of students or school personnel; and (b) the clear identification of the evaluation object is an important part of the development of any evaluation design. In planning an evaluation it seems to be important to determine what is 'the thing' (or 'the evaluand', to use Scriven's (1980) term) that has to be evaluated.*

As pointed out earlier, ‘the evaluand’ in this article is the pedagogic approach adopted in ALE, the reflexive pedagogy. To keep the evaluation focused, the evaluation questions (adapted from Fink, 1995: 6-7) used to investigate the characteristics, to appraise the achievement, and the impact of the goals and objectives of the reflexive pedagogy adopted in ALE are:

- What role does the pedagogic approach adopted in ALE achieve its goals and objectives?
- How do the students who participate in ALE experience the pedagogic approach adopted?
- For which individuals or a group is the pedagogic approach adopted in ALE most helpful?

In the context of evaluation design, it is important to identify a set of standards “needed to provide convincing evidence of a program's effectiveness, an important component of an evaluator's appraisal of merit” (Fink, 1995: 7). The most appropriate, possible to measure and credible standards for the purposes of this article are:

- Testimony from students in the form of verbal responses to interview questions and their written work;
- Students' informed, precise and critical response to prescribed academic readings and lecturers' comments on their written work and;
- Students' improved attitudes towards reading in general, and reading complex academic texts in particular.

Implicit in the above standards is a very specific philosophy of epistemology (that is, knowing or establishing ‘truth’), the subjectivist epistemology. Given the fact that this article is an evaluation of a pedagogic approach that I, as its evaluator, use to teach ALE, the philosophy of subjectivist epistemology seemed appropriate. In defining this philosophy, Worthen and Sanders (1987, 46) assert that:

*Subjectivism bases its validity claims on “an appeal to experience rather than to scientific method. Knowledge is conceived as being largely tacit rather than explicit” (House, 1980, p. 252). The validity of a subjectivist evaluation depends on the relevance of the evaluator’s background and qualifications and the keenness of [their] perceptions. In this sense, the evaluation procedures are “internalised”, existing largely within the evaluator in ways that are not explicitly understood or reproducible by others.*

In his *Crisis and Challenge: Black Education 1910–1990*, Hartshorne (1992: 1) insists that: “I do think that anyone writing on South African issues at present should give some idea of the influences and experiences that have shaped his views and beliefs about humankind and society.” My educational experiences of learning English and *in English* during and after apartheid in South Africa (Mgqwashu, 2009) and my studies (Mgqwashu, 1999: 2007), largely influence my contributions to debates and scholarship about, and pedagogic approach to meet, the linguistic and academic literacy needs of students within higher education. Hartshorne (1992:1) rightly argues that: “each of us is shaped by all the influences exerted upon us, by the way in which we have responded to them, and by what we as individuals decided to do as a result” (1). It is against this background that I have chosen the qualitative evaluation of the pedagogic approach used in ALE. According to Fink (1995: 14),

*Qualitative evaluations collect data from in-person interviews, direct observations, and written documents (e.g. private diaries). These evaluations aim to provide personalised information on the dynamics of a program and on participants’ perceptions of their outcomes and impact...Because they are “personalised”, qualitative methods may add emotions and tone to purely statistical findings and provide a means of gauging outcomes when reliable and valid measures of those outcomes are unlikely to become available in time for the evaluation report.*

In the context of this article, semi-structured interview questions, written assignments, one lecturer’s comments on students’ written work and the worksheets used in ALE, are the sources of data used to carry out the qualitative evaluation of reflexive pedagogy. As indicated, interviewing students’ and using their written work required that I adhere to the University’s ethical clearance policies. I accordingly applied for ethical clearance through the University’s Research Office (see attached appendices).

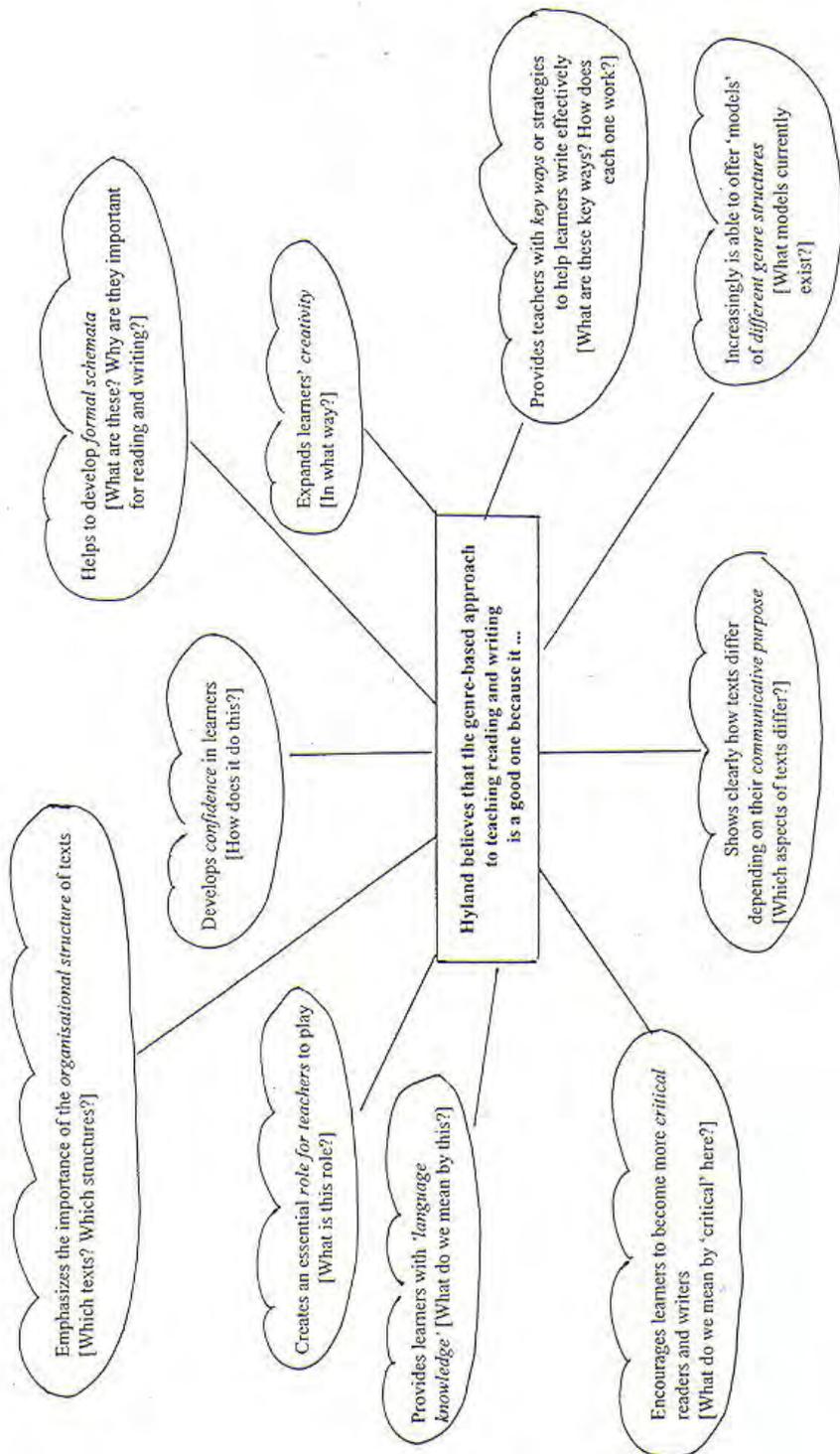
## Research findings and discussion

Given the fact that most of our students enter university education with limited reading skills, and that assessment tasks at tertiary level fundamentally evaluate students’ abilities to learn from reading (Rose: 2005), the pedagogic practice in ALE is designed to enable students to read independently and be able to learn from the reading activity. To achieve this, my lectures and tutorials begin with strategies to orientate students to the *genre* (structural conventions) and *field* (what is the language about) in relation to prescribed readings. In other words, my first point of departure is ensuring that students recognise *genre* and *field*, and that they have enough experience to interpret the latter as it unfolds through the text. This is the teaching strategy I use to initiate first year students into reading independently and learning by reading.

To achieve this, ALE focuses on different ways in which written texts are patterned and structured according to the communicative purpose they serve. More specifically, the main aim of this module is to teach students *the patterns and structures* and *communicative purpose* of the genre of the academic argument. What purpose introductions, the body and conclusion in academic writing serve, and how their structure reflects this purpose, for instance, are some of the questions the module explores. It achieves this aim by examining *the process* of developing an academic argument, discussion, explanation, and critical evaluation, and how grammatical choices, paragraph structure, and the organisation of information in each of these text-types, reflect the purposes they serve. Below are examples of worksheets in the ALE book designed to achieve these goals:

*One of the ways you can use a mind map to understand Hyland’s article is to try to complete a statement such as “Hyland believes that the genre-based approach to teaching reading and writing*

is a good one because...". Then write down as many good reasons as you can think of. Use Hyland's article as your source, as demonstrated below:



*All the claims you see on this spider diagram are paraphrases from Hyland's article. The questions attached to them assist you as the reader to go back to the original text to gain a better understanding of Hyland's arguments.*

- In your groups, identify two claims from the mind map and go back to the original text.
- Share with the whole class how the question under each claim improved your understanding of the article.
- Give two reasons why it is important to convert your paraphrases into questions when you read.
- List two processes crucial in enhancing one's understanding of an academic text. Explain how they work.

*In the entire article, Hyland uses at least three paragraphs to talk about 'schemata' and the importance of this concept for genre teaching.*

- Which three paragraphs do you think indicate that more aspects of this concept will be discussed?
- Which words gave you the clues you needed to make a decision?
- In which paragraph would you expect to find a definition of genre analysis?
- Which words gave you the clues you needed to make a decision?

*In two places, Hyland uses the word 'most', as in 'most teachers will agree that...' and 'most of the genre descriptions sketched above...'.*

- Why does he not just say 'teachers will agree that...' or 'the genre descriptions sketched above...'?
- Identify a paragraph and at least two topic sentences that you think offer something very practical that you could apply in your own classroom.

The worksheets for the ALE book, as seen above, are constructed in ways that reflect an intention to make explicit academic discourse's constructedness. This pedagogic approach, as will be illustrated further through the discussion of assessment feedback, exposes limitations to pedagogic practices that construct, maintain and evaluate inequalities in students' abilities to participate and perform successfully in higher education. This is because it is informed by the teaching philosophy that encourages support through explicit guidance on rhetorical features valued in different types of texts, and involves making explicit to all students exactly how to read and write certain types of texts.

As discussed earlier, this pedagogic approach, the reflexive pedagogy, affords novice readers and writers of academic texts access into how academic writing relies on other texts, and the extent to which grammatical choices are a result of the purpose for their construction. Given the fact that ALE is compulsory to all first year students, regardless of specialisation and phase, and that economic imperatives affect much of what goes on in our schools and classrooms, the next section presents how I used a text that focuses on the impact of global economic imperatives on advertising within third world contexts to teach about the relationship between purpose and grammatical choices. I chose this reading in order to broaden first year student teachers' understanding of the extent to which economic factors that appear to be irrelevant to our classrooms actually affect much of what goes on in their learners' homes, communities, and even third world societies where learners outside South Africa come from. The purpose of discussing ways in which I taught this reading to first year students in this article is to illustrate the potential that reflexive pedagogy has to facilitate epistemological access; more specifically, access to knowledge geared towards developing competence in academic reading and writing to succeed in higher education.

The title of the article: *The New Language of Emerging Markets* by Niraj Dawar and Amitava Chattopadhyay enabled me (at the initial stages of my lesson) to discuss at length with students the *genre* (discussion) and *field* (exploration of both sides of the argument). In order to orientate students to the *genre* and *field* of the text, I designed the **pre-reading** activities. This stage of my lesson involved the

process of identifying key words and concepts in the topic and the brief theme thereafter: ‘New Language, Emerging Markets, and key words from the journalists note: China, and India, multinationals, reaching them *can* (as opposed to *is*) be difficult’.

#### Pre-reading exercises

- ✦ The “New” Language: why new? What does the use of this word imply – a particular way of thinking, talking, about emerging markets to be replaced?
- ✦ “Emerging” Markets: why ‘emerging’? What does this word imply? Does it have any historical significance in terms of China and India?
- ✦ “Multinationals”? Any examples?
- ✦ Why does the journalist choose **can be** instead of **is difficult** when writing about the multinationals’ attempts to reach China and India (emerging markets)?
- ✦ Niraj Dawar and Amitava Chattopadhyay **DISCUSS**: what does this mean to you? Does it mean the same thing as **ARGUE**? Explain.
- ✦ Extra textual issues: China; India – what do you know about the socio-economic and political dynamics of these countries?

As dictated by reflexive pedagogy, engagement with words, concepts, and phrases by means of questions is designed to raise students’ awareness of the relationship between the *purpose* of the text and the author’s *choice* of words in the process of constructing the title and, by implication, the entire text. This facilitates the process of making explicit the discourse’s constructedness. After working with the title of the article and the thesis implied by this title, the conventions of the *genre* (discussion) in general, and how the sequence of this text’s *field* (exploration of both sides of the argument) unfolds through its generic phases in terms that students can readily understand, are summarised. To further decomplexify the reading activity, I read the text aloud to the class in order to work out what is going on in the text.

The next stage of my lesson is what I refer to as **detailed reading**. This stage involves identifying the main phases in different paragraphs of the article: topic sentence, point, issue, argument, development of argument, defence, concession, and disagreement. To identify all these phases, I selected a short segment for detailed reading during class time (paragraphs 1-9). As illustrated below, during the reading process, we jointly highlight key information in each phase and paragraph, and focus on how grammatical choices assist the two authors to achieve their purpose: to explore opposing arguments concerning multinationals’ ability to reach consumers in emerging markets. Together with students we label each phase in the margins and discuss in detail ways in which a *topic sentence*, *point*, *argument*, and other phases, achieve the broader purpose of the text by means of very specific linguistic choices.



affluent, it is far from certain that Chinese and Indian consumers' preferences will converge with those of Europeans or Americans.

Transfer

Standard marketing strategies must be questioned in emerging markets, but lessons can be drawn from companies that have designed programs from the ground up. These can be analyzed using some of the pillars of marketing: segmentation, product, price, distribution, and communication.

ARGUMENT

**Segmentation**

ARGUMENT AGAINST

Discussion so far has laid down the central issues of the article

Transfer  
↓  
action may be difficult

Multinationals bring to emerging markets not just their products, technology, and skills, but also, implicitly, their understanding of market structures from developed-country contexts. This knowledge base often encourages assumptions that are at odds with reality in emerging markets. At the root of the mismatch are assumptions about segmentation. Fine-grained segmentation only works if the costs of segmentation are low and the returns are high. Take the example of soap. In developed markets, hundreds of brands offer finely differentiated benefits on dimensions such as fragrance, freshness, skin type, naturalness, softness, gentleness, and lather.

Elaboration of problem

Illustration of an abstract idea: concretization

Such segmentation is expensive in terms of product development, branding, and distribution costs. These costs are justified if consumers are able and willing to pay for specialized products. But the mass market in emerging economies is unable to afford this. Segments are far coarser. In Indonesia, 88 percent of the market is classified as "regular" soap, with another 11 percent accounted for by deodorant soap, and the remaining 1 percent moisturising soap. The average price of soap in Indonesia is less than a third of that in the US.

ISA Green

Low wages mean that time has a low opportunity cost. Thus, labor-saving benefits, which are fundamental to ready-to-eat foods, new formats for washing powder, shampoo-conditioner combinations, and household appliances, are unlikely to sell well in undeveloped markets.

EXPLAIN

While the opportunity cost of time is low for most consumers, it is high for a small but significant segment. For this small segment, products that save labor might be attractive. However, segmenting the market by cost of time is not useful, because time can be bought. In other words, richer consumers substitute others' time for their own, and the market for time savings is served through inexpensive services rather than products. Premium-priced, non-stick cookware from DuPont has little appeal if consumers who can afford it rely on hired help for cooking and cleaning. In China, DuPont has struggled to raise market share beyond 2 percent.

Does why it can be bought and resist

This does not mean the products are not viable, but rather that they need to be positioned differently. For example, fast food is popular not because it is fast, but because it is trendy. Similarly, washing machines may not have much appeal as labor-saving devices when potential consumers are used to hiring people to do laundry by hand. But the machines can be positioned as reliable (hired help is often not), or on performance. These benefits complement rather than compete with labor. Sometimes consumers will both buy a washing machine and hire someone to work it.

**Product**

→ pattern through out the text.

Some local and international companies have demonstrated that well-targetted, indigenously developed, and locally produced products can yield profits in mass markets. One lesson is

In terms of reflexive pedagogy, once phases in a prescribed reading are identified, the next stage is the **note-making** stage. In this stage, I work with students to figure out the background knowledge to each phase. This involves writing a brief synopsis of what each phase is about, using common sense language with some of the terms from the text. After this, I write a brief synopsis of what the whole text is about, as exemplified below:

### **Note-making stage**

Synopsis of each phase

**Point:**

“Advertising positions common in the west, such as the convenience of breakfast cereals, did not resonate with the mass market in India”.

*Background to the phase:*

Multinationals (big global businesses), Kellogg in the case of this article, sometimes get driven by prospects of making much profits and begin to invest large sums of money in countries with emerging markets such as India. But because of the use of specific advertising strategies that brought about massive profit gains in first world contexts, which are however not appealing to potential consumers in emerging markets, these multinationals are not succeeding.

**Claim:**

“Most multinationals have resisted targeting the local consumers”.

*Background to the phase:*

The authors point out that the local managers of global companies have woken up to the fact that even though there are consumers in emerging markets who in fact have a purchasing power and enjoy products from such companies, these are not sufficient to bring about expected and reasonable profits. There is a need to put more efforts to attract more consumers from local communities to achieve desired results.

### **Synopsis of the article**

Niraj Dawar and Amitava Chattopadhyay discuss, that is, they explore both sides of an argument. This means they are exploring strengths in an idea that reaching emerging markets by multinationals can be difficult, and strengths in the idea that it is not difficult for multinationals to reach emerging markets such as China and India. The authors achieve this by examining ways in which Kellogg, the US cereals giant, ventured into India in the mid-1990s. To support the point they are making

by means of the choice of the title for their article, they point out that after three years, Kellogg sales stood at an unimpressive \$10m. The indication is, indeed, reaching emerging markets *can* be difficult. The authors begin to identify reasons for such a possible difficulty: advertising strategies, segmentation, product, price, distribution, and communication. The article discusses each of these factors in detail and, in the process, however, shows how possible challenges can, and in fact have been, dealt with successfully in other contexts.

This degree of explicitness as a result of using reflexive pedagogy benefited the majority of students. When I asked them to identify aspects of the pedagogic approach used in ALE that they found to be most useful, the responses were:

*1) the introduction of the assignment in lectures, 2) how to relate the claim and other points; 3) the relationships between introduction and conclusions; 4) how to construct a paragraph, 5) how to read academic texts; 6) the step by step explanation on how to write an academic essay.*

The advantage with reflexive pedagogy, and perhaps something that accounts for these responses from students, is that the first three stages create opportunities for me as the lecturer to identify a small number of ideas and plan one or two questions for the tasks *during* reading. Students' responses to such questions during class time often lead to the **joint rewriting** of the notes constructed in the previous stage. After the **joint rewriting** stage, individual students are normally ready for the **individual rewriting** about opposing ideas presented in the article, and how specific sets of ideas are defended by the authors. Feedback and proper guidance concerning attempts by students to present these in writing prepare them for the final stage, the **independent writing** stage. This is the pedagogic approach used in ALE to work with groups of students from first year to postgraduate levels. In commenting directly about this approach and its impact on their development as students, one of the students pointed out that:

*Lectures were not only engaging but they were also challenging. Each session allowed students to develop cognitively and also intellectually. We were moved from one level of understanding to the next through the very carefully prepared questions and lecture notes. There is careful planning that get students to think beyond presented literature into interrogating ways in which it is constructed.*

What goes on in lectures and tutorials become the bases for supervision of students during consultation times where I address individual students' needs. Some students are not familiar with specific grammatical terminology we deploy when analysing the relationship between authors' purposes and grammatical choices, or rhetorical features and ways in which these are informed by the purpose of a text. Below is an attempt to illustrate ways in which I guide a student who attempts to write an academic essay based on a prescribed reading.

① Historical context: (period up to today)  
Essay Title

② Have they?

③ How others have persuaded?

④ Judgement (persuade others)

Many people believe that since the 1994 elections, the role of women in South Africa has changed and attitudes towards women have improved. Write an essay in which you present your views by drawing on the issues and arguments you have been exposed to in your readings.

⑤ Synthesis (turning knowledge into writing)

In all these years women were living under oppressive conditions, whereby women were devalued than men. → ⑥ Vague. → ⑦ claims unsubstantiated (refer to headings)

Basically South African women has been suffered in such conditions but they accept that as it is. → ⑧ By who? where? when? (summarise them).

⑨ Introduction: background, contextualise the essay, here's text, position, purpose of the essay, how do you intend to accomplish it (structure)

What I am going to discuss is the major arguments which show how changing attitudes towards women happen. → ⑩ evidence? → ⑪ who is we?

Firstly, in South Africa women's self identity is changing. As we all know that women were degraded and according to our constitution men and women are equal. → ⑫ Meaning what exactly?

All these changes are also coming from men who favour equality, although not all of them agrees with that but it is just like that. → ⑬ According to who? when? Any examples? → ⑭ Section/evidence from this text.

⑮ There are various ways of changing perceptions in women's role in our society, for example, in terms of socialisation. Eagle (1998:1) says that socialisation is the "process whereby an individual acquires the knowledge, values, facility with language and social sensitivity". She sees socialisation as a positive force for society. However, the feminists regarded socialisation as being negative. → ⑯ Cohesion/Coherence.

⑰ The reader expects secondly, since firstly is given earlier.

As Eagle (1998) explains, socialisation need not be oppressive. There are some conjunctions, positive characteristics of socialisation and gender. She also explains the difference between gender and sex that gender refers to the way in which society uses sex differences to establish certain characteristics as masculine and feminine. → ⑱ Good use of rhetorical devices: ideas, challenge.

⑲ Follow-on this claim, evidence from readings.

⑳ However, not all societies rely on women only to perform the mothering role. Socialisation is the force which creates and establishes gender differences in society. Also some sexist names in which men use to call women in terms of socialisation and insulting women. According to political rights women has a right to voice out their views now because things has changed now because the video has showing us that

→ ㉑ Draw from headings in the course to elaborate on these, before the next sentence.

㉒ here is at least 4 ideas in this part. Put on sentences. Each can be dedicated to a paragraph.

㉓ Conscious control over the use of lang?

㉔ The video has not changed things? Has it? This is one of the texts you could draw on.

women can stand up for themselves by fighting with the oppression. As Eagle shows us the ways in which socialisation work in society. In family she says that in most industrialised societies, the family is the prime source of socialisation. Again, another tool of socialisation is language. There are so many common sexism in English. 'man' refers to both men and women so that means that women are devalued.

In conclusion, I agree that women in South Africa are more valued than they used to be. But this has not meant that there has been real change. Women are still treated badly in their homes even though the government has passed laws which deny this. Although we have women in parliament women still have to fight for recognition in the work place and in their homes.

*26* Incomplete sentence...

*27* Sentence construction: (thought the essay)

*28* Do you mean English perpetuates sexist stereotypes?

*29* Thought the essay, there is no indication of an intention to argue. Persuade us that your judgement point of view is the right one.

*30* The essay has not done this: there is no relationship between the conclusion and the actual essay.

A good attempt!

Please consider the following:

1. The requirements of the topic: your point of view (language of persuasion).
  2. Issues and arguments; in your course readings (use these views to present your own).
  3. Arguments are texts that attempt to persuade the reader that a particular point of view is the right one; this means — present your views, then use readings to support your views.
  4. You need to indicate the following: whether you agree with some of the ideas (points of view) by other writers (in your readings) or not. Give reasons for agreement or disagreement (this will become your point of view).
  5. See comment number 9 on how you need to structure your introduction.
  6. Conclusions need to indicate; first, what the essay intended to achieve, secondly, how did each section contribute to the intention of the essay, thirdly, what do we learn from your essay?
- we need to talk about these points and about the essay itself.*

The feedback on the student's script, as illustrated above, usually inform the one-on-one supervision I provide to the student during consultation times. It is designed to make explicit to students ways in which purpose (such as to argue, to explain, or to discuss) influence the choice of grammatical structures. In response to an interview question regarding this assessment strategy, two of my former undergraduate students pointed out that: "I think that Dr Mgqwashu's marking is fair. At first I did not understand, but after he has marked my essays and giving me suggestions on improving, I can see what he means and now I agree with him." Another student said:

*I found Dr Mgqwashu's assessment to be most accurate. He was strict yet very fair. Dr Mgqwashu provided detailed feedback from assignments, which allowed students to understand where and how to improve their work. He also encouraged students to visit his office if they had problems with their marks or had questions regarding the tasks given. This made him very popular amongst students who saw him as someone open and also supportive towards them.*

This manner of assessing students' written work ensures that my comments are self explanatory and offer useful guidance concerning which grammatical structures suit what they are attempting to argue, explain, or discuss, as dictated by the topic. Given the fact that most of such students speak isiZulu as the Home Language, I often find it fascinating to discover that some of the most complex academic discourse conventions become accessible the moment I code-switch into isiZulu, as one of the students points out during the interview:

*Dr Mgqwashu with the methods he is using in his module ALE is supposed to be the one co-ordinating and make other lecturers to use Zulu and to teach the way he is teaching. He is not leaving any students in the dark, but he tried by all means that each and everyone understands, like me who sometimes struggles to understand difficult readings written in English. I am very happy to sometimes have someone explaining difficult ideas and concepts in Zulu.*

My open-door policy, both in terms of flexibility when it comes to using students' first languages and availability for individual appointments, accommodates all my students in an equitable way. As demonstrated in this article, success in higher education depends entirely on ways in which module design and pedagogic practices acknowledge and extend the differential capabilities of students as they learn. Drawing from the pedagogic approach, assessment of students' written work, and locating this article within the philosophy of subjectivist epistemology and qualitative methodology, a number of inter-related hypotheses can be generated. These concern enabling students' epistemological access to the discourse and the rhetorical structures of diverse text-types.

- if students are afforded one-to-one tuition (or very small group tuition) in which the rhetorical structures peculiar to specific text-types are discussed as one of the formal aspects in lectures and tutorials, then students from disadvantaged educational backgrounds will better access the rhetorical features relevant to their individual disciplines;
- if the theory that informs pedagogic approach in academic literacy modules discussed in this article is used in other knowledge areas, then students will acquire the metalanguage necessary to write effectively and engage with issues related to their chosen disciplines and extend their boundaries and;
- if academics in higher education raise students' awareness of the relationship between grammatical choices and the purpose for constructing a text, and make efforts to learn and use languages other than English, then the UKZN's vision to be the *premier university of African scholarship* is likely to be realised

A conventional practice and principle of research in the sciences is that hypotheses need to be tested before they become theory. It is not my intention in this article, however, to test the three hypotheses presented. They instead provide a basis for researchers to pursue further investigation in this specific field. This article, however, provides directions for further development of a pedagogic practice model for academic literacy and for teaching reading across the curriculum in which epistemological access is foregrounded.

## References

- Bergin C 1999. The parent-child relationship during beginning reading. In Rose D 2005. Democratising the classroom: A literacy pedagogy for the new generation. In *Journal of Education*, **37**, 31-167.
- Bouhey, C 2005. Academic Study as Social Practice. In Sutherland P and Crowther J (eds.). *Lifelong Learning: Concepts and Contexts*. London: Routledge and Falmer.
- Cross M 2009. 'New students' in South African higher education: Institutional culture, student performance and the challenge of democratization. *Perspectives in Education*, **27**, 6-18.
- Dawar, Niraj and Amitava Chattopadhyay, "The New Language of Emerging Markets". *Financial Times*, Nov. 9, 2000.
- Fink A 1995. *Evaluation for Education and Psychology*. London: SAGE
- Fraser W and Killen R 2005. The perceptions of students and lecturers of some factors influencing academic performance at two South African universities. *Perspectives in Education*, **23**, 25-40.
- Hart M 1995. What students have to tell us about writing. *Conference Proceedings: 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the South African Applied Linguistics Association*. Cape Town: University of Stellenbosch.
- Jansen J D 1991. Knowledge and power in the classroom: Rethinking educational practice and scholarship. In Jansen J D (ed.). *Knowledge and power in South Africa: Critical perspectives across the disciplines*. Johannesburg, South Africa: Skotaville Publishers. 189-202.
- McArthur, T. 1998. *The English Languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mgqwashu E. M. 1999. An Examination of Communicative Language Teaching as an Approach for an English Second Language Course to Accommodate Students from Disadvantaged Educational Backgrounds in the Programme of English Studies at the University of Natal, Durban. Unpublished MA Thesis. University of Natal.
- Mgqwashu E M 2000. "University Learning: Mode and Medium of Instruction". *SCRUTINY 2: issues in English studies in southern Africa*: **5(2)**, 63-66.
- Mgqwashu E M 2007. English studies and language teaching: Epistemological access and discursive critique in South Africa. Unpublished doctoral thesis (PhD). Durban: University of KwaZulu-Natal.
- Mgqwashu E M 2009. "On Becoming a Learner and User of English: an apartheid and post-apartheid personal story". *Language Learning Journal*: **37**, 293-303.
- Montgomery, Martin and Stuart. 1992. "Ideology, discourse and cultural studies: the contribution of Michel Pecheux". *Canadian Journal of Communication*.
- Nevo D 1986. Conceptualisation of Educational Evaluation: An analytical Review of the Literature. In House E R (ed.). *New directions in Educational Evaluation*. London: The Famer Press.
- Piaget J 1928. *Judgment and reasoning in the child*. Trubner: Kegan Paul, Trench.
- Rose D 2005. Democratising the classroom: A literacy pedagogy for the new generation. *Journal of Education*, **37**, 31-167.
- Samuel M A 2002. On becoming a teacher: Life history research and the force-field model of teacher development. Paper presented at the Advances in Qualitative Research Methods Conference, Sun City, organised by Rand Afrikaanse Universiteit and University of Alberta, Canada. 24-25 January.
- Sternberg R J 2007. Rethinking university admission for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. *Perspectives in Education*, **25**, 7-16.
- Hood L and Wood E 2004. Shared storybook readings with children who have little or no functional speech: A language intervention tool for students who use augmentative and alternative communication. *Perspectives in Education*, **22**, 101-114.
- Worthen B R and Sanders J R 1987. *Educational Evaluation: Alternative Approaches and Practical Guidelines*. London: Longman.
- Ziembinski, Z. 1997. "What can be saved of the idea of the university?" In Brzezinski, J. and Nowak, L. (eds.). *The Idea of the University*: 21-26. Rodopi: Amsterdam – Atlanta