

Combining ESP and academic literacies approaches in a research-based writing course for anthropologists

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Academic literacies and ESP-genre approaches to teaching writing tend to be considered as dichotomous: Academic literacies is associated with a critical stance, voice and an epistemological foundation rooted in ethnography. In contrast, the ESP-genre approach is more concerned with the socialisation of students into disciplinary communities and adopts primarily a text-oriented approach. Our study builds on Tribble & Wingate's (2012, p. 481) theoretical conception a "best of both worlds" model of teaching academic writing. The first author's research and teaching background is firmly rooted in ESP-genre theory, while the second author has worked primarily in the academic literacies tradition. We report the results of our collaboration in terms of designing and delivering a research-based writing workshop for post-graduate anthropology students at a Swedish university. The project evolved out of a sense that a predominantly ESP genre-based approach was not optimal in terms of preparing students for the demands of research-based writing in anthropology. In the workshop, students engaged in both text-analytical tasks and ethnographically-oriented activities such as developing an interview protocol, and conducting interviews with more experienced students in their field. The aim was to place equal emphasis on the wider practices associated with writing, both epistemological and social, as well as the rhetorical and linguistic characteristics of texts in the discipline. The efficacy of the course design was probed via focus group discussions with the course participants. This paper will discuss the challenges and opportunities encountered over the course of the project.

References

Wingate, U. & Tribble, C. (2012). The best of both worlds? Towards an English for Academic Purposes/Academic literacies writing pedagogy. *Studies in higher education*, 37(4), 481-495.

Biodata

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