

STUDENT AS RESEARCHER: ASSESSMENT ANALYSIS ON INTERCULTURAL LANGUAGE EDUCATION COURSE

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Abstract

Context awareness in tertiary education is a crucial aspect. This awareness should be perceived by university students to maximize their academic potentials. In so doing, this mini research employs *context analysis* about: text, the purpose of text, the setting of text, the audience of text, the relationship between reader and writer, the expectations and conventions and the requirements of texts, shared values, background knowledge and understanding of text, intertextuality, the tone of text, assessment criteria followed by intercommunication of discourse community as proposed by Johns (1997). The context analysis on the disciplinary assignment through the active role of students as researcher is necessary. This would sensitize students what to do and what not to do in the learning activities. Furthermore, being well-informed on ethnographic writing, the study of academic practices in the university, is salient. This can be done, one of them, through the interview with the lecturer of a specific course as well as to some extent negotiate the academic practices. This positions the students as an active agent in learning.

Keywords

Student as Researcher, Context Analysis, Ethnographic Writing, Genre

Introduction

Students' success in their academic study is associated with endeavours they have exercised in all compulsory courses and assignments they go through during their study. One of the key notions is that they are aware of what to do when encountering in any kinds of tasks (Paltridge, 2001b; 2004; Paltridge, et al., 2006). In relation to this, Johns (1997) introduced the concept 'student as researcher'. In this notion, students are encouraged to examine on context analysis in which several aspects such as text, context, audience, shared conventions, discourse communities, should be taken into account when doing tasks. Further, this article further combines the notion of "student as researchers" with ethnographic writing (Paltridge, et. al, 2006), 'the study of social group or individual(s) representative of that group, based on direct recording of the behaviour and voices of the participant over a period' (Flowerdew, 2002, p.235).

As one of ways of looking at how successful students do in their academic study, this assignment will investigate assignment analysis

based on the interview with one lecture, Associate Professor Lesley Harbon, on Intercultural Language Education course. Cream & Lea (2008) mention that a part of learning a field of study is by learning to write the assignment and understanding what is involved in the assignment through interview with the lecturer/tutor.

Conclusion

There are many aspects that play important role in the notion of 'students as researcher' (Johns, 1997). These aspects are argued to be helpful for students in doing study in post-graduate level (Paltridge, 2001) especially when combined with ethnographic writing (Paltridge, et al., 2006). Furthermore, doing context analysis on the nature of the assignment given is very critical, especially for those coming from different educational and cultural background (Ballard & Clancy, 1997) so that they can acclimatise with the new educational expectation. As the anticipation for this, the lecturer and tutor consider about other way of structuring argument with regard to student's cultural and educational background which are more likely to have different writing style (Connor, 2002; 2004; Grabe and Kaplan, 1996). This seems to indicate that the lecturer and tutor are aware of

'a complex interaction of linguistic and cultural experiences that underpin student preparedness and capacity to cope with the demand of the university' (Borland & Pierce, 2002, p.122).

In scrutinising the aspects of context analysis of the assignment, the notion of genre and academic discourse community are prominent as these have dynamic relationship with academic discourse (Bhatia, 2002). Furthermore, comprehending the system of genre and genre network in academic discourse community would likely facilitate the success of doing the study as they students might then be well informed about academic conventions or genre knowledge (Huckin & Berkenkotter, 1995), in the specific field of study so that they are aware in the way in which specific required text which is socially considered appropriate in the institution they are studying (2989 words).

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