

JADE

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by Prof. Rowena Murray

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About

JADE publishes articles, case-studies, papers, reviews, teaching tips, letters to the editors, interviews and student submissions from every School and Department at Keele University.

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 FORWARD


Welcome to JADE. JADE has been devised and developed in the Learning and Professional Development Centre for Keele staff and students that wish to improve student learning through scholarly inquiry. Most importantly, JADE provides a medium for writers to share their practice, their learning and their research findings with others.

Teaching scholarship is a journey of discovery and personal growth, however when scholarship is shared with others through collaborative inquiry, conversation or by publication, the potential for learning expands and grows. To that end, the JADE initiative joins a range of established schemes and activities at Keele intended to encourage and disseminate scholarly inquiry.

I hope you experience the joy of the scholarship of teaching and learning as you participate in reading, writing, contributing, reviewing or editing for JADE.

Dr. Jackie Potter

Head of the Learning and Professional Development Centre

 EDITORIAL


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‘SNACK’ AND ‘BINGE’ WRITING
EDITORIAL FOR JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

“...people
immediately
see their
potential
for academic
writing”.

For this paper I was invited to write about snack writing – writing in short time slots. I have written about this elsewhere (Murray 2011, 2013, 2014a), but it is such a productive strategy, and seems to work on so many levels – generating text, boosting confidence, getting into the writing habit – that it is worth writing about again.

For this paper, I decided to deploy seven rhetorical modes (Fahnestock and Secor 1990). Whenever I introduce these rhetorical modes in courses, people immediately see their potential for academic writing. Learning about rhetorical modes during my PhD had a major impact on my writing: I learned a repertoire of structures, each with its set of components, and saw that using these modes would make my writing more coherent. It also made my writing process more coherent and less stressful.

The following sections provide definitions of each mode, followed by examples of the modes-in-action in 100-word sections, all focusing on the subject of snack writing.

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Description: include different features, uses, and experiences. Be specific.

Describing snack writing includes detailing what to do, where and when to snack write and how people think and feel when they write this way. People snack write for as little as 10-15 minutes, or sometimes for as much as 90 minutes. They draft freely and revise later. They do this in offices, cafés and at home, during the working day, at the start and end of the day and on the way to and from work or study. They say snacking makes writing easier and less stressful. It is less daunting and more productive to write little and often.

Narrative: put events in an order, with time markers, explain selection of events.

A **narrative** account of people learning to snack write starts with their willingness to try new strategies. At first, they questioned whether writing for short spells would be any use – it was not how they usually wrote. Then they agreed to try it, to see for themselves what it was like and whether or not it worked. Those who tried it found it was much more productive than they had expected. At this point, many continued with snack writing, writing with others who wanted to write this way. Finally, many adapted snacking strategies for other research and work tasks.

Process: explain steps, order, links and progression. Explain selection of steps.

The **process** of snack writing involves three steps. The first is defining a timeslot of between 10 and 90 minutes: when and for how long will you write? This time can be planned or spontaneous. The second is deciding on your writing goal: what it is you want to write about, and can write about, in this timeslot? The third is to start quickly and keep going, without stopping to edit or check references. You can do that later. Editing and checking displace the writing. Whenever you can, to make writing possible, write ‘unplugged’ from internet, phone and other devices.

‘SNACK’ AND ‘BINGE’ WRITING

Comparison and contrast: describe both, using same components of each.

When people **compare and contrast** binge and snack writing they focus on the differences between the two. Binge writing involves writing for long periods, without breaks and not stopping till the writing’s finished. Binge writers say they do their best writing this way and cannot see the point of snack writing. Snack writers use short timeslots, break for food, activity and rest and sleep and say they stop before completing a writing project, knowing they will be able to start again. Both snack and binge have a role in academic writing. Perhaps binge writers could adopt features of snack writing.

Analysis: explain how a subject divides into parts and what holds parts together.

Analysing snack writing involves identifying its components. We can break it down into concepts, practices and behaviours. Conceptually, snack writing involves thinking of writing not only in terms of audience, purpose and content, but also in terms of numbers of minutes and words. The practice of snack writing involves short and regular bursts of writing, which may require behavioural change. This may require confidence, but regular snack writing seems to develop confidence. This analysis explains why snack writing works – it prompts us to define the many sub-routines involved in academic writing and to define writing in terms of sub-goals.

Classification: explain how elements can be grouped using a principle of division.

Classifying the many activities involved in writing demystifies the complex process and helps us see where we can improve our writing practices. These activities include thinking, reading, talking, reviewing, contextualising, managing time, prioritising, innovating, selecting, outlining, composing, revising, editing, proofreading etc. These elements can be grouped into three sets: preparing to write, generating text and revising. Snack writing helps by privileging the second – generating text – and separating it from the other two. This simplifies the complex process of academic writing. However, the snacking approach – doing sub-tasks in short time slots – can also be applied to these other activities.

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Each mode, in each of the above sections, provides a different representation of the subject of snack writing. It is not just that each mode uses a different structure. There is a different emphasis in each section. Different information about the subject is provided in each one. Different interpretations are offered.

The modes can, of course, be combined in academic writing. One or two of the modes are suited to writing literature reviews. Others are a better fit in arguments for research methods. Most academic writing will include 'analysis'. Deciding which mode to use is part of academic writing – using modes in this way helps to make these decisions overt.

Taken together, all of these modes provide **definition** – another rhetorical mode – of snack writing. While it might seem to be the simplest, definition is often most debated in academic writing. Since it is the foundation of academic debate, it is, in many contexts, the most important.

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ARTICLE | 1

Title

HR's Development of Recruitment and Selection e-Learning

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Abstract

e-Learning was exploited at Keele University to provide training on staff Recruitment & Selection to senior academics in a flexible manner. This approach increased the number of staff available to participate on interview panels and resulted in more effective use of time for the Human Resources (HR) advisors. This reduced the number of hours required to create the e-Learning material and further enabled HR staff to consider which other courses they could build in the future. 19% of the target audience have completed the course and colleagues from across the University continue to complete the course on a daily basis. The e-Learning system also acted as a resource bank which enabled colleagues to access the learning material whenever they wished. The courses were built using a mixture of existing learning material and customisable courses already provided with the platform.

Keywords

e-Learning, HR, recruitment, selection

Introduction

In early 2013, Human Resources (HR) were tasked with providing Recruitment & Selection training to up to 250 senior academic staff to ensure there are sufficient numbers of independent panel members to support interview panels for prospective employees. Keele University has a prescriptive approach to the composition of Recruitment & Selection panels for staff which includes an independent member sourced from another School/ Department. Some panels had struggled to comply with the panel requirements, in particular, senior academic staff to act as the independent member.

Assessing the need

The figure of 250 was derived from the total of senior academic staff which was defined as Professors, Readers and Senior Lecturers. Panel members are required to complete a thorough training session to prepare them to participate in Recruitment & Selection activity at the University with a refresher session held every 2 years. Traditionally, HR had delivered this training through face-to-face workshops, booked and administered through the Learning & Professional Development Centre (LPDC), although these often clash with teaching demands. All of the HR Advisors had noted that staff were finding it difficult to attend both of the training

sessions and were requesting a more tailored and shortened solution.

At the end of 2012, it was becoming clear to the HR Advisors that the established method of delivery was not providing the flexibility that was required by recruiting managers and panel members. The evaluation forms completed for the face-to-face workshops indicated that the courses were taking too long and were not frequent enough or were held at inconvenient times. The result was an increase in the amount of requests for one-to-one training for recruiting managers who were due to undertake a selection interview; clearly, an inefficient way of training. In addition to these issues, the number of staff requiring a refresher course remained high, and, because of a separate refresher course, a great deal of time was taken up providing Recruitment & Selection training. Increasingly, following refresher sessions, were receiving requests for the training to be conducted on-line.

HR assessed that approximately 100 of the 250 senior academic staff required training, and subsequently analysed how long it would take to train this cohort through the current workshops. Examination of the target group revealed that around 150 were already trained in the Recruitment & Selection of staff and others would not participate in Recruitment & Selection activities because of their current role. This would

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require a total of 10 workshops lasting approximately 3 hours each, along with the training facilities. Clearly, a more flexible solution was required to address the initial training and then to provide for the refresher training that would be required in 2 years time.

Investigation of e-Learning

Armstrong (2006) commented that e-Learning was as 'not so much about the technology as about learning based on technology' and should be used as part of a blended learning approach. By offering a traditional workshop, e-Learning package and access to a wide variety of resources (additional case studies and quizzes), HR believe that all learning styles and experiences can be accommodated. Additionally, Marchington & Wilkinson (2008) noted that e-Learning provides a consistent approach to the quality and scope that often varies between trainers.

Previous knowledge of successful e-Learning strategies formed the basis for further investigation of e-Learning as a possible solution. HR were aware of successes including: Edinburgh Council who had used e-Learning to train all 12,900 staff on their new HR system within an 8-week period as discussed by Buchanan (2007) and AOL's successful use of e-Learning to support the introduction of new procedures as detailed by Harrison (2009). Goolnik (2012) identified there is a lack of research regarding e-Learning and this is required before it becomes a mainstream activity. Weeks (2007), cited by Marchington & Wilkinson (2008), also noted the difficulties of assessing Return on Investment (ROI). Keele University is still in the early stages of using e-Learning and will need time to properly assess the long-term impact and ROI of the training it delivers.

After careful consideration of the success stories and the concerns, as highlighted by Goolnik (2012), in partnership with the LPDC, HR reviewed an e-Learning package that was available through Learning Pool (www.learningpool.com). This offered a full Dynamic Learning Environment (DLE) with access to over 500 e-Learning courses which were fully customisable. Another attraction of this offer is the active online community across all of Learning Pool's customers who also provide help, advice and collaborate on projects.

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Fig 1 View of homepage at keele.learningpool.com.

Initially, 5 HR staff completed the training on the Authoring Tool and started to create e-Learning content. As HR had a well-established face-to-face workshop already in place with a variety of learning materials, and after identifying an existing Learning Pool course that could be customisable, HR decided to adapt the existing e-Learning course. It took approximately 40 hours of authoring to produce 2 e-Learning courses that were ready for testing by a variety of users across the University; clearly, this was a significant investment in a platform that would be available for all staff.

The main challenges in creating a visually appealing course that drew together key learning points were the creation and manipulation of images. Although Learning Pool has a stock of images, HR also used copyright free images from within the University, Microsoft clipart and from websites listing Creative Commons resources. HR found the quality of clipart images to be much improved from some years ago and now include many high quality photos and cartoons. HR also used 'smart graphics' within PowerPoint to create a contents list and then highlight the current section. These courses were then reviewed by a different member of staff to assess the content, layout, navigation, images etc and to provide feedback to the authors.

Marchington and Wilkinson (2008) identified that the use of interactive features were required to ensure users find the experience enjoyable. When building the courses, authors were careful to ensure they designed e-Learning courses rather than e-reading courses. This made use of the many interactive features within the authoring tool software, including clickable graphics, movies, drag and drop activities and knowledge checks through a variety of quiz options, including multiple

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choice questions. This may address the concern by Weeks (2007), cited by Marchington & Wilkinson (2008), that e-Learning can be dull.

The DLE was built to ensure the 2 e-Learning courses were linked, so that users needed to complete both before the course was recorded as complete. In designing this, HR considered if the Evaluation Form and Certificate should also be linked, although this was considered excessive. The choice whether to complete the evaluation and print the certificate was left with the users.

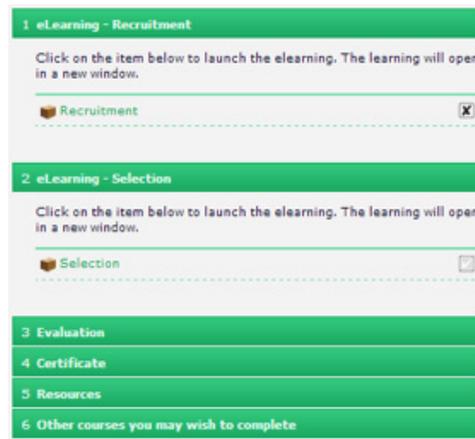


Fig 2 View of collapsible content on the DLE.

During the authoring and DLE build, enquiries were made to the Learning Pool helpdesk for advice. The experience was a prompt and effective service which answered the questions fully and instilled confidence in the authors. This advice cemented learning gained from the Learning Pool workshops and also helped authors to understand the pdf authoring/DLE guides that are available on the Learning Pool website.

Development and testing of the learning content

The most useful source of assistance during the authoring phase was to form collaborative working groups. The main benefit was that learning was shared with others to ensure that solutions to problems were only developed once. This included a recap on some of the training course and exploration of set-up/diagnostics that were available within the authoring tool. HR authors found it difficult to complete the authoring at their desks and chose to book the PC Lab in the library where the

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authoring software was already installed and/or book a meeting room and use a laptop. This provided a more focussed effort and maximised the outcomes.

Colleagues from a variety of schools/departments were invited to assess ease of navigation, course content, accessibility and to spot typographical errors. Feedback was by email to the author, via the evaluation form which formed part of the course and phone calls/meetings. When some users were first accessing the site, the most common issue was that pop-ups were blocked on their system. Although there are clear instructions on the front page, many users did not notice this advice. During troubleshooting phonecalls, HR found it useful to ask users to describe the bar at the foot of the opening page.



Fig 3 Error bar showing disabled pop-ups.

This shows if the pop-ups are blocked and then the user can be assisted to enable the pop-ups and complete the training.

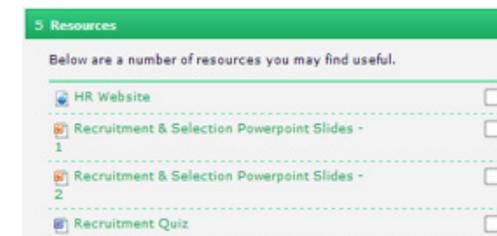


Fig 4 Resources section on the DLE.

This feedback resulted in changes to the courses and the front page to give more details about the course and to provide additional resources. In particular, some feedback noted that colleagues may wish to reinforce their learning through additional case studies and quizzes. These were quickly uploaded along with slides from the face-to-face workshops which act as a handy reference guide.

During feedback, HR established that users liked the bookmark feature as this supported users to complete the learning when convenient. This enabled users to plan to access the Staff Online Learning system on several occasions to complete a course.

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Implementation and communication

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- [Job Design and Analysis](#)
- [Authority to Recruit](#)
- [Considering Redeployees](#)
- [Advertising](#)
- [Summary](#)

On 2 Sep 13, the Faculty Deans emailed the target audience and provided them with a direct link to the R&S course. This encouraged some completions and led to many requests for the training to be available to all staff across the University. Within the first few months of release, 19% of the target group had completed the training and each week, more colleagues taking part

Fig 5 Navigation screen within the e-Learning course.

in recruitment panels are choosing to complete the e-Learning course.

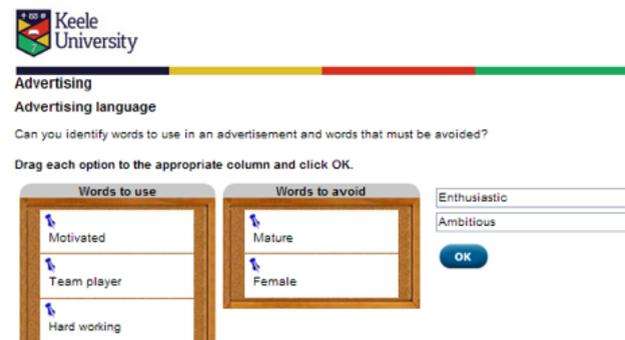


Fig 6 Example of interactive activity within the course.

Implementation of the course provided an option for other colleagues to undertake the online training at a time and place of their choosing. Since the launch of the e-Learning course, 100 staff (from all areas of the University) have completed the Recruitment & Selection course online.

Although constant review will be necessary to ensure the training materials remain up-to-date and take account of feedback, there will be measurable time saving implications for HR staff and greater flexibility offered to colleagues who need to complete R&S training. So far, HR have received a variety of positive comments:

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- "The courses flowed well, were easy to follow, informative and were well designed. My congratulations for getting this up and running so smoothly."
- "A big benefit is that I didn't have to take time out of the office to attend the workshop!"
- "Good process, ease of access and the friendly nature makes it a good experience."
- "I think this is a much better way of delivering this material than the "old" 2-day course. Much appreciated!"
- "Very useful tool as it means less time away from work to have to complete this training and allows me to read and understand things at my own pace."

Completion of the Recruitment & Selection course is recorded on the DLE. This incorporates a powerful reporting tool that enables administrators to analyse enrolments/completions. To maintain an overview of course completions, HR have set-up a weekly report which is emailed to HR staff. Every month, a report is automatically generated and forwarded to IT who import the list of course completions to the staff training records. This ensures that HR can email colleagues to remind them to complete the refresher course (also online) at the 2-year point.

Post Implementation Analysis

Goolnik (2012) highlights that over-inflated adoption rates are common; however, our report engine provides a robust tool to accurately assess many aspects of the learners and courses undertaken. (The following analysis was taken directly from the reporting tool on 14 February 2014.)

Six months after implementation of the system by both academic and non-academic staff, HR started to analyse the usage of the system. HR found that for the Recruitment and Selection course, the course was completed on average in 61 minutes; some staff were conducting the training for refresher purposes and are included in this analysis. This covered the same learning objectives as the traditional workshops although the discussion element had given way to activities that could be completed and reviewed until the learner was content to progress.

As HR expected from the implementation of the system, many learners access the courses at a variety of times and on multiple occasions. By

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examining the logs for the Recruitment and Selection courses, it can be seen that staff access the courses throughout the week and at different times of the day. This indicates that the flexibility offered through e-Learning is a key issue when undertaking training compared to the traditional workshops. Below is a frequency chart (all staff groups and all courses) showing how often they access the site.

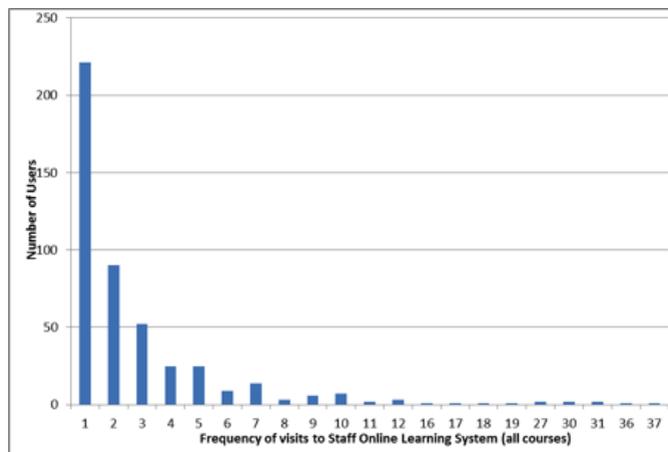


Fig 7 Example of interactive activity within the course.

The mean access rate is 3 occasions by users of the system (across all courses) whilst the mode for this group (n=468) is 1. Further analysis after a longer period of implementation will show the full extent of learners accessing the site on a repeat basis.

Summary

Completion of Recruitment & Selection training through the e-Learning option continues on a daily basis by a mixture of academic and non-academic staff. This maintains a rich pool of interviewers for selection panels and delivers the required training up to the point of the selection activities.

HR are now exploring which other training needs could be addressed through e-Learning or how this could support pre-learning before conducting the experiential learning. In short, this platform will continue to support delivery of training in a flexible method and will enable HR to work with colleagues within our Directorate to expand the range of training that is available. Our intention is that by adopting

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this approach HR will be able to support the House of Commons Science & Technology Committee's recommendation (2014), that all line managers and members of appointment and promotion panels will have access to Equality & Diversity training. This is the next project HR are currently working on that will rely on the use of e-Learning to achieve widespread training.

(The Staff Online Learning system can be accessed through keeel.learningpool.com)

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ARTICLE | 2

Title

Can Creative Writing Be Taught?

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Abstract

Creative writing incorporates a diverse set of skills, knowledge and understanding. Inevitably there are values and beliefs inherent within the conceptualisation of the term 'creative writing' and these should be addressed.

In order to answer the question as to whether creative writing can be taught, it is first necessary to define what creative writing is, and what is meant when we refer to the act of being 'creative'. It is then necessary to address what it is that is being taught; what the role of the tutor is in the learning process and then to define what the intrinsic skills of the creative writer are.

Keywords

creative writing, critical understanding, intrinsic skills, taught

When defining what is meant by 'creative writing', it is necessary to look at how the act of creativity functions in terms of its cultural and historical context. Should we in fact see creativity as invention, interpretation or a hybrid of both? In fact, all art forms are a product of their historical and cultural context, of their creator's values and beliefs and as such, are informed and influenced by them. Specifically, writing is intertextual: whilst creativity is often experimental, ground-breaking even, it remains a part of its historical and sociological, political and ideological context, informed and influenced by all these things. Rob Pope in 'Creativity, Theory, History, Practice' (2005) explains that we each of us are influenced by, and act co-operatively within, the context of the many and 'various communities, traditions and ultimately entire cultures to which each of us belongs and contributes' (p 96).

It is also necessary to examine whether creativity is the preserve of a few individuals with unique talents, 'genius' even, or as a latent ability common to all.

Pope writes of the need to, 'recognise straight away the potential multiplicity of what is only a notionally singular term'. He goes on to state that the twentieth century 'sees a less hierarchical, more overtly democratic society' with 'the ever widening application of the term 'creative' to practically everyone.' (p. 52).

With increasing democratisation in the post-industrial era and the shift away from the idea of a benevolent Creator (and within this, the belief in the divinely inspired 'genius') to the more secular and humanist approach, so creativity has become less of an elitist activity. The rise of gay/lesbian, feminist and post-colonial literature reflects this increased heterogeneity, while the rise of both post-modern and popular fiction has undermined the authority and autonomy of the vanguard of the literary elite. Stephen King says of literary criticism, 'a good deal of literary criticism serves only to re-enforce a caste system which is as old as the intellectual snobbery which nurtured it' (King, 2001, 161). Whilst he evidently has his own agenda as a writer of genre fiction, it is a valid point for consideration, where literary criticism can on occasion seem to intentionally obfuscate and alienate the general reader.

Thus it can be seen that the conceptualisation of the 'art' of creative writing has shifted. From earlier perceptions of it as the 'extraordinary act' of the solitary creative genius, it is increasingly the case that it is seen as an art form in which the ability to make an imaginative leap is an essential element of what makes us human (Pope, 2005, 52-55).

Brande (1934) stated that, 'the genius, you must remember is the man (sic) who by some fortunate accident of temperament or education can put his unconscious completely

CAN CREATIVE WRITING BE TAUGHT?

at the service of his reasonable intention, whether or not he is aware that this is so' (p47, my italics). However, the writer's dichotomy is that whilst 'the creative process is only partly under rational, conscious control...education encourages us to be deliberate and conscious' (Leach, in Graham et al, 2005, 22). The risk is that formal and traditional education teaches us out of creative and imaginative thinking as we learn planning and rationalising (Leach, in Graham, 2005, 22-23).

As such, the teaching of creative writing is necessarily constructivist in approach. This reflects the fact that Creative Writing is an intrinsically human act; drawing on the individual's thoughts and experiences. The pedagogy of the teaching of Creative Writing is experiential and uses techniques such as modelling and scaffolding as a means to explore what it is to write creatively. It ultimately seeks to enable the writer to reach a level of 'reflective competence' whereby the act of writing is simultaneously creative and reflective. The writer needs to be able to commit fully to the act of creating and being 'free' to explore the full range of language whilst maintaining the ability to reflect on what is being created. In effect, 'critical understanding in creative writing occurs before, during and after the act of creative writing. The critical writer employs an active critical sense in order to be able to construct, review and edit their work.' (Harper, 2008,1) Critical understanding - and crucially the implications of what it is that is critically understood - need to be an active and on-going part of the process of writing.

This act of being critically aware and reflective of the creative process involved, serves to develop 'responsive critical understanding' (Harper, 2008,1). Simply to express the creative process as one whereby the writer 'reflects' would be to undermine the significance of the effect of that reflection; the writer needs to be simultaneously reflective, critically aware and responsive. This is succinctly expressed by Harper when he writes:

"Responsive critical understanding is critical understanding founded in responding to need, and evolving from that position into a greater understanding that sustains Creative Writing practice and often seeks to improve it. It is the result of the coming together of capability and knowledgeability; and it is most often used, and observed, when applied to a particular act of Creative Writing, a particular project". (Harper, 2007)

The ability to form metaphorical associations - to use words and language to express complex relationships, ideas and thoughts - incorporates a repertoire of skills and knowledge that constitute creative writing. In the act of writing, images and ideas interact with language. This is a creative process during which a writer can feel they have achieved a semi-meditative state whereby the writing is intuitive, almost as if the

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words are being channelled, yet they need to simultaneously remain reflective and in control. It could be said that, 'the actual act of writing becomes a form of meditation; it untangles our emotions and cleanses the mind. Through writing, we cultivate qualities of absorption and self-mastery, leading to spiritual and emotional growth, qualities of value to the budding writer.' (Armstrong in Graham et al, 2005, 49)

In the context of the 'how' creative writing is taught, it is clear that creative writing teaching offers a distinct, and even unique, approach to how an individual actively learns and is educated. The primary setting for this within academe is the workshop. The workshop is both a process and a space in which writers reflect with others on their work. In the university setting, the process is formalised with the presence of a designated tutor whose role it is to facilitate the students' learning whereby, 'the facilitator is always in an authoritative role, powerful even. A group trusts him or her to retain awareness of this and wield it responsibly, confidentially and ethically.' (Anderson, 2006, 167)

Andrew Cowan in 'The Art of Writing Fiction' (2011), affirms the underlying principles of what it is that is taught in creative writing when he expresses the need for participants in the workshop to be critical, reflective and responsive:

"For the workshop to succeed...the participants should first have achieved a certain level of competence and confidence, not only as practising writers but as thinkers about their own and others' writing. They should have become, to some degree, self-conscious and deliberate in their approach to their craft – as much as they must also be instinctive and 'non-knowing' – and in the process they should have begun to acquire a measure of technical understanding that will allow them to articulate what they feel is 'true' or 'askew' about the works in progress that will be laid before them". (p 203).

The writer should, within the workshop process, develop effective control of language and structure, with the intrinsic ability to be critically aware and thus prepared and able to subject their writing to rigorous revision as part of the on-going relationship between writing, editing and reading.

Louis Menand in his review of Mark McGurl's 'The Program Era' sums up the workshop scenario neatly when he says, 'reflecting on yourself – your experience, your 'voice', your background, your talent or lack of it – is what writing workshops make people do.' (The New Yorker, 2009)

This reflects the constructivist approach to the teaching of creative writing whereby knowledge is made personal, and learning is an active process which is student-centred and student-led. Learning is

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experiential, for example, a workshop exercise may be to write a poem or short story, to then deconstruct it and to derive principles from it. As such, learning is holistic and responsive; rather than building up from parts of a greater whole, e.g. being told 'how to' do something, learners instead actively do the work and learn from it as a process in itself.

This holistic, experiential approach to learning is particularly pertinent in creative writing where 'creative writing is substantially before the fact, while the work of English is largely forensic; it comes after the fact.' In other words that, 'creative writing is concerned with the act of making, rather than the interpretation and placing' of texts already made' (Tighe, 2006).

It is important to note here the on-going debate as to where within academia the body of knowledge that is Creative Writing should sit. It is most usually to be found within English Departments; however it is of great significance that the pedagogy of Creative Writing differs from that which underlines the study of English Literature. It is 'concerned with the act of making, rather than the interpretation and 'placing' of texts already made' (Tighe, 2006). Within Creative Writing, existing texts are used as resources, for example to see how effects are achieved, but critical analysis is not an activity in and of itself. Critical analysis is a tool and a resource but Creative Writing remains intrinsically an act of artistic creation. There is, therefore, a strong argument to be had that its rightful place is within the Arts faculty of the academic institution, alongside other creative arts such as drama, music and art. In the same way that the study of History of Art is not the same in its approach as the study of Fine Art, so Creative Writing, both as a creative experience and as a body of knowledge, is fundamentally different from English Literature.

It could even be suggested that the fusion of critical analysis with the actual act of writing becomes part of the act of living as a writer. Goldberg expresses this in 'Writing down the Bones' (1986) when she says:

"Writers live twice. They go along with their regular lives, as fast as anyone in the grocery store, crossing the street, getting dressed for work in the morning. But there's another part of them that they have been training. The one that lives everything again and goes over it. Looks at the texture and the details" (p 53).

A beautiful quote from Amy Tan summarises what it is that drives the writer:

"Writing for me is an act of faith, a hope that I will discover something remarkable about ordinary life, about myself. And if the writer and

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the reader discover that same thing, if they have that connection, the act of faith has resulted in an act of magic. To me, that's the mystery and the wonder of both life and fiction - the connection between the two individuals who discover in the end that they are more the same than different." (Tan, in Pope, 2005, p230)

Perhaps then it can be said that the aspiration of both educator and learner is to nurture and develop the ability to use life as a resource; to perfect the ability to live and reflect, and to use those reflections to inform and create writing that in turn reflects and illuminates the human condition. Creative Writing is then not only 'teachable', it is also truly an Art form.

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ARTICLE | 3

Title

Flashbulb Memories

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Background

The School of Psychology has been developing its 'outreach activities' engaging young people and giving them a flavour of university study. We have recently developed a partnership with the Chetwynd Centre in Stafford. The 56 AS-level students visited the School of Psychology to hear academics talk about topics relevant to the A2 syllabus. Dr Yvonne Skipper talked about gender and the media, Dr Sarah Rose provided insight into attachment and adult relationships, Dr John Hegarty discussed fears and phobias, and Dr Helen Williams talked about autobiographical memory. The students were also given a tour of the department by Hayley Gilman and Lucy James and learned about the research process. This was a good opportunity, not just to learn about psychology and research, but also to tour a working department and learn about student life.

The students then ran their own research projects inspired by the four talks given during their visit. On July 17th 2014 they returned to the department to present their research to us and a judging panel. The psychology staff were very impressed at the standard of the projects and the excellent presentations which the students gave. Prizes were awarded for the best projects and the overall winners and their article on Flashbulb Memories can be found below. Congratulations to all involved!

Keywords

memory, autobiographical, working memory, flashbulb

Abstract

The area to be studied concerns that of flashbulb memories in the autobiographical memory concept. The hypothesis for our research that we created was that there will be a difference in the number of characteristics/features met within a flashbulb memory between participants aged 16-26 at the reminiscence bump and 45-55 at the recency effect stage. We used 10 participants aged between 16 and 26, and 10 participants aged between 45 and 55. We used an independent group's design and an opportunity sample where the participants both male and female were given a one question questionnaire asking them to explain 2 separate flashbulb memories in as much detail as their memory allowed at a standardised time of 5pm. The findings that we obtained were that the mean score for people aged 16-26 was 3.55 features/characteristics in each flashbulb memory whereas the 45-55 age group recorded a higher mean score of 3.75 characteristics/features. Therefore we can conclude that there is a difference between the 2 age groups design proving our hypothesis to be true however, the difference is not significant enough to claim anything.

Introduction

Memory is a hypothetical construct consisting of many different parts and varying functions. It was originally thought to be very simple with

unitary stores for short and long term memory as suggested by Atkinson and Schiffrin in their Multi-Store Model however, recent research has shown it to be greatly more complex than first thought with the Working Memory Model being developed most notably by Baddeley.

Memory is a very broad construct made up of many components and not as simple as first thought by Atkinson and Schiffrin. The Sensory memory is made up of the iconic memory which is a form of sensory memory that holds a visual image of a scene that has just been witnessed and the echoic memory which is a form of sensory memory for sounds just perceived. The Short Term memory has been known as the Working Memory. Its main component is the central executive which supervises and co-ordinates all the slave systems the first of these slave systems is our phonological loop which is our inner ear, the second is the auditory control system which is our inner voice and the third is the visuo-spatial sketchpad which is our inner eye. The long term memory is made up of many different parts. The first part is the Procedural memory. This is the part of the long-term memory that is responsible for knowing how to do things, i.e. memory of motor skills. It does not involve conscious thought. Semantic memory is a part of the long-term memory responsible for storing information about the world. This includes knowledge about the meaning of words, as

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well as general knowledge. Episodic memory is a part of the long-term memory responsible for storing information about events that we have experienced in our lives. It involves conscious thought. One branch of episodic memory is autobiographical memory key to our investigation.

The most key part is the Autobiographical memory. This is our memory for facts and events that form our personal histories. Autobiographical memory varies across a lifespan but has 3 key components of lifespan retrieval. Firstly, there is childhood amnesia where adults fail to retrieve episodic memories before the ages of 2-4 years, as well as the period before age 10 of which adults retain fewer memories than would be expected. The next component is the Reminiscence bump which is a stage in early adulthood/late adolescence. It's where there is a large peak in memory for events. It is said to be due to the development of Adult Identity, Novel experiences and a culturally shared life. The final component is the Recency effect. This is where there is an increased ability to remember events at the ages 50+.

Flashbulb memory is just one part of the autobiographical memory and is a snapshot of the event you have related to the context, feelings and vividness. Can be personal or a global news event for example, 9/11 Terrorist Attacks on Twin Towers. Flashbulb memories have 6 key characteristics which are place, your own affect, other affect, the ongoing activity, the informant and the aftermath. They are said to be particularly powerful memories hence the 6 characteristics often experienced.

One piece of research into flashbulb memory is by Conway, Anderson, Larsen, Donnelly, McDaniel and McClelland in 1994. They used the shock resignation of Margaret Thatcher in 1990 to test the memory of the event a few days, 11 months and 26 months after the event. They found that 86% of British participants remembered after 11 months with figures remaining consistent after 26 months.

The research into Flashbulb memory we undertook looked around the area of the reminiscence bump and recency effect stages and subsequent flashbulb memories. The key aim surrounding our research was to investigate how age affected the accuracy of flashbulb memories. The Independent Variable in this experiment is the age of the participants being 16-26 or 45-55 with the dependent variable being the accuracy of the event. According to Conway, Anderson, Larsen, Donnelly, McDaniel and McClelland in 1994 it is suggested that 86% people will remember flashbulb memories in detail however how age affects this is not clear hence our keen interest into this area.

The Null hypothesis that we are trying to disprove is that there will be no difference between the number of characteristics/features met within

a flashbulb memory between participants aged 16-26 (reminiscence bump) and 45-55 (recency effect) and any difference is a coincidence. Our Hypothesis for our research was a non-directional hypothesis that there will be a difference in the number of characteristics and/or features met within a flashbulb memory between participants aged 16-26 at the reminiscence bump and 45-55 at the recency effect stage. This is a two tailed experiment as previous research is not clear on which group will do better therefore the hypothesis is two tailed.

Methodology

Design

We used an independent groups design, with the independent conditions being two different age groups: 16-26 and 45-55. The independent variable in this investigation is the age of participants (either 16-26 years or 45-55 years), and the dependent variable is the number of characteristics/features met within a flashbulb memory. Participants had to fill out a questionnaire, explaining two individual flashbulb events in as much detail as their memory allows, in their own time. An extraneous variable in this investigation would be time of day that the participant fills out the questionnaire. We ensured that this was controlled by distributing the questionnaire to participants at 5:00pm, and had we not controlled it, it could possibly have affected participant's ability to retrieve all information possible. Another extraneous variable would be the personality of the participant. For example, one person may react differently to a news event than another, which would ultimately affect their accuracy of recall of the event. However, this is something that we were unable to control. Similarly hard to control, is the participant's linguistic ability as others are more capable of transferring their thoughts to paper than others. There were many guidelines we had to follow before we could carry out the investigation, as accredited by the BPS. Guidelines are as follows:

- **Consent** - we obtained the consent of all our participants by explaining the purpose and design of our research before we carried out the study.
- **Deception** - partial deception was necessary as we could not explain to participants the six criteria that need to be met within a flashbulb memory, otherwise results obtained would not be valid. However, prior to beginning the investigation, the information we provided them with was all true and was informative enough that they knew exactly what the investigation required from them.

- **Debriefing** - once participants had finished filling in the questionnaire, we ensured that we explained full our aims and hypothesis of the investigation, and what we would be looking for within the results. We also made sure that any stress caused by the procedure had been removed.
- **Withdrawal from the investigation/of data** - all our participants were made clear before they began filling in the questionnaire, that they can withdraw themselves from the investigation at any point without penalty or scorn. We also informed them that we can destroy their data, without means of retrieving it again.
- **Confidentially** - our participants had the right to expect that information they provided will be treated confidentially, and that they will be made anonymous following the write-up of results in the a way that information would be impossible to trace back to an individual.
- **Protection of participants** - participants were protected from physical and mental harm during the investigation, and were under no more risk than they would be in their everyday lives.

Participants

Our target population was the general population living in Stafford in the specific age groups being tested, which were the age groups of 16-26 and 45-55. We used an opportunity sample because it was the easiest sampling method for us to use in terms of time and money. We used participants overall, 10 of which were from the age group 16-26 and 10 from the age group 45-55. We evenly split these so we each investigated two participants from both age groups; however one of us ended up investigating four participants from both age groups. All participants were either friends, family or colleagues.

Materials

For this study we used a written debrief that we read to all participants and this was so that we could cover ethical issues possible for our study, from the BPS guidelines.

A consent form as proof that we have gained informed consent.

We also used a set of standardised instructions so that so that all participants received the same instructions and so it was clear what they had to do.

In addition we also had a standardised debrief which would cover all

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the remaining ethical issues of our study and outline the aim of our study and what the data would be used for.

A questionnaire was also used so that the participants could read what they had to do and had somewhere to record their answers.

Copies of the materials are in the appendix.

Procedure

Approach participants using an opportunity sample, of whom, all are friends and family, and gain consent from them to participate in a psychological study. Then explain that their names will remain anonymous and disguised so they cannot be recognised and they can drop out at any point during the investigation. Explain that you will be investigating how age affects flashbulb memories. Then ask them if they know what a flashbulb memory is, and if they don't, read out a standardised definition to them as follows: "a flashbulb memory is a highly detailed, long lasting memory triggered by an important or shocking news event". If they need further prompting give them an example of a flashbulb event, which is Prince William and Kate's marriage. Then, hand them a questionnaire asking them to "describe in as much detail as your memory allows, two separate flashbulb memories". When they complete this thank them for their time and read to them the standardized debrief which states what the results will be used for and what is being looked for in the results, including the hypothesis. The debrief is as follows:

"The study you have participated in is investigating the effect that age has on recall of flashbulb memories. We are testing this by identifying two age groups and issuing all participants with the same definition and questions. We will use the answers you and your fellow participants provided us with to determine if age has an effect on the amount of detail related to the 6 characteristics of flashbulb memories. These characteristics are: the place you were when you heard the news, your activity at the time, who informed you of the news, the effect that it had upon you, and effect it had on those around you and the aftermath of the news.

A previous notable study was conducted in 1994 by a group of psychologists (Conway, Anderson, Larsen, Donnelly, McDaniel and McLelland) which showed that 86% of people will remember flashbulb memories. However, there was no evidence from this study to show if age had any effect on the depth of knowledge remembered, hence our interest in this area.

Our hypothesis for this experiment is "there will be a difference in the

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number of characteristics met within a flashbulb memory between participants aged 16-26 and 45-55." We expect there to be a significant difference between the two age groups but are yet unsure whether youth will provide more detail as they are the age group which research has shown to have the most detailed memory. On the other hand, youth may have a disadvantage because the 45-55 group have lived through more important events during their lifetime.

The area of flashbulb memories is being researched at university level and they have identified the six characteristics of flashbulb memories which we are now investigating. We hope that our evidence from this study will add to their data.

As a participant in this study, you have the right to see the final write-up report and withdraw your data if you wish so. We can assure you that your participation in this study, as well as your data and contributions, will be completely confidential.

Thank you for your participation."

Results

Descriptive statistics for the results from the 16-26 age group:

Mean - 3.55
Median - 4
Mode - 4
Standard Deviation - 0.92

Descriptive statistics for the results from the 45-55 age group:

Mean - 3.75
Median - 4
Mode - 3
Standard deviation - 1.22 3s.f

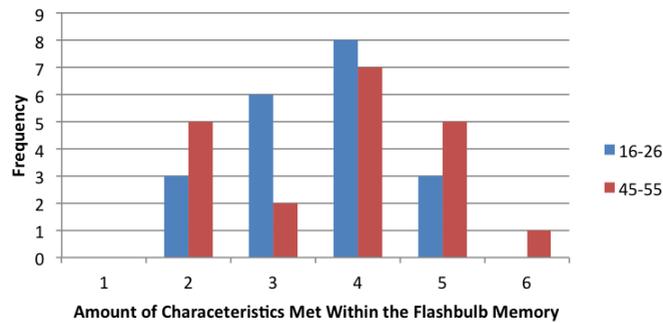


Fig 1 - A Bar Chart to Show the Frequency of Characteristics Met Within the Flashbulb Memory from Each Age Group

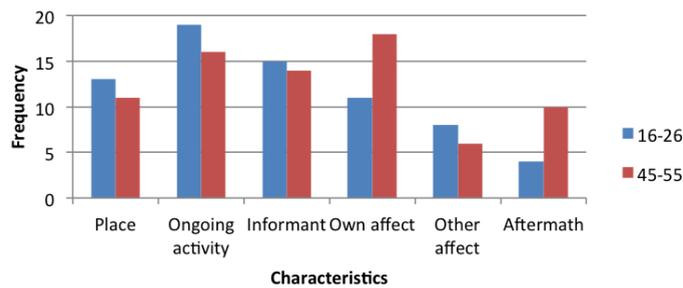


Fig 2 - A Bar Chart to Show the Frequency of Each Characteristic Met by the Separate Age Groups

X² Statistical test.

This has been used because: A non-directional hypothesis has been selected, a difference is being looked for between two variables, an independent groups design has been used, and frequently of detail is being assessed.

Observed	Place	On-going activity	Informant	Own effect	Other affect	Aftermath	Totals
16-25 Years	13	19	15	11	8	4	70
45-55 Years	11	16	14	18	6	10	75
Totals	24	35	29	29	14	14	145

To calculate expected calculate the score for row x columns divide by the total.

Observed	Place	On-going activity	Informant	Own effect	Other affect	Aftermath	Totals
16-25 Years	11.5	16.9	14	14	6.8	6.8	70
45-55 Years	12.4	18.1	15	15	7.2	7.2	75
Totals	24	35	29	29	14	14	145

Apply the formula below :

$$X^2 = \sum (O-E)^2 / E$$

Cell	(O-E)	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² /E	Total
A	13-11.5	1.5 = 2.25	2.25/11.5	0.19
B	19-16.9	2.1 = 4.41	4.41/16.9	0.26
C	15-14	1 = 1	1/14	0.07
D	11-14	-3 = 9	9/14	0.64
E	8 - 6.8	1.2 = 1.44	1.44/6.8	0.21
F	4-6.8	-2.8 = 7.84	7.84/6.8	1.15
G	11-12.4	-1.4 = 1.96	1.96/12.4	0.16
H	16- 16.9	-0.9 = 0.81	0.81/16.9	0.05
I	14 - 15	-1 = 1	1/15	0.07
J	18- 15	3 = 9	9 / 15	0.06
K	6 - 7.2	-1.2 = 1.44	1.44/7.2	0.2
L	10- 7.2	2.8 = 7.84	7.84/7.2	1.9
				=5.5

Degrees of freedom = (R-1) (C-1) = 5

For a result to be significant at P≥ 0.05 calculated X² must equal or exceed the critical table value.

Critical value = 11.07 as the calculated value 5.5 does not equal or exceed the critical value the null hypothesis is accepted and the experimental hypothesis rejected.

The difference found between the two ages is not seen as large enough to be considered significant.

Discussion

Our results from this study have shown that recalling four characteristics of a flashbulb memory was the most occurring number of characteristics from both age groups. The mean for the younger age group (16-26) was 3.55 and the mean for the older age group (45-55) was 3.75. On the surface, this would suggest that the older age group can recall more detailed memories than the younger age group. We did find that there was a difference but it was not significant enough to differentiate between the two age groups. The age of participants did not have a significant effect on the number of characteristics of a flashbulb memory recalled. The younger age group appear to have better statistics but the older age group has a greater range which may show individual differences in memory as people age. From these findings we can say that we accept our hypothesis but the difference between the two age groups is not significant enough to claim that one age group performed better than the other.

According to the research that Dr Helen Williams outlined to us, there are six distinct characteristics/features of a flashbulb memory. These six characteristics are place, on-going activity, informant, own affect, the effect on other people and the aftermath of the event. Our study showed that all these characteristics are there in the concept of flashbulb memory but not all can be recalled when asked. This could be because the participants, who we purposely kept in the dark about the characteristics, did not think that this was important to the investigation. As the concept of flashbulb memories is still being investigated at university level, we would need to repeat the experiment and collect more data in order to ensure that the data is valid.

Our findings show many differing means on how people remember information in a real life situation. The findings show that age in general does not seem to have an effect on their ability to recall information that has global significance. Our research does however contain some notable limitations. Firstly, we did not consider how gender may affect the ability of our participants to recall their flashbulb memories. To improve this we could take into account gender by splitting the male participants from the female participants however, this would require a significantly larger pool of information being obtained. Secondly, the surrounding noise from the environment in which the questionnaire was completed could have also affected their ability to recall information from their 2 flashbulb memories. To improve this we could ensure that all of our participants complete the questionnaire in a completely silent room so that there is no surrounding sound to affect our results. A final limitation is that we have a small sample size of only 20 participants this makes it incredibly hard to generalise our results to the wider population

as it is not representative. To improve this we could increase the sample size to be upwards of 100 participants making it more representative of the population and thus easier to generalise.

As our results, show very little difference between the age of participants and the accuracy of recall of a flashbulb memory, a further research area could be how gender affects the accuracy of recall of a flashbulb memory. The same methodology could be used but all that needs to be changed would be our current IV by splitting participants into 2 groups based on gender rather than age.

Our findings show that age does not affect the accuracy of recall of a flashbulb memory, so this means that we have rejected our hypotheses but accepted the null hypothesis. Our results differed from the findings in the study conducted by Conway, Anderson, Larsen, Donnelly, McDaniel and McClelland, however, their study was slightly different from ours. We found that some limitations of our study were gender, surrounding noise and the issue of generalisation which could lead us to further research on the effect of gender on the accuracy of recall.

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HIGHLIGHTS | SHORT ARTICLE

Title

The Global University - Activities in (IRD) International Recruitment and Development

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Abstract

Developing innovative means of internationalization for British Universities that provide both academic and financial rewards for the University requires creativity and sometimes, imagination. Keele University is recognized by the Times Higher as one of the 100 most international universities. On-going activities in International Recruitment and Development illustrate two such examples of globalization within the university – Year 2b and Science without Borders.

Introduction

Internationalization has become a key word in university strategies, linking UK based centres of academic learning to the wider world. The joined-up world that globalization has created ensures that communities are individual only in their location. Traditionally, internationalization within UK universities has been made up of recruitment overseas to bring in full-time degree students. This has not always been successful in creating an international environment on campus as groups of international students tend to clump together and have little to do with the unfamiliar world around them.

Keele University is placed among the top 100 most international universities (Times Higher Education World University Ranking), the top 1.75% in 2013-14 and provides innovative means of providing an international experience for both incoming and outgoing students. This Highlight will look at an example from both Outgoing - Year2b and Incoming - the link with 'Science Without Borders.'

Year 2b

Although the Distinctive Keele Curriculum (DKC) is made up of: the Distinctive Academic Curriculum; the Co-curriculum and the Development Strand, the intangible part of the DKC which is the student experience while on abroad is not as easy

to encapsulate. A new study abroad opportunity - study abroad in Year 2b - hopes to change this.

In the academic year 2014 - 15, single honours Mathematics students will be eligible to take up exchange in Year 2b. The linear curriculum of mathematics introduces distinctive issues with the current study abroad provision of a Year 2 single semester on exchange. Although every effort is made to match modules, the esoteric nature of the subject means a trivial change can be challenging when host universities make changes to module offerings that impact on matching the module material to the Keele curriculum so that students can progress. The opportunity of Year 2b allows students to go on exchange between their second-year of Keele study and the final year (Year 3) and allows a complementary exchange experience. Students will be able to study both outside their discipline of Mathematics and explore additional subject areas developing key skills in both personal development and academic scope.

Students face a highly competitive employment landscape upon graduation and 'added-value' within their degree could tip the balance as far as their future employment success. Studying abroad also helps a student with personal skills, develop confidence, focus and maturity that they might not gain by remaining in the UK for their degree study.

Students involved in the pilot year will engage with the Year 2b study abroad experience going beyond their Keele academic programme perhaps studying a language, additional Mathematics modules or choosing modules outside their degree strand to enhance their Keele degree. Students could elect to take modules in Sciences, Education, Business or an approved subject discipline. Students would be able to enhance skills and knowledge of internationalization and global citizenship, as well as broaden their skill portfolios.

Students would demonstrate their academic and personal development by documenting the experience through engagement with critical evaluation and reflection on Year 2b. In addition to the student experience gained from Year 2b, the University will also gain opportunities to enhance the student experience at Keele through:

- Research collaboration links with and between exchange partners
- An enriched curriculum through shared academic experience: opportunities for both Keele lecturers and exchange partner faculty to teach abroad or visit Keele
- Direct and indirect learning experience

It is anticipated that once the pilot is underway that Year 2b will become available to departments and Schools through the University widening both the academic and personal experiences of the wider undergraduate student population.

Elissa Williams MA

Global Education Manager

Brazil - Ciência sem Fronteiras

As the eyes of fans worldwide turn to Brazil for two of the World's greatest sporting events, International Office colleagues with a Latin America remit are biting their nails for a very different reason. This October sees the next Presidential election in Brazil, the outcome of which will have a knock-on effect in the UKHE sector. The incumbent President Dilma Rousseff is running for re-election and whilst we have no vote, the UK HEIs are willing her to win because of her extraordinary contribution to the internationalisation of Higher Education in Brazil.

The Science Without Borders Programme, or Ciência sem Fronteiras as it is known in Brazil, is a Government initiative led by President Dilma

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to upskill Brazilian students in the STEM subjects by giving them an overseas study experience at a top university in one of 26 countries. The programme seeks to strengthen and expand the initiatives of science and technology, innovation and competitiveness through international mobility of undergraduate and graduate students and researchers. At undergraduate level there are fully funded sandwich year placements which include classroom teaching and a research project or industry internship and for researchers there is full funding for a PhD or sandwich research year. With tuition fees, accommodation and flights paid for, the successful applicants get an opportunity of which ordinarily they could only dream.

When the programme was introduced in 2011, President Dilma's aim was facilitate the internationalisation of the HE experience for 100,000 Brazilian students by the end of the 2014/15 academic year and whilst this looks set to be achieved, the waves created by the scheme have been far reaching.

With a diverse range of science disciplines and an established Study Abroad unit, Keele has been able to benefit from the scheme with a small cohort of Brazilian undergraduate students enrolling each year. The diversification of the student body is invaluable as these students bring new perspectives and experiences to their classrooms and classmates. The students who have selected Keele have embraced campus life, making international friendships and trying new activities such as drama, karate and Quidditch. As they return to continue their studies at home, their role as a Keele Ambassador becomes a useful tool for the brand awareness of Keele particularly in a country as vast as Brazil.

Traditionally seen as a destination for English Language courses rather than degree level study, there is now growing interest in degree and postgraduate study across all disciplines and more Brazilian HEIs are consider collaboration with UK and other European institutions.

In September 2014 we are set to receive our biggest cohort of 'Science Without Borders' students to date and until the election results are announced we will have to assume it will be our last but if this is the case we will work with Dilma's legacy to grow the student mobility between Brazil and the UK.

Kate Whiston MA

 International Development Manager

 THE GLOBAL UNIVERSITY

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HIGHLIGHTS | EVENT REPORT

Event Title

Involving patients and learners in medical education research: benefits and challenges of co-producing evidence

Report Author(s)

Dr. Russell Crawford

Contact

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Date

2nd April 2014

This event report will attempt to give JADE readers a flavour of the range of discussions that were taking place as part of a Higher Education Academy event which took place in the David Weatherall Building (Medical School) on the 2nd of April 2014.

The event organiser was Dr. Sarah Yardley (Academic Clinical Lecturer in Medical Education Research) from Keele and her goal was for a multi-disciplinary spectrum of both speakers and delegates to come together to discuss the challenges and rewards of co-producing medical education research with patients and learners. The day was divided into two types of activities. The first part of the day took the form of a series of short talks and the second part of the day comprised of two workshop-based activities exploring pros and cons of co-production of research.

Dr. Yardley opened the event with welcome and introductions, setting the context of the day and linking to a short talk from Dr. Elizabeth Cottrell (GP Speciality Trainee in Primary Care and Health Sciences, Keele) who talked about her experiences of tripartite (patient, researcher and learner) research collaboration. Dr. Cottrell outlined the rationale behind this tripartite model of research as a positive in encouraging group interaction between these types of research stakeholder and listed a number of benefits in this approach. On the plus

side, learners in this model fed-back that they felt more valued and that the research benefited from a variety of diverse perspectives, leading to a greater understanding of any findings. The draw-backs of this approach were highlighted as primarily the logistics of stakeholders meeting up over long distances and the sheer amount of co-ordination and administration involved in collating the data. These draw-backs were balanced against some useful advice for anyone taking the tripartite research approach, that it meant meaningful involvement for all participants and encouraged the setting and achievement of clear research goals and good communication between participants and facilitators. The culmination of Dr. Cottrell's views are exemplified by the following quote..."Complex, time-consuming but worthwhile".

Unfortunately, due to illness Simon Dengari, Chair of INVOLVE (<http://www.invo.org.uk/>), a national advisory group that supports greater public involvement in the NHS could not attend, but Dr. Yardley presented his short talk, which covered a range of good ways to get both patients and the public involved in medical education research. Simon's points were equally applicable to more general education research and whilst acknowledging that there was a focus on clinical settings this information did suggest a movement towards broader educational settings. A central message from this

EVENT REPORT

talk was that public involvement in research was fundamental to quality research, rather than a desirable aspect of it and was proposed that this should be the rule rather than the exception. As an extra dimension to these points, it was highlighted that public participation in research aimed to increase feasibility and the transnational value of research by placing an element of trust into the quality of research output that has been co-produced with the stakeholder.

The next short talk was by Dr. Dawn Garbutt from the University of Central Lancashire who has also been a discipline leader for the HEA in the past. Dawn's talk focused on getting community engagement in research and talked about modes of participation moving through co-operation to co-learning (Cornwall, 1996). She discussed the relative strengths of student co-production of knowledge and outlined a number of participatory research methods (such as surveys, media or art-based projects) and concluded with a message of how co-production lends itself to innovation, being a dynamic and fluid research philosophy.

The next talk was from Dr. Alison Ledger from the University of Leeds, who spoke to the co-production theme by way of reflecting on collaboration aspects of this approach that fostered success. Her discussion explored three central factors key to collaboration: 1 - Geographical

movement as a driver of including diverse perspectives; 2 - Resources as in, formal and informal approaches to research, technology and financial issues; and 3 - Commitment to learning as a nexus of differing perspectives (those of researcher, participant and learner) and Dr. Ledger argued that all parties in a research collective were learning from each other all the time and that no one role was fixed. She finished by posing a question to the audience..."What can you learn through co-producing research?"...a question that JADE readers might also wish to contemplate.

The final speaker of the morning session was Prof. Steven Shardlow (Professor of Social Work, Keele) who provided an interesting example of a co-production project he had been part of before his time at Keele. His example focussed on a 3.5 year project investigating ways in which older people manage potential and active loneliness and isolation. There was a definite emphasis on volunteer researcher co-production and he shared some very illustrative points around issues affecting this project, one of which was a significant attrition rate in volunteers and their longer-term engagement with the project. His perspective was also valued in sharing his thoughts and experiences in teaching research methods to a diverse group of lay volunteers and outlined their adopting of an "appreciative enquiry" methodological approach to explore the research.

DR. RUSSELL CRAWFORD

This methodology is very much focussed on the “things work fine just now, but how could they work better” philosophy as a methodology (Bellinger and Elliot, 2011).

The emphasis of the event changed after these talks, with a lively panel (comprising the above speakers) discussion, fielding points and questions from the wider audience. The group-work aspects of the afternoon explored the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats inherent in a co-production research methodological approach and raised a number of useful debates around the room.

The afternoon was finished with a talk from Liz Anderson who is Discipline Lead for Medicine & Dentistry from the HEA. Liz took delegates on a fact-finding tour of the HEA website and discussed many aspects from fellowships to funding, with participants. Look out for a full article in an upcoming edition of JADE from Liz which will share some of these ideas with the larger Keele community.

LETTERS |

Letter Title

The A Minus (1980 to 1985)

Report Author(s)

Den Cartlidge

Report Author(s)

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Editor's Introduction

The following JADE Letter to the Editor is a submitted extract from a piece of work the author wrote for the “Life Writing Module” as part of the Keele MA in Creative Writing. Den Cartlidge was an MA student at Keele between 2011 and 2013 and introduces his piece as a “sort of autobiography with his lifelong interest in creative writing as a constant theme”. The extract itself is quite short and light hearted but matches well with the second edition of JADE and its theme of writing in academia. This piece also has some interesting implications for the wider pedagogic practice of feedback, both its positive and negative effects and the long-lasting impact that an inspirational teacher can have on a student, which I will discuss further in the Editors Prologue.

I was not a great success during the first year or two of High School. Most of the lessons baffled or bored me. Maths and Science seemed to be taught in a completely different language, while French literally was taught in another language. I also lacked practical skills and failed to generate much enthusiasm for woodwork or home economics. And my rotund shape and poor co-ordination skills made success on the sporting field unlikely.

‘He’s a growing lad,’ one of the PE teachers said once, in a bid to

explain my dire football skills.

‘He certainly is,’ the senior PE teacher replied. ‘The only trouble is he’s growing the wrong way. He’s growing out instead of up!’

That left the humanities and art. I thought History and Geography could be interesting, sometimes, and I quite liked Art. But the only subject that really grabbed my attention was English.

The first English teacher I had at High School was Ms Worth. She was in her mid-twenties and wore her auburn hair in a long carefully maintained ponytail. She dressed conservatively and, in my memory, her wardrobe consisted of practical cream coloured dresses, and nothing else. I thought she was brilliant. I was obsessed with writing stories at this time, and would bombard her desk with stories about alien planets with blue snow, and fantastical tales about talking birds. Ms Worth seemed to like these stories, and also praised my work when I wrote essays about less fantastical subjects, which, strangely, I felt less sure of.

I can still remember nervously waiting for my Mum and Dad to return from the first Parents’ Evening at the High School. They didn’t say much when they came through the heavy back door of our council house.

‘We’ll go through your report book,’ my Dad said gesturing towards the sofa. I sat next to my Dad with an odd mixture of excitement and foreboding. The blue report book contained several ‘Could do betters’ and a few ‘Works hard but struggles’ comments. But I was only really

interested in Ms Worth’s verdict on my school work, and my Dad knew this too.

‘She thinks the sun shines out of your bum,’ he joked, and pointed at the grade near the top of the page. ‘You’ve got an A minus. Well done.’

Looking back, I’m surprised I did so well in English, as my writing skills were inconsistent to say the least. The English teaching culture at junior school had encouraged creativity, sometimes at the expense of teaching kids how to spell, punctuate, and use grammar. Thanks to those teachers, I’ve never struggled with creativity, but to this day I still struggle with the basics of the writing craft.

I think the slightly dog-eared brown exercise books I handed into Ms Worth must have been riddled with mistakes, which, to be fair, she did try to highlight and get me to correct. But she seemed to see something in me, despite my limitations with the written word, which other teachers did not. And I will always be grateful for her words of encouragement and praise.

Eventually I began to improve in subjects other than English, although I don’t think any of the other teachers thought I had a particular talent or ability, and I was sometimes hurt by their less than constructive comments. But I didn’t mind too much, as I dawdled home from school, composing stories in my head, because, despite everything, I knew I was good at one thing, and one day, when I finally became a writer, I would show everyone what I was capable of.



LETTERS |

Letter Title

Student Reflections on Winning an "Anatomy Challenge"

Report Author(s)

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School

School of Medicine

Faculty

Faculty of Health

On the 8th December 2012 a small group of students from Keele Medical School attended the first National UK Medical Students Academic Winter Conference, held near the University Hospital of Wales.

We attended the conference in order to take advantage of the various careers talks on offer, with one of us (Mohamed) aspiring towards a career in surgery and the other (Adam) in hospital medicine. Also included were a number of lectures focusing on how to perform research and get published, along with some practical workshops. The fact that the

conference allowed us to visit the great city of Cardiff was another factor in our decision to attend. We enjoyed the opportunity to mix with medical students from institutions with different emphases and course structures, allowing us to compare and contrast our experiences.

As part of the conference an 'Anatomy Challenge' was held. This involved an initial screening round of 60 PowerPoint-based anatomy questions, from which the top 32 students were chosen to progress to 'knock-out' rounds as pairs. Of the Keele students involved, the pair of us made it through and were placed together for the remaining rounds. The following rounds again used PowerPoint-based diagrams, but the format was changed to requiring pairs to press buzzers and answer, with the team that answered first gaining a point. We were asked questions ranging from basic anatomy (for example, naming a vein indicated by an arrow) to those with a more clinical focus (such as naming certain nerve palsies). After a couple of knock-out rounds we were able to win the contest, despite requiring tiebreaker questions right at the end of the final quiz as we were level on points with another team.

We were elated with our victory because we had not attended the conference for the Anatomy Challenge, and neither of us had specifically prepared for it due to it occurring in the middle of a busy period of our second year. We do however both have a passion for anatomy, which has been nurtured through the excellent staff and teaching

facilities at Keele Medical School. We found the weekly dissection sessions provided in first-year particularly helpful, as the small-group teaching sessions helped us to understand the relevance of what we were learning to clinical practice. Additionally, in the anatomy sessions (as in the rest of the Medical School) the material is never spoon-fed, and students are encouraged to utilise textbooks and other resources during dissection to support their learning. As mature students, we both feel very comfortable as independent learners, and so this style of teaching suited us perfectly. This teaching style is also highly likely to aid the other students in developing their independent learning skills. The fact that we won the challenge is a testament to the anatomy teaching that we have received at Keele, and so the award belongs as much to the staff at the Anatomy Department as it does to us. In particular, we would like to thank Mike Mahon, Dr Menos Lagopoulos, Dr Geetha Viswanathan and Professor Peter Willan for their teaching and support during the anatomy components of the course.

If you would like to submit a letter for a future edition of JADE, please see jadekeele.wordpress.com for more information.

EDITOR'S EPILOGUE



In this editor's epilogue, I would like to consider a few different themes that have emerged from our second edition. We had a few articles, including our main Editorial from Prof. Murray, looking at writing—both creative and academic, and the astute JADE reader might ask if there is even a difference!

It is no accident that this edition has a writing theme, since there has been quite a bit of interest building in recent years around academic writing linked with teaching and learning, in no small part inspired by the on-coming Research Excellence Framework (REF) accepting pedagogic papers under their Education sub-section. The point was made last edition; teachers writing up their practice should be considered the norm rather than something only a few engage with and I hope that this message is further strengthened by this edition where we have had the opportunity to showcase writing skills from a variety of sources presented in a number of styles, from humorous to reflective, whilst at all times keeping an eye on the underpinning pedagogy. Just to further emphasise this theme of teaching practice and associated academic writing, the Journal of Pedagogic Development (University of Bedfordshire) has just published a paper I wrote aimed at convincing others of what many at Keele already exemplify (<http://www.beds.ac.uk/jpd/volume-4-issue-2/pedagogic-trinity>).

If academic and creative writing was the explicit theme of our second edition, there were undeniably a couple of implicit themes as well. Indeed on that point, one of our Letters to the Editor very much resonated with me personally. A bitter-sweet and highly intimate article by Den Cartlidge, that made a number of points touching upon the explicit creative / academic writing theme. What was most poignant (and understated) about this short piece from my perspective was that it brought into sharp relief another implicit theme from this edition of JADE: the effect and lasting impact a teacher can have on their students. Please, have another read of that letter and see if, as I did on repeat reading, you pick up on both the powerful impact that a teacher can have on a learner through positive feedback and the tragically lasting impact that negative feedback can have, even years later, on a student that influences their choice of routes through education. This theme was touched upon again in our first student submission to JADE and the points these authors made about how their course tutors had inspired

 EDITOR'S EPILOGUE

their performance in a national competition. On the point of student submissions, I sincerely hope this piece will open the flood-gates on tapping the potential of having student work considered for the journal.

The final implicit theme that I detected in this edition was the idea of drawing on principally reflective writing pieces as valuable pedagogy which may or may not be supported by rigorous evaluation or evidence, touched on tangentially in our Highlights section in the submission focussed on the transnational agenda. However challenging the idea that a pedagogic submission might not have any quantitative data and relatively little qualitative data in it might be to some academics, there is real value in reflective writing that has a rigorous pedagogic basis supported by the literature. A point to discuss in future editions of JADE, where I think exploration could bring greater understanding of the value of data-light reflective pedagogic writing and if you have any perspectives on that one, let us know.

Summing up and coming back to one of those implicit themes, more than anything else from this edition I am convinced that JADE should look to explore varied practice, pro / cons, inherent benefits, dangers and effects of all types of “feedback” in future editions, as I know for a fact there are some truly innovative works taking place at Keele that we should be drawing upon to inform best practice...so look out for that and if you have a mind to, submit something yourself on this (or any!) topic.

Until next time.

Dr. Russell Crawford

Managing Editor



Open Call for Submissions

The Learning and Professional Development Centre is pleased to announce an open call for submissions on any aspect of teaching, learning or assessment for the next issue of J.A.D.E.

For those interested in publishing their educational research in J.A.D.E there is a short video introduction to the journal and full instructions for authors available at:

<http://jadekeele.wordpress.com>



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