

**What might this form be doing to this student? A reframing of 'connections, communities and criticality' in a focus on the 'international' student writer in the text. (0164)**

In this paper the question - What might this form be doing to this writer? – is borrowed from Blommaert (2005) citing Williams (1972). The particular form referred to in the paper is the 'essay' required of 'international' students on postgraduate degree courses in Education in a UK university where the subject teacher reads student essays in their pre-submission final drafts for the purpose of assessing the extent to which each student's text meets, or is likely to meet, the given criteria as set out in the assessment proforma.

The paper is based on research in which samples of students' pre-submission essays were collected, together with the subject teachers' completion of the assessment proforma and the teachers' marginal written comments on the students' texts. This material is currently being analysed. To date two distinctive approaches have been adopted

The first approach focuses on the examples in relation to the 'essay' criteria in the assessment proforma and pays particular attention to criteria which refer to the construction of the essay text in English. It locates these criteria in particular discourses around 'connection, communities and criticality', which, it is argued, inform the assessment proforma and the teachers' written comments.

The second approach seeks the student writer in the text; i.e. the writer as textually realised, and constructs 'ghost texts' from students' breaches in their texts of the expected essay form. The purpose is to identify the form-writer interactions of the student writers from the traces in their writing of their diverse linguistic and educational histories; i.e. to look for evidence of what the textual realisation of the form—the essay--did to them instead of focusing in assessment terms on what they did to the form.

Concepts that are proving methodologically useful in an adapted form include the distinction between the iussive and the trace; Hoey's (2004) 'priming'; Kress' (2011) multimodality as 'prompt'; Raymond Williams' 'structures of feeling', and Bakhtin's chronotopes. The perceived relevance of these concepts will be briefly outlined as part of a different reading of excerpts from the students' texts

The paper will claim that the research presented could enable two developments. The first is a view of the essay which includes the 'aesthetic' in its textual realisation; i.e. it includes stylistic features such as rhythm and other multimodal rhetorical

patterns which contribute to the writer's presence in the text as a meaning-making voice but are seldom discussed in seminars on academic essay-writing. The second possible development extends this view of the writer in the text to an enlarged conception of 'connection, communities and criticality', which places greater emphasis on the linguistic and educational histories and global educational issues which a perception of students as writing in and from a particular time-space can accommodate.