



**Exploring practical applications of 'Scaffolding
Academic Literacy' (Rose et al. 2008) in EAP
reading and writing**

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Overview

- Introduction and summary of ‘Scaffolding Academic Literacy’ (Rose et al., 2008)
- Observation of our students’ needs and limitations of existing provision
- What we thought we could do about it
- Examples of materials developed
- Conclusion
- Questions/discussion



Introduction: Scaffolding Academic Literacy (Rose et al, 2008, p169)

D. Rose et al. / Journal of English for Academic Purposes 7 (2008) 165–179

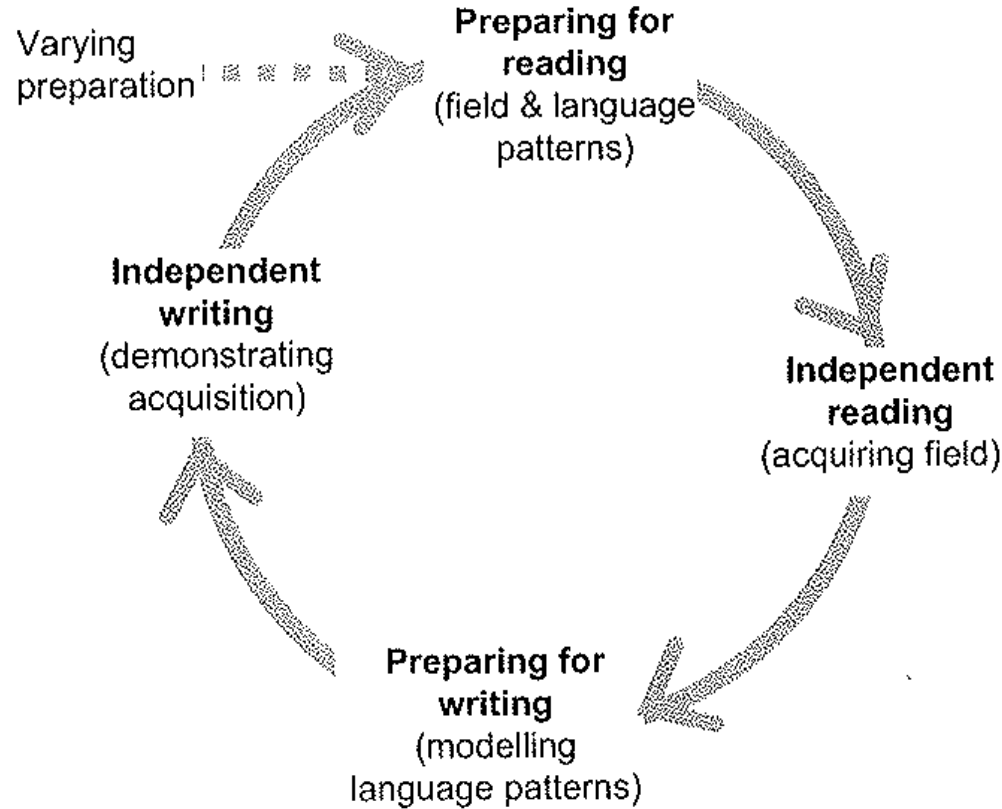


Fig. 2. Scaffolding academic cycle.



The 'Preparation for Reading' stage (Rose et al, 2008, p169)

1. Preparing *before* Reading
2. Paragraph-by-Paragraph Reading
3. Paragraph-by-Paragraph Text Marking
4. Sentence-by-Sentence Text marking



limitations of existing provision/rationale for re-development

- ‘Content’ not generally foregrounded in much of our own materials (and EAP generally)
- Emphasis on apparently transferable ‘skills’
- Underpinned by continuing mainstream subscription to language-conduit metaphor
- Teachers avoid close reading of short excerpts
- Poor classroom interaction with source materials
- Students’ essays disappointing



What we thought we could do about it

- Initially developed materials that closely followed Rose et al's (2008) 'Scaffolding Academic Literacy' approach :
'findings suggest that the *Scaffolding Academic Literacy* methodology could be valuable for teachers working with international and other students for whom English is a second language' (p. 166).
- See Rose & Martin (2007) for ESL application
- Initial impressions positive:
 - Field knowledge improved
 - Better interaction with sources
 - Familiarisation with genre of academic texts
 - Less plagiarism



However...

- Not enough time/curriculum space
- Lack of variety
- very teacher-centred
- students' expectations changed
- did not really promote independent learning



So we thought...

Can we pursue a 'scaffolded' approach BUT in a more learner-centred, task-centred, inductive way?



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Example 1

People are quickly losing the cultures of their particular countries or regions. Everyone in the world is becoming more similar in terms of their tastes and how they behave.

Traditional cultures are disappearing but they are not being replaced by worldwide 'sameness'. Modern cultures in different countries and regions are still very individual and distinct.

Cultures are mixing. Different mixes are being created in different locations and areas of life.

Religion and religious differences are becoming more significant. This is creating greater cultural gaps between different nations and cultures.

The West, especially the United States, has been dominant both economically and culturally, so the rest of the world has become 'westernised' or 'Americanised'.



(i) Before you read this section, make sure you understand the following vocabulary:

Vocabulary to talk about *concepts/theories/ways of interpreting the world*

'The *concept* of *emphasizes* ...'

'In this *perspective* ...'

'This *theory* ... has attracted ... *adherents* (as well as *critics*)'

To many [these events] *are seen as* ...

Vocabulary for establishing the extent of something

'This is not to say that ..., but it is to say that ...'

'... mainly, if not only ...'

'...largely, if not totally ...'

Vocabulary to talk about something **metaphorically**

'In one image, the world is *envisaged as a mosaic*'

'More menacing is an image of a **billiard ball table** .../'...*seen as bouncing off others* .../' ...
catastrophic collisions ...'

'...**submerged** .../'... **resurfaced** ...'

'... the emergence of **fault lines** ...'

(ii) Read the extract from 'Cultural Differentialism' on page 245 and answer the following questions:

- From the *cultural differentialism* perspective are cultures seen as completely uninfluenced by globalization?
- How do the metaphors of a 'mosaic' and a 'billiard ball table' help explain the theory of *cultural differentialism*? Why is the latter 'more menacing'?
- What two events in recent years have made caused more people to pay attention to this theory?
- How is Samuel Huntingdon's 'Clash of Civilizations' idea an example of the theory of *cultural differentialism*?

Task 4: Reading – 'Cultural Hybridization'

(i) Number the paragraphs on page 255 from '1' to '4', and the first on page 256, '5'.

(ii) Look back at the language box titled 'Vocabulary to talk about *concepts/theories/ways of interpreting the world*' in Task 3. Read paragraphs and underline similar vocabulary/phrases

Moreover, as Ritzer (2010, p.245) suggests, the core of the culture which maintains nation's original culture is not impacted by globalization. This theory, which is named cultural differentialism, has attracted more and more attention is due to two events: the terrorist attacks of 911 and multi-culturalism. For example, after the Sept. 11th terrorist attacks in the United States, the discourse of international relations and global politic has been transformed and geopolitical and security has once again become the core issue (Ritzer, 2010, p.245). Therefore, these events caused the collision of Eastern and Western cultures and the hatred of the majority and minority (Ritzer, 2010, p.245). Therefore, every country maintains their national cultural differences and making it a natural culture of their country, which not from the finance need, is an understanding of their own heritage.

cultures are recognized as being separate and in conflict. The concept of cultural differentialism was further exemplified and supported by Huntington (cited in Ritzer, 2010, p. 245) who suggested that geo-political categories such as 'Capitalist' vs. 'Communist' created by Cold War transcended cultural difference, but did not lead to their disappearance. Moreover, according to Huntington, after the end of the Cold War, these cultural differences resurfaced. The concept of cultural differentialism may, however, be criticized as it implies that cultural differences are maintained always and without doubt, and so it fails to account to the fact that even though numerous evidence suggest that cultural differences continue to exist, some of them may in fact change.

It can be further suggested that under the influence of globalisation, certain cultural practices may become hybridized (Ritzer, 2010, p. 255). This is outlined in the model of cultural hybridization, which refers to the idea that cultures can be mixed, and therefore form unique and new combinations. From this perspective: "the focus is on the integration of global processes with various local realities to produce new and distinctive hybrid forms that indicate continued global heterogenization rather than homogenisation" (Ritzer, 2010, p. 255). The most recognizable example of cultural hybridization may be represented by the way that McDonalds is run in Hong Kong (Watson, 2008, p. 126). Watson admits that McDonalds faced large success

Example 2

Read the extracts from Lechner and Steger below: how are they different in perspective? How does the grammar in the second example help you better understand their views?

1

‘The Seattle protesters made a motley crowd.’

(Lechner, 2009, p268)

‘... this impressive crowd represented more than 700 organizations and groups.’

(Steger, 2009, p117)

2

‘While the battle gained a “global” aura in the retelling, most participants were from North America, and among them were union members, brought in by the AFL-CIO, whose main demand for limits on trade agreements could have been mistaken by workers elsewhere for a form of self serving protectionism rather than an expression of global solidarity.’ (Lechner, 2009, p268)

‘In spite of the predominance of North American participants, there was also a significant international presence.’ (Steger, 2009, p116)



Examples 3 & 4

Course: Academic Skills for MN1001 Management and the Modern Corporation

Objectives: Discipline-specific language/literacy/skills developed around the content (lectures, seminar readings, essay tasks) of the core first-year Management course



Below are two telephone sales marketers talking about their respective managers: in which situation would you feel more comfortable as an employee? Why?

My manager is really cold and distant. He doesn't know anything about me personally and he doesn't seem to want to know. I don't feel like I have much control over my work - he tells me exactly what to do all the time. If I don't reach my sales targets, he gets angry with me. I feel that if I don't perform perfectly, I could lose my job.

My manager is friendly and knows quite a lot about my life, not just about my work. She gives me quite a lot of control over my own work. I feel like I can make my own decisions. When I don't reach my sales targets, she shows concern for me and tries to understand by finding out if there is anything in my personal life that can explain why I'm not doing so well at work. I'm not completely sure she genuinely cares, though ... I worry that the personal things she knows about me could one day affect my job security here ...

Example 3

In the above case study I have sought to illustrate what can be seen as three distinct views of management practice. In Dave's view, effective practice consisted in his maintaining a personal distance from his staff in order to preserve his capacity to make 'objective' decisions about what constituted the most effective means for achieving his targets. In practice, this 'objective' choice of means resolved itself into the use of threats to job security and level of remuneration to elicit the desired behaviour from his staff. Val's view of effective practice was superficially very different from Dave's. For Val, managing like Dave had got her 'into situations that could be avoided'. As a consequence of this, rather than interest herself solely in her staff's overt behaviour, Val had sought to get to know her staff as people. In Val's mind this was more effective practice for, through developing close relationships with her staff, she was able to understand the needs and concerns that informed their behaviour. This understanding, however, was not valued for its own sake, nor did Val let the closeness of her relationships with staff lead her into a sense of personal moral obligation towards them. Instead, as in the case of Rita and Christine, Val sought merely to use her understanding as knowledge that would allow her to act in ways that would improve their performance.

Thus, despite their superficially very different practices, informing both Dave and Val's actions was a common intention to control their staff. As Macintyre predicts, both Dave and Val saw their practice in morally-neutral, technical terms; and their different practices could be viewed merely as the product of different views of what constituted the most effective means of securing control. Given Val's good sales results and low staff turnover, it could be argued that her use of social scientific knowledge, in the form of the management strategies developed by McGregor, had served to enhance the effectiveness of her practice.

The third distinct view of management practice that I have sought to



Example 4

In Hofstede's cultural triad, occupational and organizational cultures are defined as uniform. If Hofstede were epistemologically consistent, he would also define the third component as homogeneous (*Definition 1*); that is, each individual within a country would share the same national culture. This he sometimes does, but he cannot do so when analysing the IBM survey data because their heterogeneity contradicts *Definition 1*. If a national culture were common to all national individuals (and survey responses could identify those cultures) then there would not have been significant intra-country differences in individuals' responses. But the IBM survey responses within each country were characterized by radical differences. Hofstede acknowledges this. Relying on his second definition of national culture he states that there was only an 'average' or 'central' 'tendency' (1991: 253). Although, for example, some Japanese respondents 'scored more individualist' than did some American respondents, each of the diverse responses were nationally averaged and then held to be representative of the cultural differences between the countries. Highly varied responses were converted into single national IBM responses and those averaged responses – when compared with other nationally classified data – were then labelled the respective national cultural differences.

Within a very heterogeneous set of data there is, in principle, always an 'average tendency'. If it is supposed that there are national cultures then it can be legitimately argued that national cultures as 'central tendencies' exist. But Hofstede maintains not merely that in each country there is a national cultural central tendency, but that he identified such national tendencies, or differences between them, from data from some respondents in a single micro-location.

If somehow the average tendency of IBM employee responses is assumed to be nationally representative then, with equal plausibility – or rather equal implausibility – it must also be assumed that this would be the same as the average tendency in every other company, tennis club, knitting club, political party, massage parlour, socialist party, and fascist party within the same country. The 'average [national culture] tendency' in New York City Young Marxist Club, for example, is (if Hofstede's *Assumption 2*, defined earlier, is believed) the same as in the Keep America White Cheer-Leaders Club in Smoky Hill, Kansas, USA.

But there are no valid reasons for assuming that the IBM responses somehow reflected 'the' national average. This argument would be correct



So, in summary ...

Original Scaffolding Ac Lit pedagogy	Adaption
1. Preparing before Reading	Synopses reformulated as opinions or situations to discuss/respond to
2. Paragraph-by-Paragraph reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Systematic/thematic treatment of vocabulary• Tasks, e.g. comprehension questions
3. Paragraph-by-Paragraph Text Marking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Systematic/thematic rather than 'ad hoc' focus on vocabulary• Where possible, link back to stage 2
4. Sentence-by-Sentence Text Marking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shift to inductive framing with questions• Contrast of two texts



Concluding thoughts

- Scaff Ac Lit/EAP ‘fusion’ perhaps not a radical shift in the *types* of tasks, but a shift in the *rationale driving them*
- ‘Transferable skills’ of skimming/scanning etc. traditionally given too much weight at expense of genuine content comprehension
- ‘Genre understanding’ more important for students to be able to transfer to their independent reading of academic texts.
- We’re looking at development of a ‘deeper’ understanding of rhetorical tools employed by authors
- Engaging with, rather than avoiding, ‘difficult’ texts
- Dealing with field and content is messy and not easily resolvable
- For this reason many published materials (as well as in-house!) perhaps ‘sanitise’ the reading element, presenting it unproblematically.



References/Further Reading

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