

What renders feedback effective for novice L2 undergraduate writers' development of discipline-specific writing?

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To be able to participate in construction of new knowledge, novice L2 writers need to build their understanding of the epistemology of the discipline that they are writing in and develop appropriate disciplinary perspectives. Novice L2 writers in the university, therefore, need to receive instruction, guidance and timely and dialogic feedback from both subject and language experts within the context of the discipline in which writing takes place. Disciplinary faculty tend to have acquired tacit understanding of writing within their discipline through “long exposure” (Nesi and Gardner 2012:261) and are often unaware of the need for training novice writers in their disciplines (Carter, 2007). This doctoral research aims to contribute towards an understanding of the processes of awareness of genres across the disciplines as experienced by novice writers through the interactive processes of assignment specific and genre-based feedback and revision. The context of my research is a writing support programme at my university developed in collaboration with the discipline teachers from across eight faculties representing broad disciplines of the arts and humanities, life sciences, social sciences, and physical sciences, using Nesi and Gardner’s framework (2012). The programme supports students through genre-based feedback on multiple drafts to raise among students an awareness of the ways of knowing and doing within a discipline as represented by discipline teacher's expectations. This talk will present an analysis of successive drafts of the essay genre family from four subjects representing four broad disciplines and the feedback students received from language teachers with a view to finding out what specific feedback helped students revise according to faculty’s expectations as represented in the assignment guidelines developed as a result of collaboration between subject and language teachers.