Writing from Sources in EAP Assessment: A Coding Scheme for References

Emma Bruce
26th November 2016
Language Testing Forum
My PhD Research

The impact of imposing a time condition in an academic reading-to-write argumentative essay assessment

The Coding Scheme for References (CSR)

- Background to my research
- Literature: RTW and time
Context and background to the study

- English Language Centre, City University of Hong Kong (English medium)
- Source-based argumentative essay: main writing genre and assessed task
- Combination of timed writing & process writing (at-home) assessments
- EAP Writing Rubric used to rate both
Growing popularity of RTW assessment tasks

- Authenticity (Weigle 2004; White 1995)
- (Context) Validity (Plakans 2008, 2010; Weir et al 2013)
- Fairness (Weigle 2004).

BUT is what we are doing in our EAP programmes delivering on these promises?
Authenticity

- 1980s – use of ‘genuine’ texts
- Authenticity is more than matching test tasks to TLU
- It is a quality that arises from test-takers involvement in the test tasks

Lewkovicz (2000)

Two types of authenticity:

- situational authenticity – the perceived match between the characteristics of test tasks to target language use (TLU) tasks

- interactional authenticity – the interaction between the test taker and the test task (cognitive validity?)

(Bachman 1991)
Validity

• Context validity – appropriateness of task demands in relation to a real-life task (Weir 2005)

• Cognitive validity – how closely the cognitive processing represents that of a real-life task (Shaw & Weir 2007)

However:

• Students have ‘unlimited’ time to work on genuine university assignments

• Limitations of traditional timed independent essay may still apply in RTW assessment tasks in EAP
Research Questions

Does imposing a time condition in an academic reading-into-writing argumentative essay assessment affect students’:

• source text use?
• essay scores?
Previous research on RTW & time

• Majority of RTW studies (Plakans 2009; Plakans & Gebril 2012; Sawaki, Quinlan & Lee 2013; Yu 2013) focus on a one-shot task (e.g. short essay, conducted in a predetermined time)

[Exceptions: Cho 2003 - compared effects of product-oriented & process-oriented approaches to an integrated writing assessment task; McGinley 1992- students allowed as much time as they needed in one sitting to compose a persuasive essay from multiple sources]

• Independent writing tasks (e.g. Younkin 1986; Livingstone 1987; Caudery 1990; Kroll 1990; Hale 1992; Knoch & Elder 2010)

• Extended conditions in many studies were only between 10 and 20 minutes longer in tasks of 20 or 30 minutes (e.g. Younkin 1986; Livingstone 1987; Hale 1992)

• Studies tend to judge impact of time on scores alone, often a holistic score

[Exception: Kroll 1990]

• No significant difference found between writing in two time conditions in majority of studies (Younkin 1986; Livingstone 1987; Hale 1992; Power & Fowles 1996; Polio, Fleck & Leder 1998).
The RTW construct

Complex interplay between reading & writing ≠ sum of independent skills but rather a different skill

Discourse synthesis: constructivist activity - writers organise content selected from sources & connect it to their own personal knowledge bank in order to transform the source texts into a new text (Spivey & King 1989)

Plakans (2009, 2015): students of higher overall proficiency display more discourse synthesis processes, less proficient students focus on language issues
## Research design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups (50 students in each)</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group H – further divided into 2 groups, HA who did topic A first and HB who did the reverse</td>
<td>HA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>One week</td>
<td>HB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HB</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>One week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group T – further divided into 2 groups, TA who did topic A first and TB who did the reverse</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>1 hr 45 mins</td>
<td>TB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Data, Instruments & Analyses

**RQ1: Students’ source text use**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data</th>
<th>Instruments</th>
<th>Analyses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Typed & anonymized compositions (drafts, plans, notes, annotated source texts, writing logs) | - 2 genuine writing exam questions from EAP course  
- Coding Scheme for References (CSR)  
- Source Use Coding Grid (SUCG) | - Textual analysis for citation types & frequency  
- Statistical analysis of features (Paired sample t-test) |
| 2. Post-writing questionnaire (PWQ) responses | - Retrospective, semi-structured questionnaire on Survey Monkey (different versions)  
- Classification scheme for composer’s reasons for citing | - Statistical analysis of numerical questions  
- Qualitative analysis of short answer responses |
| 3. Retrospective interview transcripts & video recordings | Discourse-based interviews | - Qualitative textual analysis of transcripts  
- Inductive approach to identify patterns, trends & idiosyncrasies |
## Coding Scheme for References (CSR)

Comprehensive system for classifying citations (Hyland, T. 2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coding Scheme for References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of Citation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bounded (B)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unbounded (U)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Documented (D)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other potential schemes trialled (Shi 2004; Weigle & Parker 2012; Gebril & Plakans 2013)
### Source Use Coding Grid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citation No</th>
<th>Location in the reading (P = paragraph, S = sentence)</th>
<th>Type of reference</th>
<th>Length (words) Not including reporting structure/linking phrase</th>
<th>Location in the Writing</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Reporting verb / structure (linguistic integration)</th>
<th>Contextual Integration</th>
<th>Other details</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Section highlighted?</th>
<th>Copied 3 word chunks not referenced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Stuburn, P1, S3-4</td>
<td>IUU</td>
<td>41 (whole sent)</td>
<td>P1, S1, (TS)</td>
<td>Main Idea (MI)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>A meshing together of ideas from Stuburn with some of writer's own input to create topic sentence. It can be hard to tell if some of IUUs are really ideas borrowed or ones which belonged to the students already as in the focus group students said this topic has been in the news and they are familiar with. However some of same vocals and one copied 3-word chunk.</td>
<td>low 4, low 4, 4, 3</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>reducing the number of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Stuburn, P1, S3-4</td>
<td>IUUR</td>
<td>28 (whole sent)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>low 4, low 4, 4, 3</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Romer, P3, S2</td>
<td>DBD</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>P2, S3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Could be a concession but not clear. Could be just a supporting idea.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Romer argues that &quot;...&quot; Before - none. This idea needs a linker. After - &quot;However, it is not supportive...&quot; (attempt at critical evaluation?) Seems to contradict the TS as it states employment doesn't fall much but it is used to show that regardless of this, policy does not benefit the poor. &quot;However it is not supportive that...&quot; - critical evaluation.</td>
<td>low 4, low 4, 4, 3</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Romer, P4, S1</td>
<td>IUD</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>P3, S3</td>
<td>MI</td>
<td>Reomer (2013) supports the evidence that General idea (pass extra cost to consumers). Specific examples are given in TS and then this general idea comes next. Should be the TS (MI)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Full paraphrase, bounded only at start with surname and date but not at end</td>
<td>low 4, low 4, 4, 3</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hyland’s Scheme Explained

Detailed criteria to identify four specific types of borrowing (along a cline):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct</th>
<th>Quasi-direct</th>
<th>Quasi-indirect</th>
<th>Indirect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same as original</td>
<td>Full paraphrase</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

Rhetorical features of citations classified according to presence of:

- ✔ documenting (attribution) – including the source information
- ✔ bounding (separation from main text at the start and end) – mechanically e.g. with quotation marks or rhetorically e.g. with a reporting structure or linking phrase

4 variations (bounded & documented; unbounded & documented; bounded & undocumented; unbounded & undocumented)

*The minimum wage may “lead to price increases of day-to-day goods”. (DBU)*

Hyland lists 16 different ways students can integrate source texts & gives explicit examples
## Appendix J:
### Reference Type Indicators and Examples

<table>
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<th>Type of Reference</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Identifiable techniques:</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bounded (B)</td>
<td>Any markings, words or phrases in the written text that clearly separate source references taken from the reading, from the writer’s own words</td>
<td>• Mechanical bounding such as quotation marks</td>
<td>In the article, this information is usually supplied by the victim. I agree that this is a problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Rhetorical separation with phrases like “in the article” or “the author says” or “I agree that...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documented (D)</td>
<td>Information about the source of the idea.</td>
<td>• Parenthetical references</td>
<td>Brown claims that this information is usually supplied by the victim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• In-text rhetorical references to the author’s name, institution, affiliation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bounded &amp; Documented</td>
<td>Often texts are bounded by the same information that documents a source</td>
<td>It is not specified.</td>
<td>As Brown says in his article, much information is usually supplied by the victim (p.3).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct (D)</td>
<td>Information that is directly taken from the text. There are four possible permutations:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Direct, Bounded, Documented (DBD)</td>
<td>Information that is separated from the writer’s own ideas and identified as to its source.</td>
<td>• Documentation techniques</td>
<td>Brown tells us “Though the accused is often grilled by the investigating team, crucial details are supplied by the victim” (p.3). This is...</td>
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<td>Direct, Unbounded, Documented (DUD)</td>
<td>Information is given about the source, but the reader is unclear where the writer’s ideas end and the source ideas begin.</td>
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<td>Though the accused is often grilled by the investigating team, crucial details are supplied by the victim, probably because the accused is afraid to supply them (Brown, p. 3).</td>
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<td>Direct, Unbounded, Undocumented (DUU)</td>
<td>Source information is separated from the writer’s words, but there is no indication of where the writer’s words begin and the source words end, and no documentation of the source</td>
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## Hyland’s Scheme

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• Rhetorical separation with phrases like “in the article” or “the author says” or “I agree that…” | In the article, this information is usually supplied by the victim. I agree that this is a problem.                                    |
| Documented (D)           | Information about the source of the idea.                                 | • Parenthetical references  
• In-text rhetorical references to the author’s name, institution, affiliation | Brown claims that this information is usually supplied by the victim.                                                                    |
| Bounded & Documented:    | Often texts are bounded by the same information that documents a source    |                                                                                          | As Brown says in his article, much information is usually supplied by the victim (p.3).                                              |

### Direct, Bounded, Documented (DBD)

Information that is separated from the writer’s ideas and is identified as to its source

• Documentation techniques  
• Bounding techniques

Brown tells us, “Though the accused is often grilled by the investigating team, crucial details are supplied by the victim” (p.3). This is...

### Direct, Unbounded, Undocumented (DUU)

Source information is separated from the writer’s words, but there is no indication of where the writer’s words begin and the source words end, and no documentation of the source

• No bounding techniques  
• No identification of the source materials

Though the accused is often grilled by the investigating team, crucial details are supplied by the victim, probably because the accused is afraid to supply them.
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**Direct, Unbounded, Documented (DUD)**

Information is given about the source, but the reader is unclear about where the writer’s ideas end and the source ideas begin.

• Parenthetical references  
• In-text rhetorical references  
• No rhetorical or mechanical bounding techniques

Though the accused is often grilled by the investigating team, crucial details are supplied by the victim (Brown, p.3).
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<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
Revisions to Hyland’s Classification System

Operational definitions refined / adapted:
- More clarity between quasi-direct and quasi-indirect
- Adapted definition of indirect reference: Hyland – Ideas from the source are **summarised** in the writer’s own words (indirect reference ≠ summary in many instances)

Four categories have been added:
- Summary (S)
- Synthesis (Z)
- Misrepresentation (M)
- Adaptation (A)

Original expanded version - too ambitious! CSR refined to include Hyland’s (2005) 16 classifications and my four new codes

Clear rules being established as I code more scripts & other identifying features documented on SUCG (e.g. non-integral citation; direct quote with no quotation marks)
According to Stuburn (2012), “a minimum wage hike may lead to price increases of everyday goods” (p.13).

Increased expenditure on daily necessities may be a consequence of a rise in the minimum wage (Stuburn, 2012).

A minimum wage hike may lead to price increases of everyday goods.

1B, 2A, 3C
Early findings: Methodology

Coding Scheme for References proving to be a robust and valuable system BUT
Citation count alone not sufficient → Qualitative analyses needed to complement quantitative methods → HOW exactly do students use sources? (Triangulation of data collection methods and analyses)

Insider perspective: → insights from composers are invaluable (Cronin 1981; Swales, 2014, Harwood, 2008)
  i) Cross-verification with post-writing questionnaire response
  ii) Ambiguity with IUU → students highlight sources and own essay
  iii) Transcribing interviews while coding a particular script

Plakans (2015) - conflicting findings from previous research may be attributed to differing methodologies
Early findings: Citation types

| Total No of instances of source text borrowing | DBD | DUD | DBU | DUU | QBD | QUD | QBU | QUU | QIBD | QIUD | QIBU | QIUU | IBD | IUD | IBU | IUU | S | Z | M | A |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|----|---|---|---|
|                                               | 96  | 36  | 8   | 0   | 0   | 3   | 4   | 1   | 0    | 0    | 3    | 1    | 3   | 2   | 9   | 0  | 26| 7 | 3 | 5 | 3 |
| %                                             | 37.5| 8.3 | 0   | 0   | 3.1 | 4.2 | 1   | 0   | 0    | 3.1  | 1    | 3.1  | 2   | 9.4 | 0   | 27.1| 7.3| 3.1| 5.2| 3.1|

- **DBD** – 37.5% of all citations
- **IUU** – 27.1%

**Attribution:**

All direct quotes were documented
32.3% of all citations – undocumented (83% of these were IUU)

“Some of my ideas were the same as the ideas in the source texts but were hiding in my mind and were inspired by the sources.” (Student 37H)
Expectations

• Past studies – inconclusive (but may have been due to methodology)
• More time should equal more detailed reading of sources, less misrepresentation of original authors, more critical engagement, richer content and more indirect citations, possibly of a higher quality

HOWEVER
• Do students actually use the time to engage in more meaningful practices?
• Do they know how to operate at a higher level?
• Does spending more time reading sources / reflecting result in a better end product?
• McGinley 1992: ‘synergistic’ interplay between reading & writing beyond the ability of the less proficient student regardless of time
• Authenticity / validity – students lead busy lives. Is it idealistic to expect them to spend longer because we let them work at home?
Thank you for your time!
Any questions?

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