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COMPOSITION STUDIES AND EAP

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Introduction

In the United States, the field known as composition studies, or rhetoric and composition, has historically been linked to concerns of undergraduate writing instruction. Despite its shared interests with English for academic purposes (EAP) in language and literacy development and support, however, conceptions of academic English and how it should be taught are not identical across the two fields of study, influenced by distinct historical origins, disciplinary alignments, and pedagogical contexts. Over the past few decades, numerous theoretical concepts and empirical insights from composition scholarship have been influential in EAP research and practice, but because the contexts on which the two fields focus differ in important ways—with EAP being tied to transnational, multilingual contexts of language instruction and composition studies being linked to US contexts of writing instructions—interests, values, and pedagogical approaches often vary across these two fields of study.

This chapter provides a state-of-the-art review of conceptions of academic English within composition studies, with particular attention given to the most prominent and influential strands of cross-disciplinary conversations. After an historical overview of composition studies, we address several critical topics of academic English as they have been developed in composition studies, also exploring how these have influenced or been integrated into EAP. We end by considering potential future directions of the scholarly interaction between these two disciplinary areas, in light of recent trends in composition studies.

Historical overview

The field of composition studies is tied in somewhat unique ways to a course requirement that is common in a vast majority of US universities and colleges. First year writing (FYW)—also referred to as first year composition (FYC), freshman English, or English composition—was first taught at Harvard University in the late nineteenth century and quickly spread to other universities. Today, FYW continues to be a required course for nearly all students enrolled in US higher education. Crowley (1998) estimated that in the 1994–1995 academic year, there would have been at least four million students enrolled in FYW. Because the course originated in English departments, and is still most commonly administered within these units, it has a long, though uneasy, relationship with literary studies. FYW is considered by many literature faculty members to be a less than desirable course to teach, due to its tenuous
connections to their own research interests (Crowley, 1998). To meet the high demand for staffing an often large number of sections of the course, then, FYW was commonly taught by probationary or contingent faculty; today, it is taught primarily by graduate students at research universities and by contingent lecturers (hired often part-time on semester or yearly contracts) at institutions that do not have a pool of graduate student instructors to draw from.

Although FYW courses traditionally emphasized belletristic writing, interest in a focus on social utility and civic participation grew in the twentieth century. Indeed, Crowley (1998) summarizes chronologically an array of shifting goals and rationales for the FYW requirement:

to develop taste, to improve their grasp of formal and mechanical correctness, to become liberally educated, to prepare for jobs or professions, to develop their personalities, to become able citizens of a democracy, to become skilled communicators, to develop skill in textual analysis, to become critical thinkers, to establish their personal voices, to master the composing process, to master the composition of discourses used within academic disciplines, and to become oppositional critics of their culture.

(p.6)

These latter goals coincide with the increasing professionalization of composition studies as a field of inquiry, beginning with the establishment of the National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE) in 1911, followed by the creation of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) in 1949 and the journal College Composition and Communication in 1950 (Silva & Leki, 2004). Importantly, though, FYW, as well as the field of composition studies, has never been tied exclusively to a goal of developing literacy skills in academic English. With a heavy focus on writing instruction in the first year of US postsecondary education, before students are studying in their chosen discipline, composition studies has always differed in important ways from ESP/EAP. As Johns (2009) writes, within this first-year context, “identifying specific needs and focusing on analyzable target situations, and then completing discourse analyses, are all difficult, if not impossible, to carry out” (p.43, original emphasis).

Over time, composition studies has expanded rather considerably beyond the purview of FYW, with numerous subfields having emerged in the past few decades. Areas of interest listed in the 2015 CCCC proposal guidelines, for example, included basic writing; advanced writing; community, civic, and public writing; creative writing; history; e-learning; media studies; writing program administration; workplace studies; globalization of English; professional and technical writing; digital rhetoric; adult literacy; service learning or outreach; and rhetorical theory. Most relevant to EAP are the subfields of writing across the disciplines (WAC) and writing in the disciplines (WID), areas we discuss in more detail in the next section.

In addition to having distinct disciplinary and historical origins, composition studies and EAP tend to serve different (though often overlapping) student populations, with EAP generally focused on the support of students studying in English as an additional language, and composition studies often presuming to teach primarily monolingual English users. Matsuda (1998, 1999) has studied the division between composition studies and second language studies in some detail, with respect to the exclusion of second language writing interests within composition studies. According to Matsuda (1999), it was not until the late 1950s that CCCC began addressing second language issues at the annual conference. There was, as he describes it, a great deal of interest in supporting ESL students between 1955
and 1966, though Silva and Leki (2004) characterize composition studies as having “never addressed L2 writing issues and concerns, in the distant or recent past, at more than a rather minimal level” (p.8).

However, as the numbers of international students increased at many US universities, there was a growing recognition that these students would be best served by teachers with specialist knowledge—at the time considered to be a background in structural linguistics (Matsuda, 1999). Intensive English programs (IEPs) or English language institutes, modeled after the University of Michigan’s ELI, were often created to serve this population, in essence removing international ESL students from the responsibility of composition programs. As Matsuda also notes, at institutions with smaller numbers of ESL students, remedial sections of writing for ESL students were offered instead. These institutional structures, in which L2 students were streamed into programs and courses taught by applied linguists—or, in some cases, structural linguists—was the origin of what Matsuda (1999) has termed the “disciplinary division of labor,” a division that was also bolstered by the concomitant professionalization of English language teaching (ELT) through the creation of the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) organization in 1966.

This disciplinary division is also perpetuated at least in part by some of the substantial differences in epistemology and ideology between composition studies and applied linguistics. Silva and Leki (2004), for example, demonstrate how the roots of applied linguistics (and its “parent” discipline of linguistics) are grounded in a positivist inquiry paradigm and empirical methodologies, while the roots of composition studies (and its “parent” discipline of rhetoric) are grounded in a relativist paradigm and hermeneutic or dialectic methodologies. Focusing specifically on cross-disciplinary interaction in relation to L2 writing, they note that:

(a) L2 writing within applied linguistics may be found within other such subfields as corpus linguistics or discourse analysis, however, subfields in composition studies such as computers and writing and cultural studies are rarely based in L2 contexts; (b) North American L2 writing researchers often draw, at least partially on composition studies research; however, few in composition studies adopt an applied linguistics perspective on writing; (c) applied linguistics is influenced by Australian genre scholars, British English for Specific Purposes (ESP) scholars, and others worldwide (most recently, Japan and China), where composition studies is still primarily influenced and shaped by North American scholars and often important theorists from other disciplines, for example, Foucault, Zizek, and Derrida.

(Silva & Leki, 2004, p.8)

These very different disciplinary alignments are reflected not only in the fields’ scholarship but also in their dominant pedagogical approaches. In a revealing ethnographic study of an EAP program and a FYW program at one US university, Atkinson and Ramanathan (1995) demonstrate how distinct disciplinary affiliations revealed themselves in the programs’ ways of conceptualizing and teaching academic writing. In their study, the EAP program presumed that students were not familiar with US culture, emphasized the teaching of writing strategies, and valued and taught “workpersonlike prose,” characterized by rigid, deductive, fact-based communication. In contrast, the FYW program presumed students to share US cultural knowledge, and valued and taught sophisticated thinking skills and rhetorically effective writing. The role of standardized structures, such as “the five-paragraph essay,” in these two programs further reflects the distinct disciplinary cultures. In the FYW program, this structure
“acts almost as a symbol of bad student writing” (pp.560–561), whereas in the EAP program the same form is considered “an extremely serviceable template” for students and teachers who desire a tool that can quickly and easily be applied to immediate writing needs.

**Critical issues and topics**

To those less familiar with composition studies, it may be surprising that composition scholarship has not focused exclusively or even predominantly on academic writing. As the field came into its own in the 1960s, scholarly interest centered on applications of classical rhetoric, studies of writing processes, and an interest in writer voice and individual expression (Silva & Leki, 2004). It was not until the 1970s and 1980s that a body of scholarly work developed in relation to teaching students to write in academic disciplines. Nevertheless, there are several concepts related to academic writing and EAP that have forged important cross-disciplinary conversations between the fields of composition studies and EAP. In this section, we discuss some of the issues and topics that have been prominent within both composition studies and EAP. The first three of these are characterized by often very productive cross-disciplinary dialogue and application, while the last two have remained largely as parallel but distinct conversations.

**Audience, discourse community, and academic discourse**

Composition studies has had close disciplinary ties to rhetoric since the early 1960s. Corbett (1987) notes that it was at the 1963 CCCC convention that rhetoric began appearing more seriously on the composition scene and was offered as a rationale for the teaching of composition. The coupling of rhetoric and composition has had many important influences on the teaching of writing in the US, and the attention to audience both within the classroom and the field is a prime example. In the late 1970s, Ede (1979) argued for an increased emphasis on audience in writing instruction, drawing on classical rhetoric as well as contemporary cognitive psychology. She outlined practical applications for giving audience a central role in the classroom, for example, providing students with questions to guide their writing: “Why are you writing? Who is your audience? What is the occasion? What is your purpose?” (Ede, 1979, p.294).

A half-decade later, Ede and Lunsford (1984) further developed the concept of audience. They use the term “audience addressed” to refer to a view of audience that assumes a writer can and should anticipate and write to an audience’s attitudes, beliefs, and expectations. In contrast, “audience invoked” was used to describe the belief that audience is always a fiction constructed by the writer. In this latter view, it is not the writer’s role to analyze the target audience and modify a text accordingly, but rather the writer “uses the semantic and syntactic resources of language to provide cues for the reader—cues which help to define the role or roles the writer wishes the reader to adopt in responding to the text” (Ede & Lunsford, 1984, p.160). Ede and Lunsford argued that a fully elaborated conception of audience must take into account audience as both addressed and invoked, and acknowledge the dynamic nature of the roles of writers and readers.

Audience has also been central to EAP, though the term itself has not been heavily theorized or complicated. More common in EAP is discourse community, a concept that has been developed in conversation with rhetoric and composition scholars. Early work on discourse community in rhetoric and composition by Herzberg (1986) and Porter (1988), for example, was foundational in Swales’ (1990) extended discussion of the concept. In particular, Swales...
drew on Herzberg’s description of discourse community as reflecting a “cluster of ideas,” including that language is social behavior, that discourse is a way of maintaining and extending community membership, and that discourse is constitutive of community knowledge—the final point being a principle that Swales saw as “a matter of investigation rather than assumption” (p.31). Herzberg also emphasized the importance of discourse community to the teaching of academic writing, a linking that is clearly shared in Swales’ early work and still today in EAP.

Though discourse community remains a fairly prominent term in EAP, community of practice is now often preferred within composition studies. Community of practice, as it has been theoretically defined and used, backgrounds the role of shared goals or discourse and foregrounds community participation in events and practices as well as the contestation and dynamic relationships within a community (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The different preferences for terminology here may be explained at least in part by the tendency for composition studies to focus more heavily on context and (more recently) activity than on text, in comparison with EAP.

In close relation to discourse community are conceptions of academic discourse and academic writing. Though published pieces on academic discourse are first found in the journal *College Composition and Communication* in the late 1970s, one of the most extensive—and most cited—discussions is David Bartholomae’s (1986) essay, “Inventing the University.” Bartholomae’s main argument, now taken as a basic assumption by both compositionists and EAP scholars, was that university-level academic writing and discourse is largely foreign to new students. They have to learn “to speak our language, to speak as we do, to try on the peculiar ways of knowing, selecting, evaluating, reporting, concluding, and arguing that define the discourse of our community” (p.4). Bartholomae stressed, too, that it is not just a single discourse that students must learn, but rather multiple ones, as they traverse through a liberal arts education that engages them in disciplines as diverse as philosophy, experimental psychology, economics, and literature. An important precursor to Bartholomae’s ideas was the work of Patricia Bizzell (1982a, 1982b), a point emphasized by Bartholomae when he writes in a footnote that “My debt to Bizzell’s work should be evident everywhere in this essay” (1986 p.21). Today, Bartholomae’s work is still cited in EAP because of its commonsense way of describing the variation that exists across disciplinary ways of writing, doing, and knowing, a basic assumption on which EAP rests.

**Disciplinarity, writing across the curriculum, and writing in the disciplines**

More detailed theoretical discussions and empirical studies of academic writing brought with them increased attention to disciplinarity as a complex set of practices, beliefs, epistemologies, and discourses. Crucial here has been the work of Charles Bazerman, whose extensive study of the scientific experimental article illuminated the highly situated and social nature of disciplinary writing. To understand this single genre, Bazerman (1988) demonstrated how one must look far beyond textual features to “how the page places itself with respect to social, psychological, textual, and natural worlds” (p.16). In turning attention to the rhetorical and social worlds that give rise to texts—the “contexts” of texts, but in a very rich and multi-layered conceptualization of this term—Bazerman’s early work challenged writing instructors to understand texts in new ways. This work was seminal in composition studies and has also been influential in EAP, perhaps most notably in work by John Swales, including his 1990 book *Genre Analysis*, and Ken Hyland’s (2000) *Disciplinary Discourses*. 

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While Bazerman’s work has tended to draw heavily on historical research methods, Paul Prior’s adds an ethnographic lens to the study of disciplines and disciplinary literate activity. In *Writing/Disciplinarity*, Prior (1998) offers several case studies of graduate students in different disciplines, forging an understanding of a mix of personal, academic, and sociocultural influences at play on individualized paths toward disciplinary literacy. As illustrated in his research, literate activity is mediated by sociohistoric networks, not simply by transmission of disciplinary knowledge. Prior draws on these cases to develop a theoretical orientation of disciplines as evoking ongoing and heterogeneous processes, as opposed to a fixed set of specialized practices, artifacts, persons, and communities. Such a sociohistoric view of disciplinary community guides research in EAP, giving insights into a social formation of disciplinary genre, identity, context, and even student learning, evidenced for example in Tardy’s (2009) research into learning academic genres.

Work by Bazerman and Prior has contributed much to understandings of discipline and disciplinarity as enacted by graduate students and publishing researchers, but these practices around writing often seem far afield from the writing practices and expectations found in the undergraduate classrooms that compositionists are most concerned with. Several empirical studies by composition scholars, however, have illuminated the nature and processes of disciplinary writing for the undergraduate student. In one early study, Faigley and Hansen (1985) looked closely at the writing of several undergraduates in upper-level courses in the social sciences. Comparing the grading and reactions to the papers from English teachers and from disciplinary experts, we see how the two diverge in how they read and assess field-specific writing. Adopting more ethnographic perspectives into disciplinary writing in context, scholars like Herrington (1985) and Haas (1994) looked at the characteristics of academic literacy, its functions, and its practices within undergraduate disciplinary courses. Their studies reveal the tangible ways in which learning to write within a discipline involves much more than learning particular forms or vocabularies but rather relates to learning socially preferred ways of knowing and acting.

In all, composition research of disciplines and disciplinary writing paints a clear picture of writing as context-bound, so that it becomes difficult to imagine a one-size-fits-all course like FYW effectively preparing students for the writing they will do not just in their majors but also in the many other disciplines within which they will take courses (a practice that is more characteristic of the US approach to higher education than of other countries). Much of this work has been cited heavily in the EAP literature, particularly by US scholars like Leki (2007), Johns (1997), and Spack (1997), who have also studied undergraduate writing, albeit focusing on multilingual students.

Composition studies research of student writers in the disciplines can be understood as part of the first wave of research in the movement known as writing across the curriculum (WAC)/writing in the disciplines (WID), a subfield of interest within composition studies. WAC commonly refers to curricular support for or incorporation of writing in university courses apart from FYW, while WID refers both to research of disciplinary writing and to the instruction of disciplinary writing within a designated program (Bazerman et al., 2005). Cox and Zawacki (2014) outline the three principles that they understand to be key foundations to WAC/WID work: (1) writing processes and teaching approaches should vary in line with writers’ and teachers’ goals for writing; (2) the situated nature of writing (within disciplines, professions, and activity systems) should be taught and respected; and (3) WAC programs have the potential to transform campus cultures around writing, teaching, and learning. Though WAC/WID programs take a multitude of forms in relation to institutional cultures, needs, and resources, they tend to focus on either writing-to-learn (that is, the incorporation
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of writing as a mode of bringing enhanced meaning to subject-matter material) or writing-to-communicate (the research and teaching of writing in disciplinary discourses and genres).

Johns (2005) describes ESP as “a WAC-related movement for the linguistically-diverse student,” but despite the obvious parallels between the two areas, there has been surprisingly little collaboration. Zawacki and Cox (2011) lament this lack of cross-disciplinary conversation as well as the paucity of work in WAC/WID that explicitly addresses L2 writers. Indeed, given the shared theoretical assumptions between WAC/WID and EAP regarding disciplinary writing and its instructions, the lack of engaged dialogue is surprising, but is likely related to the different histories, disciplinary alignments, professional organizations, institutional contexts, and student populations.

**Genre**

Perhaps the most lively and productive cross-disciplinary conversation between composition and EAP scholars has occurred in the area of genre studies. Early discussions of genre in the EAP literature, for example by Swales (1990) and Johns (1997), draw on Carolyn Miller’s (1984) now-canonical discussion of genre as social action. In general, the major contributions of rhetoric and composition scholarship on genre to EAP have been theoretical. In addition to Miller’s work, which challenges the notion that genres can be categorized by their textual form (it is their rhetorical purpose, Miller argues, that is at the heart of genre), EAP has been influenced by Charles Bazerman’s (1988) rich accounts of genres’ roles in disciplinary knowledge production, Carol Berkenkotter and Thomas Huckin’s (1995) research into the learning of advanced disciplinary genres, and Amy Devitt’s (2004) merging of language and rhetoric in theorizing genre, to name just a few. Now often referred to as rhetorical genre studies (RGS), this orientation to genre emphasizes the dynamic and social nature of genre, as well as the ways in which genres shape and are shaped by rhetorical context, communities of practice, activity, materiality, and intertextuality.

While theoretical developments within RGS have often been drawn upon in EAP scholarship, pedagogical conversations between the two fields have been somewhat more constrained. Certainly, EAP genre-based pedagogy has been influenced by the cautions within RGS against teaching genre as static formulas (a concern most boldly voiced in Freedman (1993) but also found in Bawarshi (2002) and Devitt (2004)). Yet the pedagogical practices outlined within RGS are less commonly embraced by EAP. These practices tend to focus heavily on understanding contexts of writing and attend less explicitly to analysis of text form, for example through the practice of identifying linguistic and rhetorical patterns within a genre. One exception is found in Ann Johns’ work, which has, notably, also focused on undergraduate writing (especially FYW) within the US.

Differing aims and activities may be one reason for limited cross-disciplinary collaboration in genre-based pedagogy. EAP typically emphasizes awareness-raising of discourse patterns and their relationship to a community’s social values and practices, while RGS tends to focus on awareness of writing and genres as social action. In an EAP genre-based classroom, students will likely analyze specifically targeted genres, while in an RGS genre-based classroom, they are just as likely to select their own genres for analysis—the goal is to understand the socially situated nature of writing in general rather than to apply analytic strategies to specific, privileged genres per se. Costino and Hyon (2011) explore these distinctions in some detail, describing genre as a “scare word,” or a term that signifies differently across the two disciplines. They describe its productive function in bridging their own disciplinary discussions and approaches to teaching writing, while highlighting the need
to unpack the different values, ideologies, and assumptions that the two disciplines bring to the term genre and approaches to genre in the writing classroom (see also Johns et al., 2006). Important reasons behind these differences relate perhaps as much to the contexts of teaching (including student populations) as they do to disciplinary histories, values, and modes of inquiry.

More recently, an even more distinct approach to pedagogy has also developed out of RGS, referred to as “Writing About Writing” (WAW) (Downs & Wardle, 2007). Drawing on the belief that the goal of FYW—teaching students to write at the university—is unrealistic, WAW aims to teach students about writing. Wardle (2009) describes such an approach as addressing topics like the following: “how people use writing, how people learn to write, how genres mediate work in society, how ‘discourse communities’ affect language use, how writing changes across disciplines, and so on” (p.784). Though not yet wholly embraced in the field of composition studies, WAW represents one of the first significant departures from the assumption that FYW can and should prepare students for the writing they encounter in their later courses. Given its fairly broad aim, this approach seems unlikely to gain traction in EAP despite shared underlying theoretical orientations.

**Transfer of learning**

The topic of learning transfer has developed in largely separate conversations across composition studies and EAP, but it is an area in which there is great potential for productive dialogue. In composition studies, the research of academic writing in the disciplines described earlier in this chapter served largely as a precursor to scholarship adopting a more explicit focus on the questions of whether and how learning of academic writing transfer from one teaching context to another. The topic, however, is recently garnering considerable interest within composition studies, perhaps also prompted by the recent rise in larger-scale longitudinal research (e.g., Fishman et al., 2005; Sommers, 2002). Specific concerns have been related to the extent to which students can take knowledge gained in a general writing course in the first year of university and adapt or appropriate it to the various tasks and audiences they will later encounter in their studies. Studies have tended to be largely qualitative in nature, often extending beyond two years of longitudinal data collection and drawing heavily on student perspectives (Moore, 2012). Research findings have generally pointed to the limitations in learning transfer, with students seeing their later disciplinary courses as distinct from FYW.

Although research on transfer of learning in EAP has differed in its methodology and sometimes learning contexts, findings have similarly suggested that the knowledge learned in a writing or language classroom is not easily applied to other environment. Within EAP, James’ (2008, 2009, 2010) work is most notable for its very explicit focus on the issue of transfer, drawing—like much research in composition studies—on Perkins and Salomon’s (1988) concepts of near transfer and far transfer. Similarly to the research in composition studies, James has found that perceptions of task similarity influence transfer (James, 2008) and that actual transfer seems to be both inconsistent and rare (James, 2010). Despite conflicting research results, a prevalent view of transfer underlying many EAP studies sees writing as composed of general writing skills and cognitive processes that are transferable across contexts. A key assumption is that transfer is the consistent use of a set of writing skills when writers move from one context to another.

Recently, an attempt to connect to composition studies has been made in EAP, notably in DePalma and Ringer’s (2011) work. Adopting a framework of transfer in education and
educational psychology, yet tailoring it to incorporate a particular rhetorical orientation in composition studies, DePalma and Ringer expand transfer to refer to the process of reshaping writing skills to fit a new context rather than the ability to reuse them. Their concept of “adaptive transfer” has been formed in alignment with the concepts and arguments in education and composition studies that challenge the notion of transfer as the reuse of knowledge (e.g., McCarthy, 1987; Wardle, 2007). Although interest in learning transfer has grown in both EAP and composition studies, these conversations have, so far, had limited interaction beyond drawing on some similar broad frameworks. DePalma and Ringer’s work, however, suggests potential for increased dialogue and more empirical study of learning transfer among L2 writers in different contexts.

**Critical approaches to teaching academic writing**

In their comparative exploration of the disciplinary values in composition studies and applied linguistics, Silva and Leki (2004) characterize the former as “left to far left in its politics” and the latter as “center left” (p.7). One way in which this political orientation manifests itself is pedagogical practice. Critical pedagogy, for example, has played a visible role in composition studies since at least the 1980s. Early advocates often framed their work as a social-epistemic rhetoric, which “offers an explicit critique of economic, political, and social arrangements” (Berlin, 1988, p.490). Ira Shor (1980) provided numerous examples of how such a rhetoric is implemented in the classroom, asking students to examine their positioning within larger social structures, and to imagine their own agency in effecting social change. The sociopolitical orientation of composition studies has also been evident in the numerous position statements drafted by various CCCC committees, including a statement on Ebonics Training and Research, National Language Policy, and Students’ Right to their Own Language. With their emphasis on social variations of language and individual rights to such variations, these statements demonstrate the somewhat contested role that “academic English” plays in the field of composition and its classrooms.

While critical EAP has been advocated for by scholars such as Pennycook (1997), Benesch (2001), and Canagarajah (2002), it has remained somewhat peripheral to the field as a whole, where the goal of teaching a dominant target variety is often unquestioned. Nevertheless, in the past decade or so, scholarship from World Englishes (WE) has contributed to discussions of whether teaching native-speaker norms is always an appropriate aim for the EAP classroom. And while the basic concept of World Englishes has also enjoyed visibility in very recent composition studies scholarship, the primary conversations around WE differ in the two fields, with a stronger emphasis on language ideology (rather than linguistic variation) in composition studies. Additionally, EAP as a field has been less organized around official position statements or resolutions than composition studies, perhaps in part because of the lack of a single professional organization and the wide range of geopolitical contexts in which EAP is taught and studied.

**Future directions**

As our discussion in the previous section suggests, composition studies and EAP have shared several topics of interest over the years in relation to academic writing, with some areas enjoying a fair degree of cross-disciplinary conversation. We now turn to other areas in which we see the potential for these kinds of interactions to develop, though they have not fully done so as yet.
One very notable strand of work in composition studies that has not yet become prominent in EAP is multimodality in academic writing. With few exceptions (e.g., Rowley-Jolivet, 2004, 2012), EAP still tends to equate writing with verbal text. Composition studies, in contrast, has developed a fairly large body of scholarship and pedagogical practice in multimodality. Though the greater attention to language in EAP is unsurprising (as it surely relates to the linguistic concerns of L2 students), it also seems likely to us that attention to multimodality will increase in EAP in the coming years, with the growth in multimodal academic genres such as video abstracts or supplemental online data in journal publications.

So far in this chapter, we have provided numerous examples of scholarship in composition studies that has influenced EAP. More disappointing, however, is what we see as a relative imbalance in the direction of scholarly dialogue. With a few exceptions, there remain many examples of “parallel universes” between composition studies and EAP as well as a relative lack of instances of EAP scholarship influencing and being integrated into composition studies (see Zawacki and Cox, 2011). Despite this pattern, we would like to conclude on a more optimistic note, describing two recent developments that may indicate an encouraging change in this historical pattern. The first is the application of corpus-based research and pedagogy to first year writing, a development that directly counters the decline in focus on and interest in language within composition studies, as detailed most compellingly by MacDonald (2007). A series of studies by researchers at University of Michigan have applied genre analysis and corpus-based text analysis to student writing (Aull & Lancaster, 2014; Gere et al., 2013), merging research methods that are typical in EAP with pedagogical contexts and concerns that are common in composition studies. This work has strong potential to foster greater communication and collaboration across fields while also contributing to both fields’ understanding of academic writing. And finally, the past decade has heard increased calls within composition studies for the incorporation of more international perspectives into the study and teaching of academic writing (e.g., Donahue, 2009) and has seen the establishment, led by Charles Bazerman, first of the Writing Research Across Borders conference followed by the International Society for the Advancement of Writing Research professional organization, “devoted to the development of interdisciplinary research into the many dimensions in writing and learning of writing of people of all ages, languages, and other characteristics” (ISAWR, n.d.). Given the increased mobility of people and texts in today’s globalized world, perhaps the time is now ripe for further collaborations that extend beyond disciplinary and contextual boundaries.

Further reading

Related chapters
2 General and specific EAP
6 EAP, EMI or CLIL?
19 Genre analysis
22 Critical perspectives
35 The common core in the United States
36 EAP pedagogy in undergraduate contexts
Notes

1 For stylistic ease we use both “discipline” and “field” when referring to EAP and composition studies. We acknowledge the complexity of these terms, but a full discussion of the extent to which either composition studies or EAP is a field, a discipline, or an alternative configuration is beyond the scope of this chapter.

2 It is important to note, here, that much has been written in the past decade on the need for composition studies to recognize the linguistic diversity of the student population and to develop scholarship and pedagogy in ways that are more inclusive of this diverse population (see, for example, Canagarajah, 2006; Matsuda, 2006).

References


