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Post/graduate research literacies and writing pedagogies

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Introduction

Discussions of researcher education continue to emphasise the dramatic changes we are facing in the higher education sector in the twenty-first century (Bitusikova, 2009; Lee & Danby, 2012). The effects of globalisation and the massification of tertiary education, along with the demand for accountability in research funding, have created a challenging context for those working and researching in today's universities. Students undertaking post/graduate [1] degrees come from very diverse language, cultural and educational backgrounds; they embark on a much broader range of post/graduate programmes and types of doctoral studies than we have ever seen; and funding bodies (both government and industry) demand much greater output and accountability than was previously the case. This complex and changing context raises new questions about what it is to be a researcher in the twenty-first century, and how we support post/graduates in developing the research literacies required to operate effectively in this setting (Boud & Lee, 2009).

This book aims to theorise the experiences of being and supporting post/graduate researchers today, and to provide innovative practices for developing the necessary writing skills, research literacies and researcher identities needed to meet the challenges of today's academic environments. What do these conditions mean for research cultures and for aspiring researchers?

The meming of post/graduate research writing

A unique insight into post/graduate research cultures can be found in social media, particularly through Internet memes (that is, units of cultural meaning such as images and brief texts that can be imitated, copied, varied and circulated online), which represent broad social patterns across national and international borders. Memes are patterns of cultural information that "directly generate and shape the mindsets and significant forms of behavior and actions of a social group" (Knobel & Lankshear, 2007, p. 199). They are widely replicated "texts". The main purpose of memes is to "harness and mobilise attention" (Lankshear & Knobel, 2003, p. 126). Successful memes are able to access attention mostly because they tune into human emotions and desires (Blackmore, 1999). Currently, social media is awash with memes, including many that refer to post/graduate experiences. A search of Internet memes using keywords such as "thesis writing", "dissertation", or "PhD" yielded some interesting cultural tropes:

[Insert Figure 1: Grumpy cat meme] [Insert Figure 2: Zoidberg meme] [Insert Figure 3: Futurama meme] [Insert Figure 4: "I hope you like it" meme]

Figure 1: Grumpy cat meme
Figure 2: Zoidberg meme

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[1] In the US, formal academic work undertaken beyond undergraduate courses is referred to as "graduate" work, while in other parts of the world this is more commonly referred to as "postgraduate". As our contributing authors come from different parts of the world and our readership is global, we use "post/graduate" to include both terms.

Figure 3: Futurama meme
Figure 4: "I hope you like it" meme

When examining the memes from our keyword search, there is a commonality to the message they convey: writing a post/graduate thesis is an unpleasant, painful and anxiety-ridden experience. These memes indicate what seems to be a collective story—"the experience of a sociologically constructed category of people" (Richardson, 1997, p. 14). Rather than remaining isolated images, memes can evolve and morph along a particular theme to become what Shifman (2014) calls "meme genres", developing an explicit manipulation of a visual image that is often remixed or re-worded to add to the ongoing joke (Shifman, 2014). Each time a meme builds off a similar, related meme, the joke is extended and deepened, continuing to appeal to the intended audience. The keyword search undertaken here generated a variety of images and themes related to thesis writing and the graduate experience, but two sets of memes on thesis writing are particularly popular on the web: *One does not simply …*; and, *Y U No*.

[Insert Figure 5]
Figure 5: One does not simply…write a thesis

The meme depicted above draws on a memorable quote from a scene in Peter Jackson's 2001 film adaption of J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*. In the scene, the Council of Elrond reveals that an evil ring must be destroyed by being thrown into the fires of Mount Doom, a volcano deep in the territory of Mordor. Boromir states the extreme difficulty of the task by saying, "One does not simply walk into Mordor" (Knowyourmeme, n.d.). The scene from the movie can be seen here: http://youtu.be/r21CMDyPuGo. In the scene, Boromir claims:

> One does not simply walk into Mordor. Its black gates are guarded by more than just orcs. There is evil there that does not sleep. The great eye is ever watchful. It is a barren wasteland, riddled with fire, ash, and dust. The very air you breathe is a poisonous fume. Not with ten thousand men could you do this. It is folly.

There are many thesis-writing (and other) memes derived from *Lord of the Rings* but this is one of the most popular. The message that it conveys is that writing a thesis is comparable to being on a dangerous journey or quest (McCulloch, 2013) where the traveller is powerless against a poisonous environment, struggling against enormous odds, and where the powers that be are constantly in surveillance mode and intend to keep the traveller out. "It is folly", is the final message.

The second set of popular thesis-writing memes we want to highlight here are the *Y U No* memes. Here is an example:

[Insert Figure 6: Y U No Guy]
Figure 6: Y U No Guy: Thesis: Y U no write yourself?

This meme shows a stick figure image with a large head. Characteristically, the facial expression is full of frustration and rage. Memegenerator.net describes this meme: "The Y U No figure stands with arms held out and fingers spread in a plaintive, almost begging gesture, looking pained that whoever the subject of his plea has not done something". The character is believed to have originated in a Japanese sci-fi manga/anime series (knowyourmeme.com/memes/y-u-no-guy). The Y U No meme has stayed popular in an environment where memes trend and fade quickly and it is particularly popular as a thesis writing meme with numerous variations such as: "Thesis: Y U No explain yourself clearly"; "Thesis: Y U No finished yet"; "Thesis: Y U No let me sleep"; "Thesis: Y U so hard to do"; and particularly popular, "Thesis: Y U No defend yourself".

The message in this meme resides in the emotional perplexity this character portrays, and also in the obvious rage. Indeed, this is known as a "rage" meme (Shifman, 2014), and the Y U No guy is always used to indicate a puzzled and furious questioner. On the one hand, he questions why something like a thesis necessarily has to be so difficult; on the other hand, he expresses his utter fury because it is so difficult. Thus, he is employed to question various components of writing a thesis to excellent effect. This meme also subverts academic language and the "correct" way of writing by using text-speak, something which is clearly not academic. In addition, the key characteristic of the meme is that it is overly emotional.

Why are these memes important?
Memes are most often generated for fun, for expressing solidarity or for making political points. However, the significant point about memes is that they "speak" to affinity groups. These are spaces where people are held together—loosely or tightly—because of shared interests or goals. Memes would not exist without affinity spaces in which the meme is seen as meaningful. As such, memes are "socially constructed public discourses" (Shifman, 2014, p.8) and, consequently, give us unique insight into post/graduate experiences. That memes like these exist is indicative of a broader perception of writing a dissertation, a sense of shared meaning, a discourse community which sees these memes as a humorous (and tragic) commentary of a real experience. While it may be a stretch to see these memes as instances of Blommaert's (2005) text trajectories, they are certainly related to the practice and experiences of post/graduate student writers. As he suggests: "language is always produced by someone to someone, at a particular time and place, with a specific purpose" (Blommaert, 2005, p. 40).

Overall, the message these memes portray is of graduate thesis writing as an experience of tension, difficulty, powerlessness and helplessness. It's hard to find a meme that reflects positively on writing a thesis. There are many reasons why the post/graduate *experience* may be seen as a struggle: lack of financial support, limited resources to conduct research, the absence of childcare facilities, insecure job opportunities and so on. We would like to focus on why *writing the thesis* is such a challenge. Conducting original research should be a time of reflection, deep reading, innovation, excitement in new ideas, discovery and passion. However, thesis-writing memes portray what Thesen (2014) refers to as the "'postgraduate condition'—a sustained predicament over time" (p. 3). She continues: "postgraduate writers are at once original yet scholarly; makers of new knowledge yet slaves to the old; anglicised yet not English; creative yet held by generic conventions; independent yet in need of supervision;

assertive yet humble; at home as experienced writers yet estranged. This predicament over time has strong emotional content" (p. 7). It is this contradictory and complex world that generates the memes described above, and draws our attention to the paradoxical nature of the post/graduate experience as students undertake the written component of their research degrees. We want to use these memes as a springboard to explore three paradoxes in particular that are of importance to textual production: 1) the invisibility of writing in academia; 2) the conservative nature of universities as institutions; and 3) the privileging of the "detached" scholar.

Paradox 1: The invisibility of writing in academia

Doreen Starke-Meyerring (2011) argues that many writers in academia see writing as something separate from research. They see it as the end point, the reporting phase, the communicating period. She suggests that academic writers think this because, over many generations, the practices, routines and patterns of interacting in a research culture become so "common sense" that they are normalised and have become invisible to insiders in the discourse: "disciplinary and institutional traditions of producing knowledge through writing have become normalized to the point that they appear universal to long-time participants in research cultures, including supervisors" (Starke-Meyerring, 2011, p. 77). In other words, insiders to the discourse (supervisors, professors, instructors) often do not "see" the patterns of writing that are specific to academia because they are so used to them. Writing is seen as the same for everyone, universal and generic—merely a skill to be learned. For insiders, writing a literature review is a simple task of critically reviewing the literature; for newcomers, it can be mysterious and opaque.

The paradox, according to Starke-Meyerring (2011), is that research writing is not universal at all. It is *always* situated. Writing a thesis in Geography is very different from writing a thesis in Philosophy, even if they are both located in Arts faculties; both are very different from writing a Science thesis. Again, writing a Master's thesis is substantially different from writing a PhD thesis, or professional doctorate, or creative practice-based doctorate, or a journal article for peer-review publication. All of these demand writing as a "skill" but also contain specificity: "the culturally shaped nature of writing, its deep rootedness in cultural, institutional, and disciplinary traditions of knowledge production" (Starke-Meyerring, 2011, p. 78). This specificity becomes invisible to long-time members of a research culture, who have come to see it as "normal", obvious and clear—"common sense". Newcomers (post/graduate students), in contrast, experience the tension between the specificity of writing in this new context and being told that at this level they should be able to use the general writing skills they already have.

Further, as Blommaert (2005) argues, language is not only always situated within existing structures of inequality, but also helps constitute them. Post/graduate students quickly learn that writing a literature review is about meeting the requirements of the discipline or research culture, making knowledge claims and providing evidence appropriate to the discourse community within existing discursive practices. What is "normal" to long-time members is new, unknown and hidden to newcomers. Foucault (1994) shows how knowledge is governed by a collection of unwritten rules. The micro-dynamics of power are exercised, often in indirect ways, within contexts and particular

sites. Post/graduates experience tensions because they feel the pull of power being exercised often without knowing why. For example, being able to recognise one's epistemological journey is a way of resisting discursive power. It is being able to "see" the available epistemologies and position oneself rather than being positioned by the discourse unknowingly (Naples, 2003). Academic language is exclusionary by nature: "the use of disciplinary codes represents a power play between those who know and those who do not", which translates into practices of "Are you one of us?" (Green, 2010, p. 49).

There are several significant consequences of not recognising the invisibility of writing practices and processes (Starke-Meyerring, 2011). First, when the writing is seen as generic, therefore invisible, and the focus stays on subject matter, the *epistemic* nature of writing remains unacknowledged. How one *argues*, for example, is tied to available epistemologies and how one comes to know knowledge. How one questions (or is allowed to question) is intimately linked to how knowledge is produced in a specific research culture. Second, if writing is not acknowledged as part of *epistemic practice*, then the role of writing in shaping scholarly identity goes unrecognised. It is through writing that the researcher engages with disciplinary debates, positions him/herself, and develops an identity as a researcher. As such, research writing is identity forming. In post/graduate writing, citations involve aligning oneself with particular debates, defending a position, and establishing an epistemological foundation (Starke-Meyerring, 2011). All these practices are part of the process of saying: this is what I believe, this is where I stand, and this is the kind of scholar I am.

Students experience tensions because research writing is, as Hélène Cixous describes, a "theatre of writing" (Cixous & Calle-Gruber, 1997, p. 171). Post/graduate writing is a performance of identity: "writing is intertwined with performances of professional identity, voice, and persona" (Micciche & Carr, 2011, p. 478). It is a dance in which the newcomer attempts to move from the margins to the centre of the discourse, but a complicated dance, especially if one has no knowledge of the steps or rules: "the linguistic and rhetorical complexities of the dissertation are simply inexpressible for most academics" (Paré, Starke-Meyerring & McAlpine, 2009). The meme "not sure if the thesis is good or the prof gave up on me" highlights the dimly lit stage post/graduate students regularly trip across.

Paradox 2: The conservative nature of universities as institutions
The second paradox of writing in academia focuses on the conservative nature of academic discourse. We hear calls for universities to "become centres for creativity and innovation", for creativity to be at the "heart of education" (Coate & Boulos, 2012, p. 129; Phipps, 2010). Universities "are increasingly encouraged to produce graduates with creative thinking skills, who are flexible, adaptable, and able to solve problems in order to face the challenges of the twenty-first century" (Coate & Boulos, 2012, p. 129). Institutions want post/graduate students to produce research that is innovative, original and ground-breaking. The paradox is that universities generally are not places that cultivate creativity (Coate & Boulos, 2012; Phipps, 2005). There are, of course, exceptions and some universities may deliberately create the conditions for creativity. However, the practices of academic discourse usually serve to encourage conformity rather than risk-taking.

Tierney (2012) argues that the organisational culture of universities often works towards destroying creativity through both formal and informal structures because creativity "challenges the academy itself" (Arnold, 2012, p. 10). University cultures often foster an integrationist perspective and, while not everyone in the institution will follow the organisational culture, integrationist "themes, concepts, and ideas do pervade organizations" (Tierney, 2012, p. 169). Predominant themes in many academic discourses emphasise consistency, organisational consensus and clarity, while ambiguity and uncertainty are discouraged (Tierney, 2012). The aim is a normative subject position; anything moving away from that position is deemed deviant.

Creativity is often associated with positive traits and attributes such as wisdom and intelligence, but organisations (including universities) routinely reject creative ideas, despite espousing the rhetoric of creativity. In the same way, teachers/instructors are often averse to students who show creative thinking and inquisitiveness, even when they feel that, as a whole, creativity is a sound educational goal. Mueller, Melwani and Goncalo (2011) argue that people hold deep-seated negative views of creativity. The drive for creativity leads to tensions, it opens up the potential for risk, failure or what is often perceived of as worse—change. Creativity often involves uncomfortable uncertainty, while conformity is soothing and practical (Mueller, et al., 2011). This deep-rooted thinking is often implicit and unspoken, which makes the bias against creativity difficult to expose. The results of the Mueller et al. (2011) study show that, regardless of how open minded people are, they are intrinsically motivated to reduce uncertainty and to conserve the status quo.

The emphasis on conformity is deepened in the context of neo-liberalism, a broad philosophy that currently underpins educational strategies in many countries. This set of discourses acts as a "truth": an unquestionable orthodoxy. Under neo-liberalism, the market becomes the central organising principle for political, social and economic decision making. The university is no longer a "cultural" space to discuss, critique and create, but is now a collection of commodities subject to continual audit (Patrick, 2013). One of the tenets of neo-liberalism is the emphasis on self-reliance. If an individual fails to manage the culture, s/he is at fault, not the culture (Hartman & Darab, 2012). Thesen (2014) suggests that increasing policing on plagiarism and ethics are "symptoms of how an awareness of risk serves the forensic needs of universities in the context of a globalising higher education sector" (p. 12).

Perceptions of time have been reshaped in this context. With globalised markets and the corporatisation of the university, Hartman and Darab (2012) argue that we currently exist in "timeless time" where individuals need to be available to produce all the time. Subjects discipline themselves by observing, measuring and recording their output, time-use and productivity (Hartman & Darab, 2012). Yet, time is essential for deep cognitive processes involved in innovative and creative thinking. Post/graduate students focused on producing output in a competitive job market experience the tension to conform, to be competitive, at the expense of cultivating "slow" deep scholarship (Hartman & Darab, 2012).

The implications of this paradox—the tension between creativity and conformity—are first, that post/graduate students are encouraged to conform rather than take risks in their choice (if they have one) of research topic, in their thinking about research and also in their writing. However, the opportunities of combining research and

creativity "are potentially transformative as they provide us with the ability to look at the world in new ways, to look through different prisms and lenses" (Arnold, 2012, p. 11). Further, post/graduate work requires complex cognitive capabilities and requires mastery of challenging concepts and skills about research, theory and content (Knight, 2005). Risk-taking in research and writing, while uncomfortable and subtly discouraged, has the potential to yield transformative experiences.

A further implication is that students experience the chaotic world of research as something that needs to be controlled. Rather than immersing themselves in a process of messiness with flexible minds, wonder, discovery and exploration, students are encouraged to follow rigid conventions and procedures. Gatekeeping, a deeply embedded practice in knowledge discourses that is often not acknowledged, surfaces to keep discourse members in line. More significantly, conventions often enact a subtle process of exclusion. For example, Ruttan (2004) shows how "the influence of the assumptions and structures embedded" within the conventions of the literature review privilege certain ways of knowing and marginalise others (p. 105). Similarly, Smith (1999) argues that "research draws from an 'archive' of knowledge systems, rules and values" (p. 42) that perpetuate systems of exclusion. The meme "one simply does not […]" aptly captures the all-seeing eye of surveillance than drives conformity.

Paradox 3: The privileging of the "detached" scholar

The third paradox highlights the idea that the reasoning, rational scholar is still a dominant image in many academic contexts. The emotional *Y U No* rage person has no place in this environment. The emotional experience of being a post/graduate student with all its incumbent family, health and financial constraints is seen as being necessarily separate from the "objective" process of being a researcher. Early in their careers students learn to take themselves out of their writing and to be impersonal (Hyland, 2002). However, post/graduate students live with the tension between detachment and involvement: "It's no secret that graduate students (much like faculty) regularly encounter academic writing as an emotionally fraught, privately experienced hardship" (Micciche & Carr, 2011, p. 479). Feelings of inadequacy, imposter syndrome and incompetence are common among post/graduate students; these emotions often derail the intellectual endeavour. For example, "writing anxiety", anxious feelings about the task, the situation and about the self as writer, can surface regularly at different points throughout the research/thesis writing process.

The implications of perpetuating the image of the detached scholar are that students often experience isolation and alienation (O'Malley & Lucey, 2008). They feel "othered"—a mechanism of exclusion where members of a community begin to feel they do not belong, that they are different, possibly inferior (Badenhorst, et al. 2012). Otherness happens through rules of behaviour and conventions that govern performance in a discourse. Separating the student's research interests (passion) from the research is one way othering happens. Another is through "de-authorisation", where texts created are supposedly autonomous, objective and authorless. Writing becomes not the researcher's interpretation, but an external reality. Many post/graduates become detached from their writing, divorced from their personal history and de-authorised as their texts become shaped by others (Badenhorst, et al. 2012). Supervisors often do not recognise how much

the act of writing is tied to an (emotional) sense of self and lose the opportunity to develop the graduate student's identity as a researcher and scholar.

Research literacies
These paradoxes and their implications underlie the recent surge of interest in post/graduate research literacies and writing pedagogies. Concern with research literacies has emerged out of the academic literacies approach to literacy in post-secondary contexts which emerged in the 1980s in the UK. It developed from university educators who noticed that many students struggled to decode academic language and to understand what was required of them, specifically in relation to academic writing. Writing tends to be the focus of an academic literacies approach because most university assessment takes place through writing—writing for which many other literacies (reading, critical thinking, citing practices, etc.) are required (Russell, et al., 2009). Indeed, "in many subject areas the development of a student's writing ability has come to be seen as practically synonymous with their acquisition of knowledge" (Goodfellow, 2005, p. 481). "Literacy" is constructed through economic, political and socio-cultural conditions. This approach, however, moves beyond "skills" development because it locates literacies ideologically. Literacy is seen as acquiring the epistemologies necessary for participating in a particular discourse. For example, students need to learn what knowledge is valued, what questions can be asked and who is allowed to ask, while at the same time recognising what they know and how to write what they know (Lea & Street, 2014). Discourses and disciplines are complex and constantly shifting; the writer has to interpret and negotiate language, discursive practices and power relations among individuals in the institution while navigating their own multiple social identities. An academic literacies approach suggests that students should not merely be socialised into academic contexts and taught how to conform to existing cultures; it conversely advocates that students should be able to "read" the discourse and then decide if they want to conform, transform or resist. While aimed at undergraduate levels, more attention is increasingly being paid to post/graduate research literacies.

The prevailing myth in many university environments is that one should already know the literacies needed to be successful before one begins a post/graduate programme (Lea & Street, 2014). Increasingly, post/graduate writing is being recognised as not just an extension of undergraduate writing, but also as a range of literacies that "is not best learned by tacit immersion" (Micciche & Carr, 2011, p. 497). Jargon, specialised terminology, unexplained ways of writing, and obscure, contradictory expectations all contribute to positioning graduate students as perpetual novices despite many years of study (Strasser, 2007).

Research literacies can only be understood as social practice—literacies are necessarily located in practices. Thus, writing as social practice recognises that:

- the ways that people do things often become part of their implicit routines or habitual patterns of activity;
- the expectations accompanying these patterns vary according to the specific contexts in which they take place;
- practices are tied to institutions and structures that involve power dynamics and specific ideologies related to knowledge production and language(s) […];

- practices are ever-evolving in response to personal, institutional, local and global influences. (Curry & Lillis, 2013, p. 3)

If we view research writing as a social practice then writing a doctoral thesis, for example, is one set of activities nested within other activities, each capable of influencing the others (Paré, Starke-Meyerring & McAlpine, 2009). Thus, it is with this understanding of the significant role research literacies can play in the lives of post/graduate students we set about collecting a volume of essays about the situated, social practice of post/graduate writing and the innovative pedagogies being developed.

Pedagogies for writing and research literacies
As we look to the future of post/graduate education, it is clear from the discussion above that there is a growing—perhaps even established—understanding now that today's diverse cohort of post/graduates needs support in developing research literacies. It is within this dialogue that we see the contribution of this volume. In particular, we see a belief that research writing is something that can be actively taught. This is much more than simple language instruction for those using English as an Additional Language (EAL); indeed, it is generally accepted that "academese" is nobody's native language (Tierney, 1995, p. 386; Hirvela & Belcher, 2001, p. 86). While academese has been the butt of derision at times, as some of the memes discussed above attest to, there is a more useful side of this labelling that acknowledges the necessity of being able to operate within the expectations of specific discourse communities. Novice researchers must learn how to conduct, assess and write about research in the ways their peers will recognise as appropriate; that is, they must demonstrate that they know how to play the game according to the particular rules of their discipline. As Hyland (2003) puts it: "literacies are situated and multiple—positioned in relation to the social institutions and power relations that sustain them" (p. 24).

The chapters in this book contribute to the literature a range of often unexplored pedagogies used to develop research literacies. In some situations, scaffolded instruction by language and writing specialists has proven valuable; elsewhere, learning occurs in writing groups and retreats, provided by peers as well as supervisors and learning advisors; both face-to-face and online modalities are employed.

Genre approaches
Pedagogical practices emerging from genre approaches explicitly articulate the features of research texts and provide a scaffolded approach to producing such texts, as the chapters by Habibie, Lockhart and Ferreira in this volume demonstrate. Explicit instruction has long been regarded as a valuable approach to developing specific literacies, and this remains the case in relation to research literacies. Much of this work was pioneered by linguists working with EAL post/graduates who may have high levels of literacy in their first language, but find themselves confronted by very different discoursal and cultural expectations when it comes to interpreting and writing about research in English. However, such research literacies are confronting not only for novice EAL scholars; as Paradox 1 above reveals, it is increasingly understood that many native speakers require similar instruction in order to develop appropriate research literacies. Process approaches to writing, while serving to encourage an understanding of the

recursive nature of writing, fail to provide the strong foundation needed to succeed in research writing (Hyland, 2003). Hence, process approaches have given way in many places to the genre approach (Bhatia, 1999; Halliday, 1994; Hyland, 2004; Swales, 1990; Swales & Feak, 2004), which has revolutionised the teaching of academic English and research literacies to students from all sorts of language, cultural and educational backgrounds. By understanding the situatedness of writing, and the social and political context of any text production, post/graduates are better positioned to mobilise the nuances of the research literacies they have acquired.

Threshold concepts
To understand the social practice of attaining research literacies, several of our chapters employ the notion of "threshold concepts". This approach to learning has increasingly gained traction in most disciplines since Meyer and Land (2003) started theorising about the critical moments when students often seem to become stuck in liminal spaces. The agonised memes of thesis writing are often expressing these moments of "stuckness"; by identifying these moments, threshold concepts theory attempts to grapple with them productively. Margaret Kiley and Gina Wisker (2009) have been key researchers of doctoral threshold concepts, and Wisker continues that discussion in her chapter here. Bosanquet and Cahir draw on threshold concepts to understand their own experiences of doctoral study, while Almond applies similar insights to understand what students might require from an online post/graduate writing course.

Writing groups and peer learning
The benefits of participation in writing groups and writing retreats is well recognised by those seeking to provide opportunities for post/graduates to develop research literacies (Aitchison & Guerin, 2014; Grant, 2008; Murray & Newton, 2009). Writing groups take a myriad of forms: they may be facilitated by language and literacy specialists or by a group member; they may be sanctioned by the institution or sit outside formal structures; they may be strictly structured with a formal programme of set goals or respond ad hoc to current needs; they may meet in person or online. Meetings may be used for providing critique and feedback on members' writing; for each person to work on their own writing in the company of others; for discussing broader issues of research; and/or for offering social and emotional support for those sharing the experience of undertaking a research degree. These groups draw on the social aspects of peer learning, linking the development of research literacies with emerging academic identities (Lee and Boud, 2003). The chapters in this collection explore informal writing groups that support EAL students (Buell; Kim) and more structured groups facilitated by an academic (Almond). Such groups work to support those sitting in the tensions between behaving as a "detached scholar" and the potentially disruptive forces of emotional engagement.

Online and digital technologies
And finally, as in every other area of our lives, online and digital technologies are enhancing the learning opportunities available to research students. The pedagogies informing these interventions are borrowed from the direct instruction of genre analysis and process writing, as well as the social interactions of writing groups and writing retreats. They also offer the flexibility required by today's diverse post/graduate cohort,

no longer restricting them to specific times and places, instead providing learning opportunities that are "just in time, just enough and just for me" (Rosenberg, 2001). While universities create structured online programmes and writing groups for their own students, many of those students also take it upon themselves to access further online material to support their understanding of the research literacies required to succeed in their degrees. The Online Writing Lab (OWL—https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/) at Purdue University is one of the best-known of the many and varied open access websites currently available. Students are also accessing social media and professional blogs in search of advice, such as:

- patter (http://patthomson.wordpress.com)
- Explorations of Style (http://explorationsofstyle.com/)
- DoctoralWritingSIG (http://doctoralwriting.wordpress.com/)
- PhD2Published (http://www.phd2published.com/) and
- Thesis Whisperer (thesiswhisperer.com/).

The informal learning afforded by such technologies can support that provided by institutions; sometimes it plays a crucial role in filling gaping holes for post/graduates who receive minimal support from overstretched supervisors.

Themes
Beyond the direct engagement with the pedagogies outlined above, a number of other themes have emerged from this book, threads that run through the chapters and stitch them together in productive and sometimes unexpected relationships. Although the authors hail from different parts of the globe, their concerns overlap in all sorts of ways as they explore post/graduate writing in the current higher education context. The connections between the chapters here operate on the levels of their pedagogical underpinnings, their research methods and methodologies, the theories they invoke to explain their findings and the themes they explore within those findings.

EAL writing
Post/graduate research writing, and especially that at doctoral level, is aimed at an international audience: in making a contribution to advancing the knowledge in one's discipline, these authors must conceptualise that discipline as global, even if their specific topic has a local focus. Several of the chapters in this collection look in from what has been treated as the "periphery" (Pennycook, 1998; Canagarajah, 1999, 2002) of the English language research community. Ferreira writes from Brazil, Khan, Majoka and Fazal from Pakistan, and Smirnova from Russia, while Kim and Buell both explore the implications of Korean researchers negotiating language issues from inside English-speaking research communities. These shared interests remind us that research and writing at this level necessarily connects into international practices, and those of us working within English-language contexts must acknowledge the social and political privileges and responsibilities of our location.

Affect and the personal

Researching and writing are, at bottom, fundamentally about people: their concerns, their politics, their courage and their frailties. Most of the chapters here touch upon the human element of the writing, our authors refusing to accept that research writing is simply objective. The emotional aspects of the writing journey, and the ways in which this links to identity, come to the collection from many points of departure, demonstrating strategies for resolving the paradox of the "detached scholar" who is in fact emotionally engaged and socially embedded. The playfulness that can be harnessed to energise those learning to write about research is an organising factor for Badenhorst, Moloney, Rosales and Dyer, as it is for Davies Turner and Turner. Far from trivialising the text produced, playfulness can be used to break through some of the constrictions that can prevent writers from achieving their best research outputs. Bosanquet and Cahir take an alternative approach to the very human nature of post/graduates learning research literacies by investigating the emotional context that determines the path of that learning. For Stillman-Webb, this focus on the human condition manifests as a contradictory belief that the capacity to write well is an innate "gift", but that it can also be taught. Affect can be both disruptive and generative as it exerts its potent force on research writing.

Collaboration and relationships
The theme of collaboration runs through all the chapters in different forms: sometimes this takes the shape of collaboratively writing together, or groups or individuals learning together and building strong collaborative relationships. Research literacies are aimed at communicating with one's research community and beyond; collaboration is the beginning of this communication with immediate peers. For some, coauthoring provides a way into learning the nuances of research writing, as we see in the chapters by Guerin, Habibie and Stillman-Webb, all of whom discuss situations where supervisors collaborate on publications with students. Seven chapters overtly perform this collaborative writing relationship for us by naming coauthors. In general, this collection presents learning as a collaborative project between students and their supervisors (Knowles; Maher and Say); between students and writing advisers (Pritchard, Desjardins and Kuntz); in a structured online programme (Smirnova) and between students and their peers (Buell; Kim; Almond).

Theories and methodologies
In attempting to understand how post/graduates acquire research literacies, authors draw on a number of different theories and methodologies to their research into these questions, bringing those approaches to the forefront of their discussions. A feminist lens reveals how the values of universities, research communities and publication practices continue to be powerfully inflected by gender relations. Dietz, Kehler and Yoon draw on feminist rhetorical concepts to understand the tensions, conflicts and negotiations that are part of learning and learning relationships; Bosanquet and Cahir, in contrast, focus on the embodiment of gender and how that impacts on their research experience. For French, post-qualitative approaches provide fresh insights into researcher subjectivity and identity, while revised notions of cognitive apprenticeship are enlightening for Maher and Say in their exploration of learner identities. Guerin uses the learning theory of connectivism to understand contemporary relationships with the publication of ideas. Turner takes us into an understanding of "writtenness" through Bourdieu's elaboration of

the effects of economic misrecognition. Ethnography is a valuable approach for Furneaux; autoethnography offers Bosanquet and Cahir a pathway into understanding their own situation.

Many of the chapters are based on data collected in interviews with post/graduates and their supervisors/advisors in acknowledgement that those doing the daily work of developing research literacies are well placed to reflect on their experiences in useful and informative ways that are of benefit to others. Since this book is aimed at those working directly with post/graduates who are learning how to undertake and communicate their research, such research methods and methodologies are important. Our purpose is to better understand those economic, political and socio-cultural conditions that impact on the development of research literacies and the accompanying epistemologies and ontologies; the broad range of theories and methodologies employed by these authors provide new and exciting insights into how this is being experienced by today's post/graduates.

Structure of the book
The skills required to reach high levels of research literacy are many and varied. As Aitchison and Guerin (2014, pp. 8-9) point out: "The act of producing text and of writing is a complex, situated, social and political act that makes and reflects identity, position and power". These complexities are reflected in the range of approaches and concerns presented in the chapters in this book. There are, of course, many different ways in which one could organise this rich set of insights and explorations of research literacies. We have chosen to group these 22 chapters under the headings of "Publication literacies"; "Writing and research identities"; "Writing networks and exchanges"; and "Contact zones, boundary crossings and transitions". But as we've already shown above, there are many threads that weave through this dense tapestry, creating dozens of different patterns through which we can make sense of the current state of post/graduate writing pedagogies and research literacies.

Section II: Publication literacies
The first group of chapters after this introduction explores the pedagogies that can be used to support post/graduates negotiating the complexities of publishing their research. This is a challenging and complex arena for those working in English as their first language, and even more difficult for those using English as an additional language. These investigations originate from Australia, Canada, Russia and Brazil; each context brings its own concerns and focus. Guerin's chapter explores the format of the thesis by publication, mobilising the insights of connectivist theories of learning to understand what this might mean for novice researchers attuned to a digital world of social media. Habibie is interested in the ways in which collaborative writing with supervisors can pave the way for entry into discourse communities for post/graduates. Smirnova shifts the focus to EAL writers and reports on the value of an online programme that promotes the self-regulated learning that facilitates emerging researcher identities. Ferreira, in contrast, draws our attention to the cultural values attached to the features of research genres in English, and details the ways in which this operates as a significant obstacle for those from other language backgrounds attempting to find a place for their research in English language journals.

Section III: Writing and research identities

The writing as social practice turn in literacies work has taught us to appreciate the important role of writing in identity formation (Lea & Street, 2014), particularly for those writing at post/graduate level (Lee and Boud, 2003). In this section we start with French's post-qualitative, self-reflexive challenge to the traditional conceptions of researcher and researched. This is followed by an equally personal investigation of the experience of doctoral writing through the eyes of Bosanquet and Cahir. Dietz and Kehler reflect on how they developed research literacies in a Masters course taught by their coauthor Yoon. Complementing the autoethnography of Bosanquet and Cahir, Furneaux takes an ethnographic approach to the personal experiences of international and local Master's students coming to terms with the writing expectations in their discipline. Wisker theorises how doctoral candidates exercise agency as they translate messy research into neatly structured theses, along the way creating appropriate voices and personae in the text.

Section IV: Writing networks and exchanges

Post/graduates access a range of sources to learn about writing, and the chapters in this section explore the ways in which these students gain feedback on their own writing and feed into others' learning too, and how they negotiate these multiple voices (Aitchison, 2014). Turner commences this section with a plea for a renewed appreciation of the "writtenness" of the research text, critiquing the fact that the hard intellectual labour of writing involved in getting there is undervalued, and often seen mechanistically as "proofreading". The chapters by Buell and Kim both detail the experiences of international students negotiating the multiple voices from writing groups and others advising on their writing; for Buell, the focus is on the multi-layered, recursive nature of learning about doctoral writing in such a context, while Kim is more concerned with the academic socialisation that this form of feedback facilitates. The next three chapters in this section explore the role of supervisors in developing research literacies in their students: Stillman-Webb writes from the context of the Sciences, where supervisors articulate a notion of writing skill as a "gift" but nevertheless actively teach this skill; Maher and Say explain how supervisors themselves remember learning how to write appropriately in their own disciplines; while Knowles argues for the value of both mystery and transparency in the supervision of research degrees. As Knowles reveals, the relationship between post/graduates and supervisors is by no means straight forward, marked as it is by ambiguity produced by, for example, student guardedness and supervisors' prevarications. Pritchard, Desjardins and Kuntz shift our attention to writing advisors and the intense, rewarding role they can play in developing research literacies.

Section V: Contact zones, boundary crossings and transitions

As we come into the final section of this book, the chapters explore the points at which post/graduates come into contact with liminal spaces between known, established practices and the future demands of the research world. Badenhorst, Moloney, Rosales and Dyer push their students into harnessing the power of visual elements in their writing, demonstrating the creative value of "play" for post/graduates. Similarly, Davies Turner and Turner provide space for a post/graduate writer to play, in the process

allowing her to find her own emerging researcher identity. Lockhart works with post/graduate Masters of Arts students whose two-year courses demand explicit instruction to acquire the necessary research literacies in this compressed timeframe as they leap across the boundaries between coursework and research. With the chapter by Khan, Majoka and Fazal we shift to the contact zone of Pakistan, where staff and students are faced with the enormous challenge of being expected to write at post/graduate level in English without strong foundations in academic English, continuing to operate within the contact zone established by colonial history. Finally, Almond's chapter projects us into the digital world of cloud technology, demonstrating the affordances of online learning for research literacies.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have used Internet memes to help us decode the cultural processes that underlie post/graduate thesis and research writing. We have made the argument, as Shifman (2014) does, that these memes are not arbitrary. They are indicative meanings made by groups of people who share in a common experience. The contributions to this volume demonstrate the significant complexity of post/graduate research literacies and the pedagogies being developed to traverse the challenges students face. This volume is considerably bigger than we had originally envisaged, yet it still represents only the beginning of many of these conversations around research literacies and post/graduate writing pedagogies. As editors we have learnt a great deal about the innovative practices and challenges to conventional theories about how post/graduate students in many different educational and geographic contexts are developing the skills they need to succeed as researchers; we trust our readers will find the chapters here equally informative and inspiring, and will in turn contribute further to the conversation.

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