

**CAL Undergraduate Research Scholarships Scheme 2017
Project Proposal Form**

Project Proposer/s:	Suganthi John
School/Dept:	EDACS/English Language and Applied Linguistics
Project Title:	An account of student writing in literature and linguistics – a tale of two disciplines
Project Summary	
<p>Often thought of as cognate disciplines under the umbrella term 'English', the fields of language and literature are often combined in degree programmes. The perceived 'closeness' of these fields is explored in this study through an investigation of disciplinary characteristics as demonstrated in <i>student</i> writing. Focussing on UG final year research projects/essays, the study aims to identify structural and stylistic characteristics (primarily academic stance and identity), as revealed through a corpus-based analysis. Complementing this quantitative corpus-based analysis is a questionnaire with student writers. The questionnaire has two aims – (1) to uncover some of the ways in which students perceive these characteristics; and, (2) to what extent their perceptions of these characteristics match those uncovered by the linguistic analysis. The data will therefore comprise student writing from the Bank of Assessed Work, complemented by the BAWE (British Academic Written English) corpus and questionnaire data.</p>	
What the researcher will do	
<p>The researcher's role is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to turn the Bank of Assessed work essays/projects into a searchable corpus - to conduct the linguistic analysis of the student essays - to design the questionnaire based on the linguistic analysis (although time will not permit the execution of the questionnaire in the summer period. This will take place in the academic year 2017/2018) <p>Week 1: The researcher will create a corpus of student writing in the two disciplines. Week 2: Conduct a corpus analysis (focussing on different sections of research projects/ essays). The focus is likely to be on stance and academic identity as revealed in introductory sections of the pieces of writing. Week 3: Design a questionnaire based on the results of the linguistic analysis Week 4: Undertake a literature review and prepare a summary of papers read. Reflect on the results of the corpus analysis and the literature. Week 5: Write some draft sections of a paper.</p>	
Skills required by the Scholarship holder	
<p>(1) An interest in the disciplines of literature and linguistics (2) Proven ability to use corpus tools and the ability to design a questionnaire as demonstrated through their first year and second year work. (3) Ability to work independently as demonstrated by their second year project work (4) High level of academic writing skills as demonstrated by a high mark in the module <i>The Practice of Writing</i> (if they are a single honours English Language student) or <i>Language for Literature</i> (if they are a single honours English Language and Literature student or an English Literature student) and high marks in the research training modules <i>Investigating Language</i> (1st year) and/or <i>Research Skills in English Language</i> (2nd year).</p>	
How will your Project benefit the Scholarship holder?	
<p>(1) The student will gain an in depth understanding of the ways in which disciplines construct knowledge differently. Regardless of whether they study these disciplines together in a combined programme of Language or Literature or whether they are single honours students in one of these disciplines, having a heightened awareness of disciplinary characteristics will enable them to read academic papers more accurately and produce writing which is closely aligned to disciplinary community expectations. (2) The project will enhance their ability to use corpus techniques, questionnaire design and linguistic analysis. These are key research techniques and the student will be able to transfer what they learn to their final year dissertation/research project. (3) The project will enable them to hone their research ability and demonstrate their ability to work on some complex data. This is particularly useful should they wish to pursue a funded Master's programme or for future applications for AHRC/ESRC PhD schemes.</p>	
How will the Scholarship benefit your Project?	
<p>My project is a larger one based on student perceptions of disciplinary differences. The second part will involve questionnaire analysis which I will complete in 2017/2018, but having the student complete the first part of the study would be tremendously helpful. The intention is for this paper to be published in either the <i>Writing and</i></p>	

EDACS03

Pedagogy journal or the *Journal of Academic Writing* in late 2018.