Principles of Academic Writing
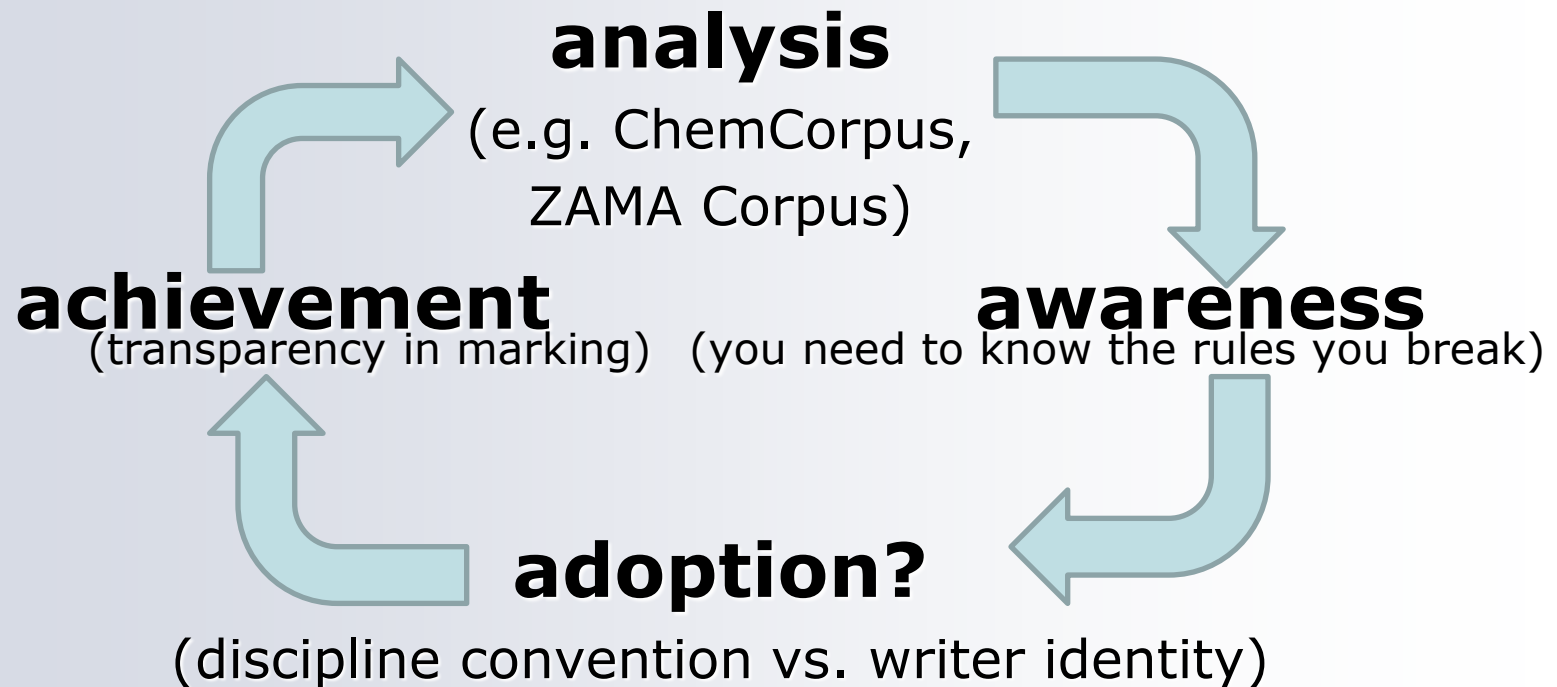
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1. Introduction
1.1. "rhetorical consciousness raising"

analysis
(e.g. ChemCorpus,
ZAMA Corpus)

achievement   **awareness**
(transparency in marking)   (you need to know the rules you break)

adoption?
(discipline convention vs. writer identity)

(adapted from Swales/Feak ₃2012:ix)

1.2. Project ideas

- exchange views and experiences on academic writing among teachers and students from different national backgrounds
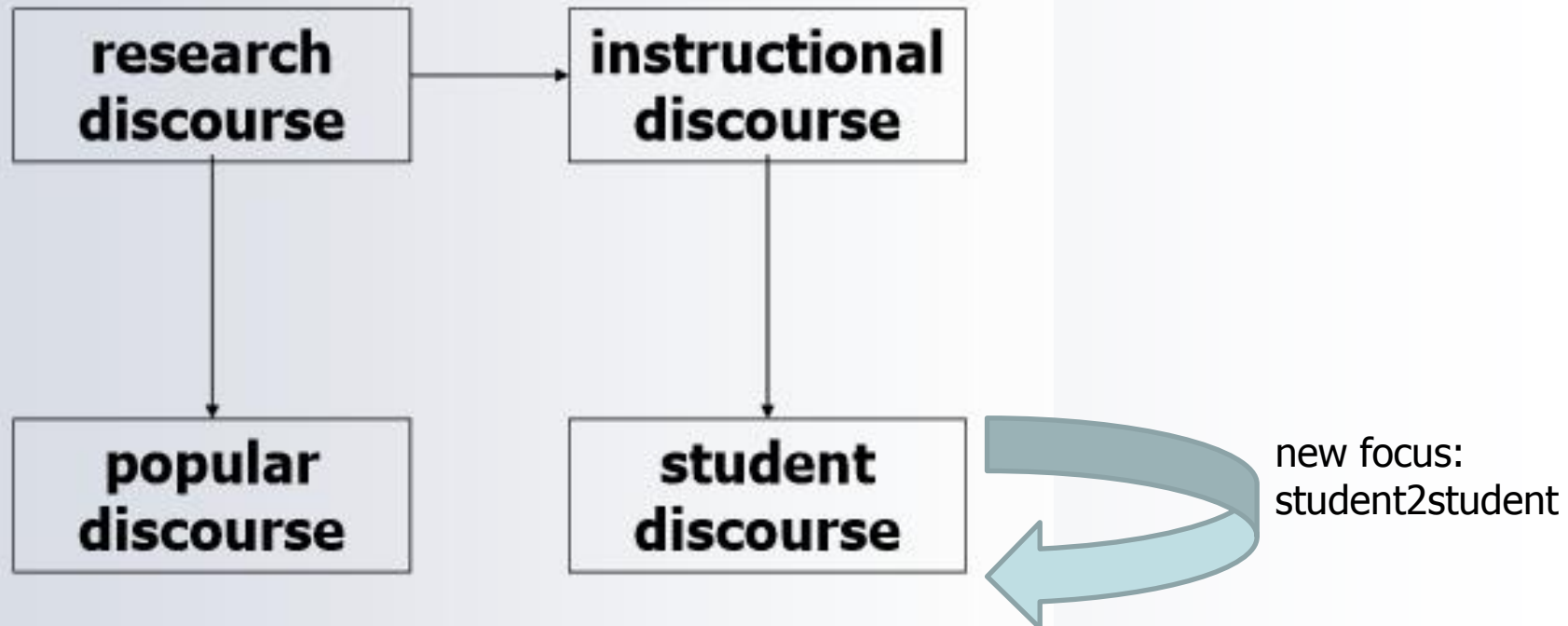- teachers serve as resource persons – students learn from each other

3 steps:

- April Skopje workshop:
  coordinators/teachers discuss to provide the frame:
  needs analysis, liaison with other partners, exchange of materials
  summer school: time, place, participant selection, slot allocation
  for groups
- July Chemnitz workshop+conference:
  coordinators do research and present it in a conference
- August Ohrid summer school:
  all participants=students+teachers contribute what they can to the discussion

1.3. Summer School expectations

- participants agree on what they can offer to each other
- teachers coordinate their national groups
- students learn from each other
- students present their own experience, i.e. more what they have really done in writing their BA thesis than what they we told to do
- more discussion/interaction than presentation
- participants discuss conventions:
  "the text must be made accessible for the reader" (adaptation)
  vs.
  "the text must reflect the complexity of the subject" (iconicity)
- diversity=differences between disciplines:
  natural sciences – social sciences – humanities/arts

1.4. Discourses in Academic English

```
┌──────────────┐            ┌──────────────┐
│   research   │ ─────────> │ instructional │
│  discourse   │            │  discourse   │
└──────────────┘            └──────────────┘
       │                           │
       v                           v
┌──────────────┐            ┌──────────────┐
│   popular    │            │   student    │
│  discourse   │            │  discourse   │
└──────────────┘            └──────────────┘
```

new focus:
student2student

1.5. Future project ideas?

- web portal with resources:
    - guidelines
    - models
    - data for analyses
    - joint publication (down-loadable for free)
- MA/PhD research stays at Chemnitz in Germany
  → send me a CV/resume with a preliminary proposal
  by Friday!
- traineeships/internships in SE universities
- e-learning?

2. Key Concepts

2.1. convention vs. individuality

2.2. reader-/listener-orientation,
    argumentation structure,
    discourse management

2.3. genre

2.4. meta-language:

author-involvement, -commitment (hedging)

all to be illustrated in following presentations and discussions

3. Texts as database

3.1. Corpora combine theory and practice

different writing corpora for comparison:

- ChemCorpus (concrete learner-related)
    - Magister Theses
    - Magister Written (timed exam)
    - BA Theses
    - MA Theses
    - Reports?
- SPACE Corpus (Specialised+Popular same topic)
- ZAMA (from South Africa, well stratified)
- CamAcCorpus
- GhanaAcCorpus
- Brno Corpus (Czech mother-tongue; compatible to Macedonian?)
- TürkCorpus
- SEEurop. Corpus? (Macedonian/Slavonic vs. Albanian?)

3.2. A genre approach to academic discourses

research "output"
- **research article**
  - **book reviews**
  - **project proposals**
- **conference presentations**

> discipline-specific
> culture-specific

science "journalism"
- **popular science articles**
  - **popular blogs (David Crystal)**
  - **popular science films (Horizon)**
- **popular science books**

teacher "talk"/e-learning
- **ppt presentations**
  - **lectures**
  - **student presentations**
- **textbooks**
  - **Wikis**
  - **www pages**

student "literacy"
- **fieldwork notes / essays**
- **MA/BA thesis**
- **seminar presentations**

"Novice Academic English"

> author-specific
> culture-specific

Genre Report

Structure of Project Reports:

- executive Summary
- with Gantt chart=time/resource allocation with milestones, incl. class work, group work, individual work
- description of work phases
- problems of individual project phases to reach milestones
- project evaluation (publishable)
- personal addition (unofficial project criticism=not publishable, e.g. on communication misunderstandings)

2 concrete examples

Report: Marking Criteria

In **Project Reports** we use 5 criteria:

- content, incl. "customer satisfaction"
- argumentation, i.e. "inner" logic and cohesive devices
- style, formal (NO *bit*, *get*, contracted forms, etc.) and convincing metalanguage (esp. author involvement, hedging)
- form, esp. quotes, references, etc. according to MLA (for literature) or APA (for social sciences, linguistics)
- language (in both languages German as well as English there are often idiomatic mistakes)

3.3. Common compilation principles + problems?

references for comparison:

■ ICLE (=International Corpus of Learner English)
   but: are argumentative essays compatible?
■ ChemCorpus

opportunities for a SEEurop. Corpus

■ comparative: Macedonian/Slavonic vs. Albanian?

problems:

■ legal: national language in many departments
■ technical: electronic form

Nkemleke (fc.)

2: to produce a Manual that helps students "successfully" write in the following genres

Research articles	Theses and dissertations	Term papers
Books and monographs	Conference presentations	Grant proposals
Statements of intent	Research proposals	Abstracts

wider analyses: form > function

research articles
- *novelty* →
  in lit. review evaluation →
  stance, hedges, boosters
  modal aux/adv

- *complexity*
  in ontology lexical
  hypernyms/hyponyms

instruction
- macro-/micro-structuring
- meta-discourse
    - interpersonal
    - attitudinal
(compare MICASE, BASE)

science journalism
- metaphors
- multimedia with
  text/image/sound
(??)

student papers
- argumentation structure
- coherence →
  cohesion by pronoun
  chains, clause adv.
(compare BAWE)

Research question: divergence or diversity?

Research English
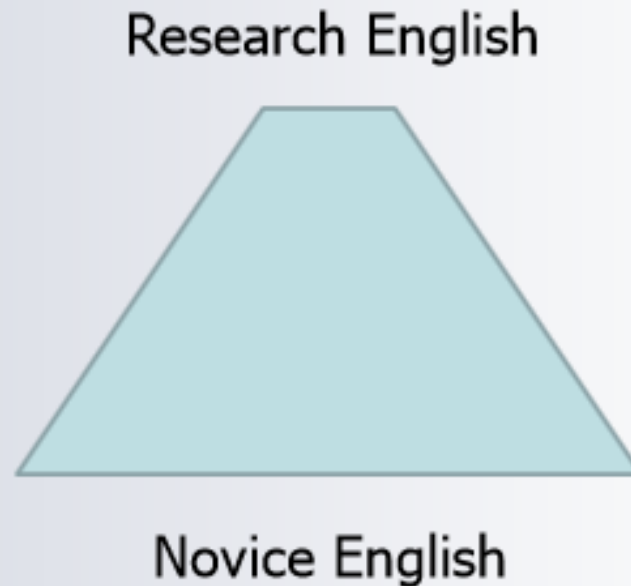
Novice English

How much convergence do we want in research English?
How much diversity do we accept in novice English?
Which features do we want to reduce or increase?

3.4. Example of a particularly well stratified corpus: ZAMA Corpus from Stellenbosch

- 150 texts
- gender balanced
- ethnic/language background according to name:
  English, Afrikaans, (S)African languages, rest (Indian, Chinese, Luo)
- department-stratified: aim 5 (6) MA theses in over 20 disciplines
  - Anthropology
  - Chemistry
  - English (Lit.)
  - Curriculum Studies
  - Geography
  - History
  - Journalism
  - (Gen.) Linguistics
  - Mechanical Engineering
  - Civil Engineering
  - Psychology
  - (Public) Law
  - Political Science
  - etc.

3.5. Example of a "developping" reference corpus: ChemCorpus = Chemnitz U/German student writing

corpus	# files	# words
Bachelor Year 2 Term Papers Linguistics CUT	18	75,528
Bachelor Theses Linguistics CUT	11	143,692
Magister Exams Linguistics CUT	52	103,732
Magister Theses Linguistics CUT	24	652,869
Magister Theses Cultural Studies/Literature CUT	10	292,537
total CUT	**115**	**1,268,358**

4. Sample Analysis ZAMA Corpus:
Variation in personal pronoun usage

author involvement: *I, me, my*
                                 we, us, our

reader address: *you, your*

semantic differences:
     inclusive - exclusive *we*, *pluralis majestatis/modestiae*
     you as audience - *(any)one*

examples:

„I will now review some of literature relevant to South Africa in order to provide a context for the study." (ZMA06BA-YE)

„[…] these larger social patterns […] will have to be addressed if we are to curb this phenomenon." (ZMA08MV-YX)

„Furthermore, you need to 'comprehend ' [what] you're reading […]" (ZMA10MM-EE)

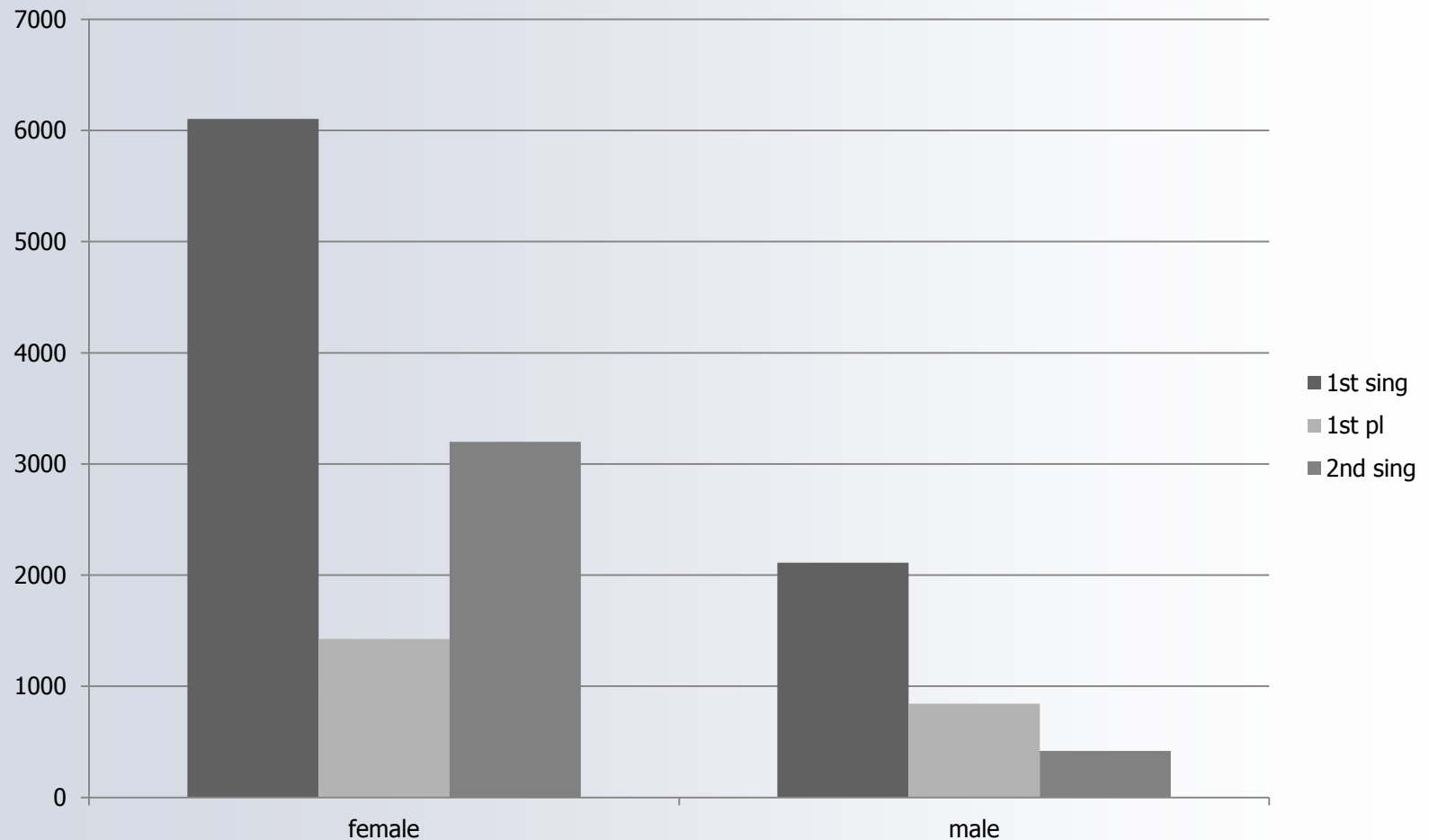## 4.1. Variation in personal pronoun usage (normalised, per 10,000 words) presented in tables and figures to discover "decisive" variable

	female	male
1st sing	6105	2112
1st pl	1427	844
2nd sing	3200	419

	Afrikaans	English	SAfrLang
1st sing	2540	6934	2867
1st pl	918	1313	1480
2nd sing	925	3930	726

4.1. Variation in personal pronoun usage by gender

relative/1M words and by 4 functional categories
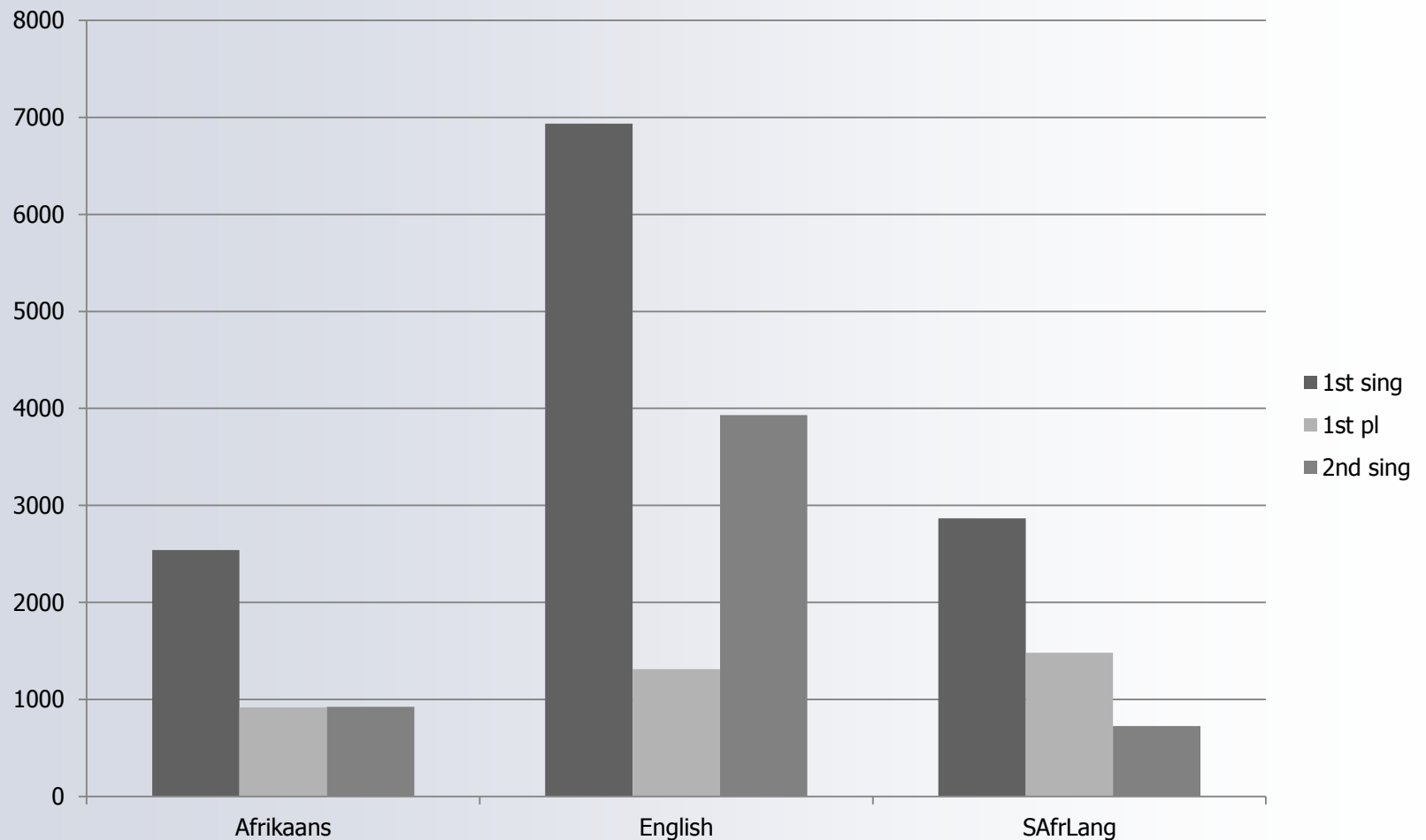

Legend:
- 1st sing
- 1st pl
- 2nd sing

4.1. Variation in personal pronoun usage by language

relative/1M words and by 4 functional categories

4.2. Variation in personal pronoun usage by discipline

	Anth	Chem	EngLit	Geo	Hist	Jour	Ling	MechE	CivE	Pol	Curr	Law	Psych
1st s.	4272	904	9695	1132	1872	1347	5989	815	598	917	5998	386	11212
1st pl	1355	739	1710	264	1881	1179	1337	19	36	932	1872	73	2398
2nd pl	509	67	6163	481	421	839	3409	51	63	104	1319	0	4661

→ discipline has the most obvious influence (visualised in Fig. 4.2 below), but we have to calculate diligently and us significance tests

4.2. Variation in personal pronoun usage by discipline
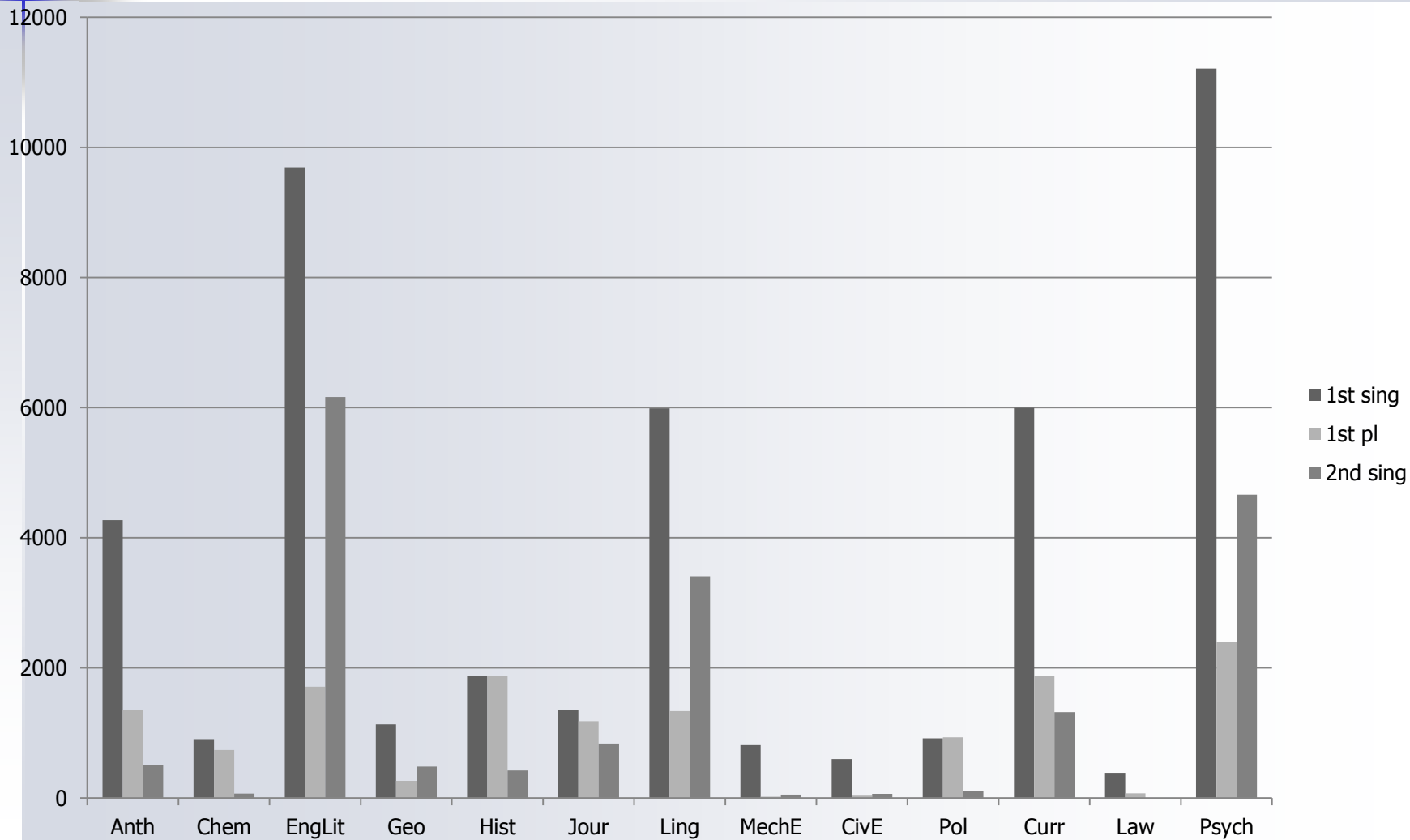
5. Conclusion:
combine research + teaching – in cooperation?

all students need AcWriting skills today because the expectations have become higher (genre conventions stricter)

some students (language specialists) can write about AcWriting and use what they have learnt and researched their own writing

research principles:

- variation depends on may interrelated variables
- hypothesis: discipline culture > gender/language culture
- analysis needs hard data and hard statistical analysis

teaching principles:

Is metalanguage instruction on a functional basis possible?

- "to a different degree":
    personal pronouns (explicitly categorical = regulated)
    > cohesion (overused through teaching?)
    > modality/hedging (complex, less awareness)

Related reading materials

Clyne, M. (1994). *Inter-Cultural Communication at Work. Cultural Values in Discourse. Cambridge: CUP.*

Hyland, K. (2012). *Disciplinary Identities: Individuality and Community in Academic Writing.* Cambridge: Cambridge Applied Linguistics.

Hyland, K. (2009). *Academic Discourse.* London: Continuum.

Hyland, K. (2006). *English for Academic Purposes: An Advanced Resource Book.* London: Routledge.

Schmied, J. (2011). „Academic Writing in Europe: a Survey of Apporaches and Problems". In Schmied, J. (ed.), 1-22.

Schmied, J. ed. (2011). *Academic Writing in Europe: Empirical Perspectives.* Göttingen: Cuvillier Verlag.

Siepmann D., J.D. Gallagher, M. Hannay & J. L. Mackenzie (2011). *Writing in English: A Guide for Advanced Learners*. Tübingen: A. Francke Verlag.

Swales, J. M./Ch. B. Feak (2012, 3rd. ed.). *Academic Writing for Graduate Students: Essential Tasks and Skills*. The University of Michigan Press.