Scholarship in the modern world has become increasingly specialized, with new disciplines forming all the time, created with their own associated bodies of knowledge, specialized forms of discourse, and types of research, expertise, and practical skills as needed for evolving and communicating that knowledge. Social forces within academia as well as from the world outside the academy are involved in the formation of new disciplines and their unique bodies of knowledge and practices (Neumann, 2009: 490–491). New academic disciplines may emerge from a parent discipline through processes of specialization and separation, when a subfield gains sufficient members to develop its own discourses and research orientations, as in the case of applied linguistics developing as a specialization separate from (formal) linguistics. New disciplines can also form through processes of merger and hybridization of previously distinct disciplines, as in the case of psycholinguistics merging aspects of cognitive psychology and linguistics. New disciplines may evolve from practical fields that develop a research culture, as is happening to an extent with English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL), or may be created in response to new social needs or discourses, as in the case of international studies, bilingual/multicultural studies, and gender studies.

Writing pedagogy, while not itself a recognized discipline, is nonetheless recognized as an important area of specialized expertise and practice that is also developing its own discourses and research orientations. Writing pedagogy has a primary home in departments of English – in the United States often within a subdiscipline of rhetoric and composition. In the U.S., writing pedagogy is also a component of elementary and middle school language arts and high school English and as such is in interaction with the discipline of education. In addition to being part of the educational curriculum for all languages, in the U.S. and other countries, writing is a component of ESL/EFL and applied linguistics. These different disciplines draw on knowledge.
and practices of writing pedagogy even as those disciplines are enriching knowledge and practice in writing pedagogy.

Writing pedagogy is increasingly connected to all of the disciplines, as a focus of writing across the curriculum (WAC), writing in the disciplines (WID), and English for specific purposes (ESP). While WAC is oriented to undergraduate writing, WID and ESP additionally embrace graduate level writing as well as writing in professions. In their different ways, WAC, WID, and ESP orientations foster a two-way interaction between writing pedagogy and academic disciplines, building interdisciplinary and intradisciplinary knowledge and practices.

Writing pedagogy is also increasingly international in its influence, going well beyond the boundaries of the teaching of English in the United States. In the recent past, there has been a great expansion of interest in writing pedagogy worldwide, as the number and the size of university English departments outside the countries where English is a primary language have expanded concurrent with the expansion in the number and diversity of students and others wanting to learn to write English for academic and business purposes. Foreign language departments have also increasingly adopted modern writing theory and pedagogy into their disciplinary emphases. A further aspect of internationalization and expansion of writing pedagogy is the “writing without borders” that is possible (in many senses) in online environments.

Writing pedagogy is no longer merely an adjunct of English literature nor only a U.S.-based field of rhetoric and composition. It is moreover not only centered on university-level composition but embraces writing in K-12 education and in online environments. A large number of those teaching writing in the United States have degrees in education rather than in English, and many of those teaching writing outside the U.S. – in secondary schools, universities, and graduate programs – have graduate degrees in applied linguistics or English as a second language rather than rhetoric and composition or English literature. This is in addition to those teaching writing in other languages based on literature, language, or education degrees.

The domain of writing pedagogy is expanding as its importance and relevance are gaining recognition both within and outside academia. This is similar to what happened in ESL/EFL and applied linguistics in an earlier period. Also similar to the case of ESL/EFL and applied linguistics in relation to linguistics departments, writing pedagogy has been part of a process of speciation in which English departments developed subspecializations such as creative writing, literature, and rhetoric and composition. Disciplinary specialization and separation from departments of English and linguistics has occurred for ESL/EFL at university level, and ESL is also now recognized as a subspecialization of K-12 education. A similar trend can be seen for the subspecialization of writing
to separate off from the parent discipline of English and to form autonomous departments, sometimes bringing together English subdisciplines such as creative writing, professional writing, and first-year composition, and occasionally forming new hybrid departments through merger with linguistics or applied linguistics. This trend toward specialization and separation or merger bodes well for the possibility of writing to evolve as an academic discipline, though it is too soon to tell which discipline (or disciplines) will end up inheriting or taking ownership of writing and writing pedagogy in the current era, or whether either writing or writing pedagogy can be tied to any one specific discipline at all, or for very long.

All of these trends demonstrate expansion and change of writing pedagogy in relation to processes of disciplinary specialization, hybridization, and the emergence of new research cultures and social discourses and needs. In a number of senses, writing specialists are crossing academic borders and creating new knowledge and practices in interaction with other disciplines. Writing & Pedagogy aims to foster this border-crossing in the creation of a new, internationally referenced forum for discussion and sharing of knowledge related to writing pedagogy. The intention is to create a “journal without borders” for interaction of those working in rhetoric and composition, second and foreign language writing, creative writing, writing in the disciplines, K-12 English and language arts, Internet literacy, and others with an interest in writing pedagogy, not just in the United States but worldwide. It is hoped that the bringing together of these disparate groups that have a common interest in writing pedagogy will help them to “talk across the fences” and learn from each other, creating a body of common knowledge that can support and nurture the growing field.

Editor’s Perspective on Volume 2, Number 1

The contributions to this issue of Writing & Pedagogy span a disciplinary range that includes English as a foreign language, secondary education, higher education, and teacher education. Authors hail from the United States as well as the diverse cultures of Hong Kong, Iran, Abu Dhabi, and Austria. Three of the articles involve English as a second or foreign language, two of these focusing on university English majors and one on high school students and teachers in subject area classes (i.e. other than English). Another article centers on graduate students in an online English Education class; yet another has a focus on partnerships between preservice teachers and high school students. The issue also includes the first part of an article reviewing major changes in writing practices on the Internet as well as two book reviews.
In the first Research Matters article, “Writing in Late Immersion Biology and History Classes in Hong Kong,” Stella Kong looks at the written English in science and history classes of high school students who are native speakers of Cantonese. Although these students have had much of their instruction since grade 7 (Form 1) in English, the writing which they are producing in their classes is limited, geared more to answering examination questions than to exploring subject matter through a written medium. The examples which Kong provides of student writing suggest both a poor command of written English and a highly restricted goal for writing. Rather than supporting content learning and language learning, as could be expected in an English-medium immersion curriculum, writing is largely functioning as a medium for the students to regurgitate copied or memorized information and a vehicle for the teachers to check students’ retention of factual information in preparation for standardized examinations.

WAC, WID, and ESP construct writing as being in a subdisciplinary relationship with different fields. Yet the teachers and learners in these Hong Kong schools, as in the majority of cases worldwide, do not view writing as a primary mode of expression or consolidation of knowledge other than for testing purposes. They are in this sense highly restricted in what they can do with language and in their control of a key medium of communication, that of written language. Rather than functioning as a mode of expression, consolidation – and, indeed, construction – of disciplinary content, these second-language users’ view of writing is a limited one, as a medium for reproducing rather than creating information. In this sense, they are allowing others to control information as well as their interaction with it, i.e. their communication and their learning. Kong’s research points up the need for significant attention in teacher education to writing pedagogy for all secondary subject teachers in Hong Kong and further suggests that “[t]eacher education in writing may also have to address the cultural issue of the reliance on copying and memorization as learning and writing strategies by Chinese and Asian students” and explicitly contrast this with writing-to-learn pedagogy.

In the second of the Research Matters articles, “Chained and Confused: Teacher Perceptions of Formulaic Writing in a Virtual Classroom,” Amy Alison Lannin and Roy F. Fox offer a glimpse into the world of a group of teachers, who were from different states in the U.S. and represented different areas of concentration at middle school and high school levels, based on discussion board posts in a graduate English Education course offered online. These teachers started the course with an orientation to writing as formulaic and focused on correctness and hierarchy, such that sentences must be “mastered” before paragraphs and paragraphs before essays. This “building-blocks” view of constructing a composition piece by piece and step-by step, which ignores the necessary driving force and energy for writing that is provided by purpose and
the desire for expression of self and a point of view, suggests a failing in teacher education. Both language arts and middle and high school English teachers are insufficiently involved in writing and preparation for the teaching of writing. Those teaching writing in schools are often not themselves writers, not even in online contexts; or, if they are, they are often teaching a writing process very different from the way they themselves write.

In the push for standardization and orderliness, educational approaches are becoming mechanical, not just in a metaphorical sense, but in the sense of trying to systematize learning into an assembly-line process of constructing skyscrapers of information from giant piles of bricks and the steel structure holding them in place. The structure has little staying power and resiliency: the bricks and steel are of poor quality, and the mortar holding them all together of very poor quality indeed, as students – and often their teachers – never really understand the whole which is constructed out of these parts, that is, the whole purpose of the enterprise in which they are engaged. The voice of the teachers in the online community, together with the voice of the graduate course teacher, helps the reader enter into their thoughts and their world of teaching, underlining their perceptions of the many restrictions and chains binding teachers and students to set structures such as the “five-paragraph essay.” On a positive note, the teachers did not finish the course as they had started out but rather were changed by it, gaining new insights about the writing process and a new sense of possibility for their own teaching of writing.

The final research article, “Undergraduate Iranian EFL Learners’ Use of Writing Strategies,” is a study by Esmael Abdollahzadeh of writing strategies used by university English majors in Iran. Starting from Rebecca Oxford’s work (e.g. Oxford, 1990), Abdollahzadeh classified the students’ writing strategies as: memory strategies (ways to commit information to memory); cognitive strategies (ways to handle the mental processes involved in creating text while writing); compensation strategies (ways to compensate for language limitations); metacognitive strategies (ways to prepare for and manage writing performance); social strategies (ways to gain assistance for writing from others); and affective strategies (ways to manage attitudes, motivation, and emotion connected to writing). Abdollahzadeh found that the students most frequently used cognitively and metacognitively focused strategies. He then compared the writing strategies used by male and female students in the first and final years of study, finding no significant differences in the frequency of different types of strategies used across these groups.

In spite of the lack of significant differences across the groups, interviews with participants indicated that the more advanced students used somewhat different cognitive and compensation strategies than the less advanced students: whereas the final-year students used planning or outlining to prepare for writing and would reportedly coin new words or expressions when faced with language limitations while writing, the first-year students were less likely to
plan and outline and tended to rely on translation as a compensatory strategy for handling their language limitations. The interviews also revealed differences in learning styles and motivations of male and female students. Whereas the male students preferred writing in solitary conditions, female students noted the social strategy of gaining feedback from peers. Most of those interviewed stressed the value of the feedback gained from teachers while also noting that they could not always understand teachers’ written feedback on papers. In addition to the need for teachers to give more usable feedback, the research revealed a need to raise students’ awareness of and competent use of a range of strategies to aid their writing process.

In the first Reflections on Practice article in this issue, “Engaging Future Teachers to Reflect on How Reading and Writing Can Change Lives,” Maureen P. Hall and Robert P. Waxler describe an innovative urban literacy project situated in an alternative school in Massachusetts that paired preservice teachers with at-risk youth. The aim of the project was to develop a “new neighborhood” in the sense of a safe space and a productive literacy community with a focus on reading, discussing, and writing about literature. The aim was for this new, psychologically engaging neighborhood to “serve as a challenge to the old neighborhood these high schoolers knew well, the hardscrabble streets ruled by the voices of gang leaders.” Hall and Waxler give an overview of the project and the readings used, then focus on the preservice teachers’ written reflections on the “journey” they had experienced in working with the high schoolers, as prompted by Robert Frost’s “The Road Not Taken.”

In the second Reflections on Practice article, “A Refocused Approach to Writing Instruction: Incorporating a Focus on Genre into the Writing Process,” Lisa Nazarenko and Gillian Schwarz describe a teaching approach that they developed for improving the writing of their EFL students, who are largely English majors, at the University of Vienna. Nazarenko and Schwarz relate how they developed a scaffolded, “front-loaded” writing process that responds to their students’ writing needs while being designed to refocus their attention away from surface correctness and towards the deeper concerns of content, organization, and genre conventions. They are thus helping the students learn how to control and shape writing in a much more significant sense and at a deeper level, to develop themselves as writers and not simply users of “correct English.” This is done through strong teacher modeling, guidance, and feedback at every step along the way – from awareness to planning, drafting, and completion of a piece of academic writing such as the argumentative essay used as an example. Students take control of their own writing process gradually, as genre awareness and knowledge of writing conventions and processes are integrated and as teacher control and scaffolding give way over time to self-reflection and self-monitoring. The result, according to the authors, is a much improved writing process and product.
The From the e-Sphere contribution for this issue, “Writing in a Multiliterate Flat World, Part I: Multiliterate Approaches to Writing and Collaboration Through Social Networking,” is the first of a two-part overview by the section editor, Vance Stevens, of the new affordances provided in online writing environments. Part I centers on the possibilities in the current day for writers to publish online print and multimedia texts and to form online communities of those with shared interests. Stevens describes the shift from the “read-only” Web to the “read-write” Web, termed Web 2.0: “In the read-only era, writing on the Internet meant sending an email or putting up a Web page, but…Web 2.0 not only gives scope for but requires interaction,” such as through wikis, blogs, and various types of user groups. Stevens discusses the shift from “push” technology, in which information was pushed to sites top-down, to “pull” technology, in which users can selectively filter and pull information as they wish from the Internet. In this connection, he highlights the importance of RSS feeds, which are a way for subscribers to easily track new content posted on blogs and other computer services they want to follow. He also notes the value in wikis, in contrast to blogs, of a strong reading-writing connection.

In the New Books section, the topic of urban literacy is taken up in Elaine Richardson’s review of Ernest Morrell’s Critical Literacy and Urban Youth: Pedagogies of Access, Dissent, and Liberation, a book that illustrates Morrell’s theory of critical literacy practice and social change in relation to work with urban high school students. For Morrell, “critical literacy requires the conscious citizen, especially urban youth, to confront, resist, and transform hegemonic discourses.” Richardson, showing how Morrell seeks to use critical literacy and pedagogy to inform academic literacy in ways that incorporate popular culture and Western and non-Western philosophies, finds much to like about this book. Mark N. Brock reviews Mary Lynch Kennedy and William J. Kennedy’s Writing in the Disciplines: A Reader and Rhetoric for Academic Writers (Sixth Edition). Brock evaluates this new edition favorably in terms of making strong reading-writing connections, offering critical reading as a basis for academic writing, and “[equipping] undergraduates with the skills necessary for participating in the conversations that characterize academic discourse within and across a variety of disciplines.”

References


The First Two Years of *Writing & Pedagogy*

The first two volumes of the journal (Volume 1, 2009, and Volume 2, 2009) were two years in the making, with the first submissions coming in January 2008. Other than occasional solicited articles on a specific topic, the normal process is one of blind review by three reviewers, at least two of them from the Editorial Board. Approximately one-third of submissions have either been accepted outright on first review or had the submission declined on first review. The most typical response so far has been “revise and resubmit,” and our current policy in such cases is to give generous input to authors to assist in revision, resulting in the majority of resubmissions being accepted for publication. Although the numbers are yet modest, the following pattern of decision-making resulting from the review process can be given (in round numbers) for the first two years of work on the journal, through the end of 2009:

- Accepted on first-stage review with minor revisions – 15%
- Rejected on first-stage review – 20%
- Option to revise and resubmit based on reviewer and editor input – 65%
  - Accepted after resubmission and rereview – 40%
  - Declined opportunity to revise and resubmit – 15%
  - Rejected after resubmission and rereview – 10%

During this time, we have benefited greatly from the expertise and assistance of our excellent Editorial Board members as shown on the opening pages of the journal, in addition to the following other reviewers during this period, whom we would like to publicly recognize below:

- Mary Baron, University of North Florida (USA)
- Mark Brock, Cardinal Newman University (USA)
- Pauline Burton, City College of the City University of Hong Kong (Hong Kong)
- Kate Kessler, James Madison University (USA)
- Sky Marsen, Victoria University of Wellington (NZ)
- Molly Hurley Moran, University of Georgia (USA)
- Sara Pace, Lamar University (USA)
- Mark Richardson, George Washington University and Northern Virginia Community College (USA)
- Ling Shi, University of British Columbia (Canada)
- Beth van Es, University of California, Irvine
Upcoming Issues

The journal publishes one open topic issue and one special topic issue per year. Submissions for the first issue (open topic) of Volume 4 (2012) are now being accepted. For best consideration, submit by 30 January 2011. We are especially interested in the following topics for future special topic issues or individual articles in the genres of essay, research, and reflections on practice: Teaching Writing in Elementary School, Teaching Writing in the Disciplines, Teaching Writing Online, Changing Needs for Writing in the Twenty-First Century, Writing Assessment, Education and Professional Development of Writing Teachers. The special topic issues for the next three volumes are:

Upcoming Special Topic Issues

Vol. 2(2) 2010  Plagiarism in the Academy  In production
Vol. 3(2) 2011  Multiliteracies  Guest Editors
               Sherry Taylor and
               Jim Cummins
Vol. 4(2) 2012  Creativity and Writing and Pedagogy  Guest Editor
               Harriet Levin Millan

The Plagiarism in the Academy issue is in production. The contents and authors of the Multiliteracies issue have been agreed with the Guest Editors, Jim Cummins (Ontario Institute of Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Canada) and Sherry Taylor (University of Western Ontario, Canada). We are seeking contributions for the Creativity and Writing Pedagogy issue edited by Harriet Levin Millan (Drexel University, USA).

Call for Contributions to Special Topic Issue, Volume 4, Number 2 (Autumn 2012) Creativity and Writing Pedagogy

Writing & Pedagogy announces a special topic issue on Creativity and Writing Pedagogy guest-edited by Barnard New Women Poet’s Prize winning author, Harriet Levin (Millan), Writing Program Director at Drexel University. The issue aims to present the latest research and practice on creativity as it pertains to writers and writing, which may include theoretical essays and research articles on technology measuring or advancing creativity or on the study of creative methods or practices as these pertain to writing; personal narratives on individual creative writing processes; and reflective practice contributions on
teaching creative writing to college age students, adults, or children. The issue aims to break new ground in offering a comprehensive look, both practical and theoretical, at enhancing learners’ skills as creative thinkers and writers.

Submit detailed outline or article for consideration by December 1, 2010 to:

Harriet Levin Millan
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Volume 2, Number 2 (Autumn 2010). Special Topic: Plagiarism in the Academy

Featured Essay

Not (Entirely) in Their Own Words: Plagiarism, Process, and the Complicated Ethics of School Writing
Cary Moskovitz, Duke University (USA)

Research Matters

Writing from Sources, Writing from Sentences
Rebecca Moore Howard, Patricia Serviss, and Tanya K. Rodrigue, Syracuse University (USA)

Addressing Pedagogy on Textual Borrowing: Focus on Instructional Resources
Zuzana Tomaš, University of Utah (USA)

How Do University Students Attempt to Avoid Plagiarism? A Grammatical Analysis of Undergraduate Paraphrasing Strategies
Casey Keck, San Francisco State University (USA)

Student and Teacher Perceptions of Plagiarism in Academic Writing
Nahla Nola Bacha and Rima Bahous, Lebanese American University (Lebanon)

Reflections on Practice

Teaching Novice Writers Concepts of Academic Honesty and Plagiarism
Jane Suzanne Conzett, Margaret Martin, and Madeleine Mitchell, Xavier University (USA)
**Preventing Plagiarism: Working with What Works**
Mark Lewis Richardson, George Washington University and Northern Virginia Community College (USA), and Tammy Linder, East Georgia College (USA)

**From the e-Sphere**

*Detection Systems for Text-Based Plagiarism: Developments, Principles, Challenges, and the Aftermath*
Wilfried Decoo, Brigham Young University, and Jozef Colpaert, University of Antwerp

**New Books**

Diane Pecorari, *Academic Writing and Plagiarism: A Linguistic Analysis*
Reviewed by Virginia LoCastro, University of Florida (USA)

Wendy Sutherland-Smith, *Plagiarism, the Internet and Student Learning*
Reviewed by Miriam Eisenstein Ebsworth, New York University (USA)

**Volume 3, Number 1 (Spring 2011): Highlights**

**Research Matters**

*“The Job of Teaching Writing”: Teacher Views of Responding to Student Writing*
Dana Ferris, University of California, Davis, Hsiang Liu and Brigitte Rabie, California State University, Sacramento

**Reflections on Practice**

*Teaching Writing and Civic Literacy*
Katherine Kessler, James Madison University (USA)

*An Exchange on High-Stakes Testing: Standardized or Transformative Teaching?*
John Poole, Lincoln Alternative High School and Brigham Young University Idaho (USA)

*A View from Across the Pond*
Sandra Sargent, University of Bedfordshire (UK)

**From the e-Sphere**

*Part II, Writing in a Multiliterate Flat World*
Vance Stevens, The Petroleum Institute, Abu Dhabi (UAE)