

## Editorial

# A Community for Dialogues across Academic Writing Genres, Tools, Student Groups, and Colleagues

In early July, the JoAW Editorial Team convened to discuss the Summer issue and its Editorial. We did so following an unexpected six-week interruption during which the journal's platform, and therefore its website, were unavailable. Although JoAW and its contents were not affected, the situation was frustrating because authors, potential authors, reviewers, and our readers were all unable to access JoAW's website or its submission system. Furthermore, as JoAW's Editorial Team, we were unable to access JoAW's manuscript workflows. Therefore, we would like to begin by thanking our authors, reviewers and readers for their patience throughout this period. We are equally grateful to everyone involved in identifying the cause of the disruption and enabling access to the website and the system so that this Summer issue could move forward.

The disruption created challenges for managing submissions, copyediting, production, and communication. We were unable to follow the various revision processes in the ways we normally do and want to. As a result, we lost momentum and flow as well as our reflective dialogue about the manuscripts. Reading the submissions again as the complete Summer issue, however, has revealed several connections that had not initially stood out to us. The four contributions in this issue address institution-wide literacy development, digital poster assessment, AI-supported writing pedagogy, and the implications of generative AI for writing education. At first glance, these may appear to belong to different conversations. Yet, they all share our pedagogical concerns for effective learning activities relative to intended learning outcomes; they are all concerned in their specific ways with disciplinary discourse literacy; and they all refer to community engagement with continuous improvement through discussing experiences of teaching academic writing. However, a more fundamental running theme in the four pieces surfaces as we place them side by side: the centrality of dialogue.

This theme appears in different ways across the contributions. In **Lennartson-Hokkanen's** discussion of the Writing Boost Project, dialogue is embedded within programme-level workshops that bring together subject lecturers and literacy practitioners to examine teaching practices collectively. Grounded in Academic Literacies theory, the project challenges approaches that locate literacy difficulties within individual students and instead advances a transformative model based on disciplinary expertise, institutional responsibility, and inclusive support. In this piece, collegial dialogue functions as a mechanism for pedagogical and programme development. The balancing act of promoting subject specialists and their disciplinary discourse literacy while also making such literacy transparent and available to students is a demanding collaborative learning and development project. Lennartson-Hokkanen's team strikes us as very successful in facilitating that important dialogue.

**Lu, Awad and Neilson's** contribution describes examination of online poster assessment. The project exemplifies how more deliberate and informed assessment practices also serve as quality learning activities. In their account of the online poster project, dialogue emerges through meaningful asynchronous peer interaction. Their findings suggest that digital posters

do more than diversify assessment formats; they require students to synthesise research through multimodal design while engaging with peers through feedback, questioning, and discussion. Literacy development is therefore intertwined with participation in digital communicative environments where ideas are shared, interpreted, and refined. There is also something appealing about making good use of the asynchronous format, as it allows deeper engagement with the demanding, multimodal knowledge genre of posters while also making the learning environment more inclusive by generating the opportunity and a channel for the students in our classes who might want more time to think and articulate their feedback ideas.

**Muir and Kannelønning** approach dialogue from a different perspective by exploring interactions between researchers and Generative AI systems. Responding to concerns that the apparent fluency of AI-generated text can obscure important rhetorical limitations, they describe a workshop that encourages researchers to engage critically with AI through kairos-based prompting. So, the design of the workshop addresses what many of us are concerned about – Generative AI's inability to really help a writer assess the quality of an argument's support and help the author position their argument. Rather than treating AI as a source of ready-made answers, the workshop positions effective prompting as a rhetorically informed practice that requires users to guide, question, and shape AI responses. An important step in that process, and one that is often forgot, is for writers to probe what their AI tool actually 'knows' about a certain genre or different models for arguments. In this sense, the power of dialogue is obvious, perhaps, as a dialogue with the tool, but there is more to dialogue in this process – testing different structures and rhetorical models for the AI to learn from also accentuates how our academic writing channels are always already in a continuous dialogue between different approaches and schools.

A similar commitment to critical engagement is evident in **Saeed's** review of Medina's *Generative AI in Writing Education*. The review highlights Medina's argument that institutional responses to AI are often shaped by longstanding assumptions about writing, assessment, and authorship. Rather than framing AI as an existential threat, Medina advocates for informed engagement with its technological, pedagogical, and sociolinguistic dimensions, encouraging educators to participate in broader conversations about how writing education might evolve alongside these emerging tools.

What impresses us is that dialogue does more than support learning in these papers. It also shapes how literacy itself is understood. Academic Writing scholars have established the dynamic character of working across academic literacies (Lillis et al. 2015) and have also argued how literacy and argument extend beyond writing alone (Huang & Archer, 2017). Across these contributions, literacy emerges through collaborative reflection among lecturers, asynchronous exchanges between peers, rhetorically informed interactions with AI systems, and critical institutional conversations about the future of writing education. The practices under discussion differ considerably, yet they all foreground literacy as participation in environments where meaning is negotiated, expertise is shared, and knowledge is co-constructed.

We find that, perhaps, the centrality of dialogue is what ultimately connects these four contributions. In Writing Boost, dialogue provides a means for colleagues to rethink literacy practices collectively. In poster assessment, dialogue takes the form of peer questioning and asynchronous exchange. In the two AI-focused contributions, dialogue emerges in interactions between writers and AI systems and in broader conversations about how these technologies should be integrated into the teaching of writing. While the contributions address different concerns, they collectively remind us that learning, writing, and knowledge-making remain fundamentally relational activities.

It strikes us as very appropriate, and promising, that the journal's readership and the EATAW community seemingly effortlessly generate the theme of dialogue in an issue with distinct topics distributed between the pieces. We hope that you will appreciate the insights available to us as we give up some of the myopic perspectives of our respective preferred points-of-view and try to look beyond our silos for the benefit of our colleagues and students.

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## References

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