

## Editorial

# EATAW 2013: Teaching Writing across Languages and Cultures – The Wealth of Diversity in European Contexts

The theme of the Seventh EATAW Conference, held in June 2013 at Central European University in Budapest, was 'Teaching Writing across Languages and Cultures'. The three keynotes of the conference were carefully chosen and adapted to the multilingual and multicultural context that teachers of academic writing in Europe face. Paul Kei Matsuda addressed the need to promote our work in multiple languages and L1-publications in his keynote 'English Only? Exploring the Importance of Academic Writing Across Languages'; Christiane Donahue, in her plenary workshop 'Challenging Loss: Language, Culture, and the Future of Academic Writing Research and Teaching', similarly emphasised the need for us to draw on research published in languages other than English in view of the rich European context; and the closing keynote by Bojana Petrić, 'Revisiting the Meaning of Culture in Academic Writing Research and Pedagogy', further advanced our understanding of 'culture' and our appreciation of the potential of the European environment in terms of teaching as well as research. Not surprisingly, the thirteen contributions that make up this special conference issue reflect the theme of the conference and broad scope of European teaching of academic writing.

We start this volume, however, with an interesting piece of meta-research about EATAW itself. In 'An International Discourse Community, an Internationalist Perspective: Reading EATAW Conference Programs, 2001-2011', Judith Kearns and Brian Turner, longstanding EATAW members from Canada, perform a thought-provoking analysis of the first six EATAW conferences, from Groningen to Limerick. Is EATAW just another writing conference, or does it have its own distinctive character? And perhaps more importantly, how has that character evolved from the founding of the organisation in 2001 to 2011? Kearns and Turner answer these questions and more.

Following this, we turn to two articles that deal with the issue of multilingual writing, both looking at the interaction between German and English. In 'Resource-focused Research for Multilingual Competence in Scientific Writing', Melanie Brinkschulte, Monica-Elena Stoian and Ellen Borges report on the initial results of a study based on interviews conducted with participants of the course 'Academic Writing for Natural Sciences Students', offered by the International Writing Centre at Göttingen University. They examine the use of English and German in different contexts and for different tasks, shedding light on the complexity of multilingual writing competence.

The second article on this theme is Markus Rheindorf and Birgit Huemer's 'Developing a German-English Dictionary of the Common Language of Academia'. It presents an ongoing research project regarding the partial lack of equivalent linguistic means between German and English in academia, presenting preliminary results on the way to mapping the interrelation and sometimes lack of correlation between the two academic languages, a relevant topic for those seeking to understand how scholars function in more than one language.

The next three articles in the collection all examine the issue of second language writing, across Swedish, German and English. In 'Scaffolding Strategies: Enhancing L2 Students' Participation in Discussions about Academic Texts', Maria Eklund Heinonen and Ingrid Lennartson-Hokkanen take a look at some of the pre-writing and scaffolding strategies used in a Swedish writing course for L2 students to foster more effective writing and create empowering learning situations. They show how a diversity of strategies can be successful in helping students to produce more effective written assignments.

We follow this with María José Luzón's 'An Analysis of the Citation Practices of Undergraduate Spanish Students'. Based on a learner corpus of 35 literature reviews by third year BA students in English Studies, Luzón traces students' inadequate performance back to a combination of three lacks: lack of awareness of the purpose of citation, lack of paraphrasing skills and lack of familiarity with the language of citation. The final article in this trio is Anja Voigt and Katrin Girgensohn's piece, entitled 'Peer Tutoring in Academic Writing with Non-Native Writers in a German Writing Center – Results of an Empirical Study'. The writing centre at European University Viadrina in Frankfurt an der Oder is now well established and originally drew on US peer tutoring models. It is therefore interesting to see Voigt and Girgensohn's careful reflection on how their local context and needs in Germany with L2 German writers has led them to adapt and reconsider, and to conclude that the experience of peer tutoring in their context 'can offer recommendations for peer tutoring in general'.

The first group of articles finishes with a study by Luís Filipe Barbeiro, Luísa Álvares Pereira and José Brandão Carvalho, entitled 'Writing at Portuguese Universities: Students' Perceptions and Practices'. Looking at first language writing in Portuguese, this study is a valuable initial attempt to map the difficulties of student writing and the support provided, or lack thereof, based on 1150 student responses to a questionnaire about literacy practices in higher education. While the findings of the study are not always encouraging, it provides a good map of the status quo on which to build, and useful reading for those in other countries who contemplate similar research among their own students.

While the articles discussed so far address academic literacy and multiliteracy, the remainder have a different focus. Both Thomas Armstrong's 'Peer Feedback in Disciplinary Writing for Publication in English: The Case of 'Rolli', a German-L1 novice Scholar' and Geneviève Bordet's 'Labeling Discourse to Build Academic Persona' examine issues related to publishing. Armstrong chooses the approach of a single case, using text history, interviews, and feedback comments to portray the socially-situated story of a novice multilingual writer on a trajectory to successful publication. Bordet, in contrast, looks at PhD abstracts written in English by English and French applicants in several disciplines, so as to identify the factors that lead to success or failure in the case of both native and non-native writers.

These are followed by two rather different genre studies. First, Mira Bekar, Claudia Doroholschi, Otto Kruse and Tatyana Yakhontova, in 'Educational Genres in Eastern Europe: A Comparison of the Genres in the Humanities Departments of three Countries', examine the varying understanding of student genres of writing in the humanities in Romania, Ukraine and Macedonia. They identify significant differences both in use and labelling across the three countries, but a core 'pool' of genres that may be common across countries. This study is valuable in a geographical region that has hitherto been largely passed by when it comes to serious genre research.

On a more micro scale, in 'Research Article Titles and Disciplinary Conventions: A Corpus Study of Eight Disciplines', Robin Nagano studies the title conventions of eight disciplines, four hard sciences and four social sciences, focusing on the use of multiple-unit titles, noun phrases, and initial article use. Data is based on a 3,200-title corpus of titles from research articles published in prestigious journals, and recommendations are made to provide guidance for novice writers.

Two articles from authors across the Atlantic on first-language writing round up this collection. In the first of these, 'Increasing Student Responsibility in Revision Efforts: Redefining and

Restructuring Peer Response with the Millennial Generation', Crystal Bickford presents a structured classroom peer-response activity she calls group conferencing. Students are asked to listen, read, write, respond, discuss, and apply writing techniques so as to learn how to work in a team towards improving their writing. All of these strategies are likely to work equally well with European students, including those working in different languages, whether as L1 or L2.

Finally, in 'Intensive Reflection in Teacher Training: What is it Good For?', Estela Ene and Cassidy Riddlebarger focus on teacher education in the context of a second language writing course examining the effectiveness of an intensive reflective exercise using questionnaires. The method was useful in developing critical thinking, and integration of prior knowledge and new content, and also helpful as a tool for assessing student learning and planning lessons. The education of writing teachers, in Europe at least, is still a very much neglected area, and this final article is a timely contribution.

Returning to the theme of Kearns and Turner's opening article, EATAW 2013 was a rich and uniquely European conference, but one that also went beyond the borders of Europe. The short collection of articles in this edition of the *Journal of Academic Writing* provides a representative vignette of the diversity of both European and world scholarship that continue to mark out EATAW as a diverse and flexible organisation that reflects the growth of writing in Europe and its interaction with writing elsewhere in the world.

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