Editorial

EATAW2021: Selected papers from the 11th Conference of the European Association for the Teaching of Academic Writing, VSB-Technical University of Ostrava (online), Czech Republic, July, 2021

The 11th European Association for the Teaching of Academic Writing (EATAW) conference was initially scheduled to take place face-to-face in Ostrava, Czech Republic, being co-organised by the VSB–Technical University of Ostrava and the Czech Language Institute at the Czech Academy of Sciences. However, amid the uncertain times of the COVID-19 pandemic, the conference moved online. The conference was held on the 7th and 8th July, 2021 and its theme, "*The residence of writing and writing support",* attracted 249 delegates from 39 countries. In planning the conference, the organisers distributed a survey to EATAW members, inquiring about preferences for the conference and the presentation formats. Responding to the views shared by the wider EATAW community, the conference offered multiple presentation formats, including keynotes, themed discussions, research papers, teaching practice papers, symposia, and workshops. The scientific contents were disseminated via *Zoom*, while *Wonder.me* offered a fun space for socialising online.

In the call for papers after the conference, we asked for research papers and shorter pieces, both teaching practice papers and papers related to the invited themed discussions. The current issue is smaller than the usual conference special issues and we attribute this difference to the difficulties related to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the lower number of presentations at the conference, also likely owing to the impact of the pandemic on academic writing specialists, globally, as well as the conference's online format. Nonetheless, we received a number of notable research and teaching practice papers from the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Norway, the UK, and Kazakhstan and we were also happy to see author teams of the themed discussions submit papers, extending and reflecting on their themed discussions at the conference.

Many of the submissions aimed to address several of the questions that guided the conference theme. Interestingly, or maybe understandably, both the themed discussions, i.e., **Anson and Straume**; and **Ganobcsik-Williams et al.**, and the paper by **Reimers** attend to questions related to writing and technology (How do technologies help us?/How digital are we?/How are we affected by the impact of technologies?) in combination with questions such as, "What is our field?". **Dimitriou and Omurzakova** explore questions related to the profession of academic writing teachers, especially "What do we need to know directly to support academic writers at any level?/What else do we need to know to teach academic writers so that they can prosper?". Their work makes a valuable contribution, showing how the teaching of writing has made a difference in the context of so-called foundation courses. Other models at bachelor, master, and doctoral levels were discussed by **Freddi and Tluková**; **Wirenfeldt Jensen and Nordentoft;** and **Muir and Solli**. These papers are of note, as not only do they offer critical perspectives of their models for supporting writing at different levels, these papers also demonstrate how the teaching of writing makes a difference in their contexts. Finally, **Davis** deals with recent changes related to teaching online, attending to the questions: "How has the

residence of writing support changed as we have shifted to working remotely?", suggesting several useful and widely applicable strategies for online writing development.

The contributions of this special issue are organised based on format. Themed Discussions are fore-fronted, raising a number of provocative questions that re-emerge in the issue's subsequent papers. These are followed by four Research Articles and two Teaching Practice Papers, with empirical and practical insights in a variety of burgeoning subfields of academic writing studies. We close the special issue with two Book Reviews that offer critical perspectives on timely contributions to our field that, notably, intersect with the range of themes discussed throughout this special issue.

Themed Discussions

In their Themed Discussion, **Anson and Straume** address the question, "How do technologies help us?", as they ponder the prospective as well as troubling nature of AI-based natural language production systems. As AI tools, including text-generating tools, such as GPT-3, develop at unprecedented speeds, Anson and Straume discuss the remarkable capabilities of such technologies for producing texts that are almost indistinguishable from human-produced texts. Reflecting on the affordances of AI tools and the potential challenges they bring to academic writing teaching, learning, and assessment, the authors caution writing instructors, stating the need for them to brace themselves for new challenges. For example, rather than combatting such tools, Anson and Straume call for writing instructors to embrace them, e.g., by including AI writing tools in writing instruction as sources for reflection, discussion, and higher level learning.

Ganobcsik-Williams et al. have built their paper on a discussion launched at the EATAW 2021 conference panel, "*Writing Tutor Development: Challenges and Opportunities in the Current State of the Art*". Asking what constitutes a writing tutor in contemporary contexts and at the Centre for Academic Writing (CAW) at Coventry University, the paper outlines a range of academic writing support identities and roles. Looking at the conference question of "Who are we?", the authors address the issue of agency in terms of the challenges of enculturating writing tutors into communities of practice, discourse communities, and research networks. Taking CAW as a model, the authors point to the need for varied development pathways in writing tutor development particularly to facilitate the move towards the delivery of online writing provision during and after the global COVID-19 pandemic. The discussion revolves around sustaining professional development, focusing on the role of technology, not only in refashioning academic writing support, but also the roles and practices of Academic Writing Tutors at CAW. In conclusion, the paper raises a number of questions to guide future directions in research on (online) Academic Writing Tutor development and Academic Writing (crisis) Pedagogies.

Research Articles

The first research article focuses on a study related to a tertiary foundation writing course in Kazakhstan. **Dimitriou and Omurzakova** argue that, due to the lack of first-language (L1) reading-to-write education in many post-Soviet countries, English second language (L2) literacy development has become difficult, particularly in English Medium Instruction universities. The study looks at Omurzakova's first-hand experience in the classroom, drawing on and analysing journal entries in her reflective journal. Among a range questions and areas for reflection, one recurring question that frames this paper pertains to asking whether or not it helps students if their tutor had developed their L1-literacy through the same (but chronologically-earlier) system. The reflective work and the tutor's interpretations of classroom literacy problems aim to offer guidance for helping students with the challenging linguistic demands of tertiary study in an L2. Moreover, the study can inform the teaching of low L1-literacy students' writing and metalanguage.

Freddi and Tluková examine the writing needs of engineering and architecture students at two universities, Pavia (Italy) and Brno (Czech Republic) University. With an online questionnaire, they set out to find out how often students write in their L1 and L2 English, what genres they write and what digital tools they use. The aim of obtaining this information is to help faculties at both universities make informed decisions for ESP courses. Comparisons of the results in the two universities pointed to similar student needs and somewhat different experiences in the genres the students use in their writing. Overall, drawing on their results, Freddi and Tluková suggest increasing the presence of some overlooked genres in ESP instruction for architecture and engineering students at both universities, namely CV/online portfolio, but also broadening the array of digital tools to include in writing instruction.

Targeting the writing of Master's theses in Denmark, **Wirenfeldt Jensen and Nordentoft** introduce a concept uncommon to many settings, except for the Scandinavian countries, i.e., writing a Master's thesis in pairs, and the issues such joint high-stakes writing projects bring. They studied four pairs of writers during the process of writing their Master's theses to investigate the strategies they used and how the collaborative writing process affected their identities as writers. Their findings show how the pairs negotiated and assigned largely fixed writing identities at an early stage to set boundaries and build trust. An interesting contribution of this paper is the insight it affords into the strategies the pairs developed to ensure that the joint pair writer identity was not threatened. Considering the highly collaborative nature of today's workplace writing (Bleakney et al., 2022), it is a topic that undeniably deserves more attention.

Moving higher up to doctoral student writing development, **Muir and Solli** share a new way of enabling more advanced English as an additional language (EAL) writers to reflect on their writing development and learning. The authors do so by introducing the writing manifesto as an alternative genre to the traditional reflective essay. In their analysis of 20 doctoral students' manifestos, they show that the manifesto can be a fruitful tool, allowing students to freely, non-academically express and comment on their personal development as they build their research and writerly identity. The manifesto is not intended as a genre to teach but as an outlet for doctoral students' self-expression and a springboard for continuous writing development. In academia, so often tied with strict rules, it is refreshing to see ideas that not only allow the rules to be dissolved but place the doctoral students in the position of the rule-makers. In this capacity, the doctoral students are free to take charge, which is what the manifestos allow them to do. With an important pedagogical benefit, the manifestos undeniably offer teachers an interesting option for facilitating student reflection.

Teaching Practice Papers

Addressing the question of building university-wide writing support, **Reimers** introduces a pilot project, which developed and launched a writing fellow program at a German university. This program provided specific training to peer tutors who were then assigned to work with subject lecturers in a Language and Communication introductory foundation course. The writing fellows helped develop the course writing task, gave initial written and oral feedback to their assigned students, and allowed these entry-level students to revise their course paper before submitting it to the subject lecturer. Reimers shows the numerous positive effects that such early writing intervention can generate for both individual students and the subject lecturers. The pilot ran during the COVID-19 pandemic, which moved instruction online. Under these circumstances, the writing fellow program showed the added benefit of allowing entry-level students to have direct, individualised contact with their assigned writing fellows at a time when contact with the course lecturer in this large class was limited.

In reaction to changes in working environments during the COVID-19 pandemic and the related challenges for conducting online teaching, in her teaching-oriented paper, **Davis** shares eight virtual strategies she has developed during her teaching practice and experience of teaching writing online during the pandemic. The strategies are broadly applicable for the teaching of academic writing and Davis calls on leading communities in academic writing studies, such as EATAW, to facilitate some of these strategies in the future. In particular, Davis suggests that

EATAW could facilitate, "Networks for peer support" as an initiative, by using a forum or link-ups between student writers at different institutions, supported by EATAW member writing tutors in multiple locations. Another useful strategy is "Writing events'" which may also be held online and the dates for which could be further promoted by the likes of EATAW. All the strategies are shared as attested ways of supporting students online or through blended learning formats. It will be interesting to see if the EATAW community takes these recommendations on board, by encouraging the EATAW board and wider community to facilitate online networks and offer a hub for online writing recommendations and writing events news.

Book Reviews

As mentioned above, the special issue closes with two book reviews. Although they are not directly related to the conference programme, their topics fit into the conference theme. The first review is a book review of *Creating Digital Literacy Spaces for Multilingual Writers* by **Bowling-Johnson**, and the second text is a book review of *What is Good Academic Writing? Insights into Discipline-Specific Student Writing* by **le Roux**. These reviews offer critical perspectives on recent, exciting contributions to the field. Moreover, the focus on multilingual writers, (digital) literacies, technology, and the teaching of academic writing offer a critical insight into texts that extend the discussions occurring in this special issue.

Finally, as the conference organisers and guest editors of this special issue, we would like to express our thanks for two great opportunities/challenges over the last year and a half. First, for having the opportunity to host the EATAW 2021 conference, and second, for having the opportunity to guest-edit the JoAW 2022 special issue. We would like to thank the EATAW board and the editorial board of JoAW for their support. Moreover, there are many others to thank, namely the authors, and the reviewers. The final thanks go to the those who helped with the layout and copyediting (see the credits). Thank you, all.

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