Editorial

Thinking outside the academic writing box

The title of this editorial is adapted from a line in the book review published in this issue of the *Journal of Academic Writing* (*JoAW*). The review is written by Livingstone, who argues for the importance of texts that push, "those of us in academia, who have become too fixed in our ways, who are afraid of thinking outside-the-box." This line reflects a core value of *JoAW*, as the journal has always endeavoured to serve as a reflexive space for innovation and development for EATAW members and the wider community of researchers and practitioners interested in academic writing. The various genres *JoAW* publishes that go beyond the traditional research article, the formative approach it takes to publishing, and the value it attributes to open-access, practice-oriented research demonstrate just some of the ways in which *JoAW* has aimed to push boundaries in academic writing research and practice.

Reflecting this facet of *JoAW,* arguably, what best connects the papers that compose this issue is their efforts to offer alternative perspectives on and innovative contributions to research and practice in academic writing. These papers offer perspectives that draw on interdisciplinary research, perspectives that reflect developments in academic writing practices and pedagogies during a time of crisis, perspectives on less studied areas of academic writing, and reflections on the past with projections to the future. The international spread of the contributors undoubtedly has played a key role in the convergence of the differing points of view offered in this issue, with submissions engaging with academic cultures from Australia, Canada, England, Germany, North Macedonia, Scotland, and the USA, contextualised for a European audience. Overall, this issue is composed of four research articles, two dialogues responding to previous *JoAW* publications, and one book review. In presenting the articles in the issue, this editorial reflects on how they each can help us all to 'think outside-the-box' when informing our academic writing research and practice.

Research articles

The first paper of the issue, by **Hill and Duffy**, is entitled 'A palimpsest of practice-led enquiry. A conversation' which offers a pathway for approaching barriers to academic writing, through the dialogic presentation of a practice-led inquiry approach. Hill and Duffy introduce the idea of the palimpsest as a metaphor for the writer's provenance by discussing how a writer's provenance, including factors such as language, culture, and experiences, influences their creative practice. The authors emphasize the importance of exploring and understanding one's provenance as a practitioner and they argue that practice-led inquiry involves reflecting on one's practice, identifying irregularities, and interrogating one's tacit knowledge into new, informed practices. In the paper, the impact of provenance on second language writers is examined through a study of a writer experiencing writer's block. The reflections of the writer accompanied by guidance from her critical friend leads to a deeper exploration of her cultural provenance and its

integration within her writing. Overall, this paper offers an interesting, holistic, and theoretically and culturally situated approach to tackling barriers to creative practices.

While the use of practice-led inquiry for interrogating academic writing practices reflects, in itself, an innovative practice, the medium through which this research is presented also pushes the boundaries of the research article genre. The paper is presented as a dialogic conversation between a practitioner and her critical friend, guiding the reader through the processes of reflection and self-interrogation. Holding to this format, the authors not only deliver a strongly contextualised account of a writer's difficulties in engaging in creative practices, but they do so in a way to emulate the practice-led inquiry approach which readers can seek to recreate with or as critical friends.

The second paper of the issue centres on an interrogation of academic writing pedagogies in times of crisis. **Stojanovska-Ilievska**'s paper 'On the perceived usefulness and effectiveness of Eduflow as a supplementary tool for online writing instruction' offers a valuable perspective on the development of online writing pedagogies during the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the paper discusses the application of Eduflow, an online learning management system (LMS), in an academic writing course. The paper highlights how the shift to online instruction presented challenges in creating social spaces for writing development that facilitated activities like peer review. In so doing, it explores students' perceptions of the usefulness and effectiveness of Eduflow for online writing instruction and its value for facilitating interaction and peer review in distance, online learning. Looking to both pre- and post-pandemic contexts, the paper reflects on online pedagogy and the integration of technology in teaching academic writing. Recognising the critical importance of socialised learning in academic writing pedagogies and the challenges of facilitating such learning in distance, online contexts, this study provides valuable insights for instructors and institutions seeking to enhance online writing instruction through the use of LMS platforms like Eduflow.

Operating in a similar timeframe to Stojanovska-Ilievska, **Zhims**' paper on 'The Power Hour of Writing: An empirical evaluation of our online writing community' presents a study of writing development activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, offering guidance for the implementation of writing supports in the power hour format. The article discusses the concept of the 'Power Hour of Writing' (PHOW) as a form of academic writing provision in a university setting. Recognising the challenges academics face in creating time and space for writing, and the barriers to engaging with writing communities during the pandemic, the paper proposes an intervention that creates an online community setting for academic writing. Central tenets to this community require that participants in the PHOW have protected time for writing, be accountable for their progress, and receive dedicated writing support. As a response to the COVID-19 pandemic's online pivot, Zhims' study demonstrates the flexibility of the academic writing community during this challenging time. This flexibility is embodied in the PHOW team's reflexive efforts to facilitate engagement and embed writing development within academics' pandemic writing practices and the notable uptake in attendance at and engagement with the PHOW provision during the COVID-19 pandemic appears to be a direct result of this effort.

Finally, **Siegel**'s paper, 'Written notes and listening comprehension: A correlation study' offers insight into an area of academic writing that is typically occluded: student notes. Focusing on this form of writing, Siegel demonstrates the value of analysing notetaking as a strategy for learning. The paper discusses different approaches to notetaking and explores the cognitive processes involved in notetaking, including listening, writing, reading, concentrating, using memory, and thinking. Based on an evaluation of information units (IUs) and their relationship to test performance, the paper provides an overview of previous research conducted in both first language and second language contexts. In so doing, it highlights the positive correlations

between notetaking and test performance. Though notetaking may not initially seem to reflect the typical forms of academic writing one might expect to see in *JoAW*, this study demonstrates that, as a form of academic writing that is directly linked to learning, notetaking can be a valuable for students who wish to develop disciplinary knowledge needed to effectively develop their expertise. Likewise, by engaging with notetaking in an explicit way, this paper demonstrates that learners can both learn relevant content and develop pathways for integrating writing into their self-regulation strategies.

Dialogues and book review

The dialogues published in this issue offer current perspectives on previously published work in *JoAW*. **Horner's** dialogue, 'Privatised academic writing: Reflections on access, knowledge, and policy' responds to Catalina Neculai's 2018 paper on the privatisation of academic writing development by arguing for the need to recognise the character of academic literacies development and the policies governing that development as always emergent. In this short paper, Horner situates Neculai's paper as serving to reveal the agents and identities behind privatisation in academic writing and calls for more research to bring recognition to the work, and the workers in privatised contexts.

The second dialogue, by **Curry**, 'How should digital tools for writing be evaluated? Reflections from digital pedagogies and applied linguistics' responds to Schcolnik (2018), by considering the use of digital tools for writing development in light of advances in digital pedagogies and applied linguistics. Curry focuses on the intersection between pedagogy and technology and reflects on the implications of Schcolnik's paper in light of changes amid the COVID-19 online pivot and the development of AI technologies, such as Chat GPT. Recognising the challenges of working on such shifting sands, Curry stresses the need to situate our practices pedagogically, by drawing on our knowledge of how people learn and using technology to facilitate and amplify these practices.

Finally, the book review of Herzogenrath's *New Perspectives on Academic Writing: The Thing That Wouldn't Die* by **Livingstone** offers a critical appraisal of the text. Livingstone argues that the book, while complex at times, contains a bounty of riches. Grounded in reality and theoretically driven, Livingstone reports on how the book inspired reflection and development, by focusing on new approaches and technologies that can be brought into everyday teaching practices. Seeing Horner's dialogue as an extended critique of a facet of academic literacies less studied, Curry's dialogue as a recontextualisation of Schcolnik's paper following the global online pivot, and Livingstone's review as an interrogation of the new, emerging, and innovative practices discussed by Herzogenrath, together these three short papers further extend the focus of this issue as one that facilitates thinking outside-the-academic writing-box.

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