

# FLOW

Foreign  
Language  
Opportunities  
*in* Writing

Edited by  
Jan Majer and Łukasz Salski

## **PREFACE**

The skill of writing effectively has always been considered one of the biggest challenges of foreign language learning and teaching, yet it is only recently that we have witnessed renewed interest in theoretical and practical aspects of composing written discourse in L2. As a result, composition instruction has come to assume a more important position than it held in the heyday of communicative language teaching. The idea for the present volume emerged precisely from that growing interest on the part of applied linguists and methodologists in L2 writing pedagogy and research undertaken in educational settings where the target language is not regularly used outside the classroom context, i.e. where it is a foreign, not a second, language, most articles referring directly to the EFL context in Poland. The papers collected here aim to show diverse approaches to the subject in question.

The straightforward lay-out of the book is made up of fifteen chapters arranged in three sections. Thus, in Part I, foreign language writing is viewed from different perspectives in five contributions. In the opening chapter, Jan Zalewski reflects on the situation in Polish tertiary education, and concludes that Polish academic institutions are faced with the challenge of the increasing number of high school graduates taking up university education. Next, Mirosław Pawlak presents a psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic rationale as well as practical implications for the use of output-based teaching procedures moving gradually from focus on accuracy to communication. In the third chapter, Monika Kusiak discusses mentalistic and sociocultural perspectives on foreign language reading, a skill basic to writing. She suggests classroom activities that can be used to develop creative reading skills. In the next contribution, Łukasz Salski ponders about the nature of foreign language writing, which is clearly different than writing in a native or second language. He proposes a graphic model to render the intricacies of foreign language writing. Finally, Paweł Scheffler and Marcin Cinciała report on a study exploring the correlation of students' knowledge of grammatical rules and their ability to correct formal errors.

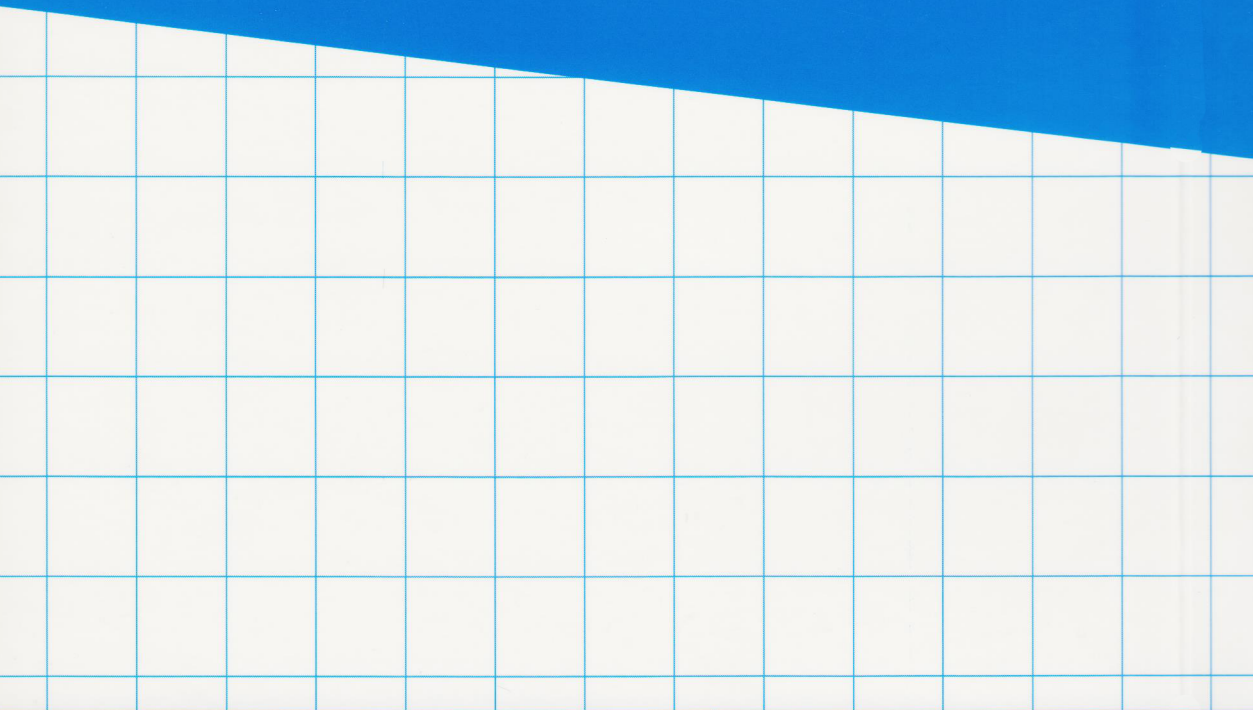
Part II contains five chapters concerned with researching foreign language writing. In the first of these, Marion Colledge challenges the current manuals of academic writing claiming that at the BA level, students need more support in structuring the literature review sections of their dissertations. Then Mira Bekar examines self-reported problems revealed by a questionnaire-based study, and concludes that L1, as well as L2, students should be taught sentence structure, and that L2 writing can be facilitated by the use of visuals. In the subsequent contribution, Małgorzata Adams-Tukiendorf discusses the results of a small-

scale study which indicate that students with lower scores on a creativity test tend to write longer texts. Next, Damian Picz examines the authenticity of the Cambridge Proficiency in English exam paper 2 (writing) tasks, and concludes that the examination does not test real-life writing. In the closing chapter of the middle section, Przemysław Krakowian elaborates on a possibility of applying a research tool for computerized analysis of propositional density in a written language corpus.

In Part III of the present book, the focus of inquiry shifts to the practical aspects of teaching foreign language writing. In the first chapter of this section, Ann Mott demonstrates how techniques used for tutoring in writing centers can be used – in a context where no writing center facility is available – as regular writing classroom activities. In the chapter that follows, Krzysztof Majer stresses that the sentence, the basic unit of any text, should also be the basic unit of writing instruction. The author argues further that the ability to write captivating sentences leads to mastery in composing texts. The next contribution is by Agata Klimczak, who uses the genre approach to writing to address the cultural, linguistic, motivational, and didactic problems of teaching the formal letter of complaint. After that, Anna Parr-Modrzejewska and Patrycja Ostrogska present a variety of practical ideas for activities that foreign language teachers can use to enhance their students' motivation to write. And in the final study of the third section, as well as the entire volume, Katarzyna Chojnacka and Łukasz Salski show how letter writing can be made meaningful and authentic, and argue that Amnesty International Urgent Actions can also serve as an opportunity for examination practice.

It is hoped that the papers assembled in this collection will contribute to both research and practice in the field of composing foreign language written discourse. Besides offering suggestions for further explorations in this area, the book also encourages better writing pedagogy with applications in a range of teaching contexts. We therefore trust that readers will find the present volume both relevant and useful.

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