



Introduction

Magnus Gustafsson

Andreas Eriksson

CHALMERS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Teachers of academic writing across European languages meet every two years for a conference to share research findings, pedagogical approaches, and to discuss new and old challenges. Having access to such a community is of course an asset. This collection grows out of the 10th conference of the European Association for the Teaching of Academic Writing (EATAW) in 2019. The EATAW conferences and the publications from them, exemplify how drawing on, and contributing to, the collective wisdom of colleagues is essential to our professionalism. Given the range and quality of the research presented at the conference, the call for papers was a joint one with the *Journal of Academic Writing (JoAW)*, and the special issue from the conference (<https://publications.coventry.ac.uk/index.php/joaw/index>) was published in December 2020.

There is a natural overlap in topics and research approaches between the two publications but the contribution of a collection like this is the extended studies it allows. Chapters are twice as long or more than the article-length publications available in the special issue. The research areas and interests are very similar but the scope possible in the collection chapters is simply not an option in the special issue. There is also, possibly, a slight change of character between the *JoAW* articles and the collection chapters. Since the collection is a much slower publication, the findings, conclusions, and recommendations communicated in the collection chapters are slightly less time sensitive. One shared denominator in the chapters is the element of discussing models, approaches, and frameworks more than individual results. Needless to say, this is a difference of degree only.

The 2019 conference explored the theme “Academic writing at intersections—Interdisciplinarity, genre hybridization, multilingualism, digitalization, and interculturality,” and the contributions to this collection focus on the sorts of choices we face as teachers of academic writing and, indeed, as writers who seek publication as we stand at various intersections. Intersections explored in the chapters include our use of technology. It is true most of us increased the use of technology in the 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 academic years, and we got better at using different platforms and applications. We

also, however, need to continue questioning each choice and application of technology. What are the effects on learning with its use and what are the, possibly conflicting, assumptions about learning with a specific technology? Another recurring intersection we tend to face very often is that of choosing supervision approaches. We need to be able to assess what the respective student learning profiles expect and need at any given point during a learning process. While that requires situational awareness, such choices are also informed by our own experiences and fundamental assumptions about learning. A third intersection comes with our needing to scaffold writing processes. We continuously negotiate what we know about writing and publication process variations and contextual challenges. Without such negotiation, optimizing supervision and writing development is even more challenging. A fourth category of intersections occur within and across our shifting contexts. Most EATAW members find themselves in translingual conditions addressing multiple languages and often facilitating learning in English-medium education. The translation or adaption of approaches between different international higher education systems and publication traditions constantly require us to explore and expand our positions as teacher-researchers in relation to traditions and canons—the center. The individual chapters in this collection address these recurring topics and offer an entry into the shared conversation of the EATAW community.

As expected in EATAW work, most chapters negotiate pedagogical intersections in one way or another. One of those concerns, as expected in EATAW with its multilingual contexts, is that several chapters address, directly or indirectly, the negotiation of language use and translanguaging. On the one hand, EATAW members obviously need to promote writing development in the respective first languages of their many higher education systems. This often involves relying both on the tradition and history of the local or regional context as well as on translating or adapting what might be done in international contexts. As we move from first cycle levels (bachelor level) into the second and third cycles (master and Ph.D. levels) promoting student mobility, language diversification increases and any one writing process or supervision approach needs testing and adjusting to an ever more heterogeneous student body. So, language use, educational backgrounds, and interdisciplinary contexts prompt added attention to writing processes and supervision practices.

It is obviously true that the emergency remote teaching we have all experienced since spring 2020 has accentuated the need to also navigate and negotiate technology and the challenges and affordances it comes with. This pedagogical focus is implicit in some chapters and explicitly addressed in two chapters. There is a need for us to be well-informed about the assumptions

and limitations of any tool or platform we choose to use. Therefore, beginning to discuss how to assess the tools and applications we consider is a critical step for the community.

The EATAW context is also one characterized by significant organizational variation. Coming out of these different contexts and traditions, the chapters emphasize the constant negotiation of theory, frameworks, and approaches that may have been initially articulated in other contexts or for different conditions in the past. The strength of much EATAW work is precisely this negotiation of the situated character of our respective contexts and our use of “theory” as these affect decisions about writing assignments, supervision approaches, research designs, as well as institutional and support for teachers, students, and researchers.

Chapter Outlines

The first part of the collection has work from Europe and beyond and includes three chapters elaborating on two of the keynotes from the conference. In addition to the empirical data-driven work in the studies conducted, the collection also provides three additional and important overviews. One is an interview-based history of the 20-year-old association. The second is an impressive summary of the many ways writing instruction, research support and support for teaching and learning is organized across the many different higher education systems in Europe including a vision for steps forward. The third overview is an important discussion of the constant negotiation of centre—periphery including positions of the semi-periphery in issues and discussions concerning writing studies, writing instruction, and writing for publication in English as a second or foreign language.

The collection opens with a look at 20 years of the association. We believe readers who are new to the community might benefit from this background as they later take on the following chapters with elaborations on the studies that informed two of the keynotes and five additional studies conducted based on presentations delivered at the conference. In this sense, the nine chapters we offer from the 2019 conference in the first part of the collection exemplify a sample of the issues of interest in the community. The production process of the collection coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic and while authors have had an opportunity to add comments about the pandemic where relevant, this collection does not focus on the impact COVID-19 has had on our research, processes, and pedagogies. That topic might receive more coverage in the publications from the EATAW2021 conference. This 2019 collection emphasizes the continual negotiations, the flexibility and tenuousness

of our positions as writing researchers and teachers in EATAW.

Zimmerman offers a 20-year history of the association. While the history of EATAW can likely be traced in additional ways, this interview study is the first of its kind and very important as a way of documenting the evolution of EATAW over 20 years, a history often lacking in associations and one that provides necessary reflection on our values and purposes as a field within our contexts. Zimmerman summarizes the recurring themes of the association's development from interviewing a number of colleagues with connections to the history of EATAW. Current and past board members get to articulate reasons for establishing EATAW and what has driven them to maintain or help develop the association. Overseas colleagues get to point at what a European community means to them and how it has affected scenes outside Europe. The chapter also accounts for the work that went and goes into the *Journal of Academic Writing* as well as the various phases of the work the EATAW board has been involved in.

Chris Anson and Karen Head gave a joint keynote at the 2019 conference. Here, **Head** describes and discusses two parallel processes of exploring the roles and conditions for technology in our learning environments. Her account of the MOOCs trend and the work of designing and developing one for academic writing provides an insightful view and a set of issues with assumptions of learning in MOOCs. Similarly, our respective learning platforms, accentuated by the pandemic in 2020 and 2021, also come with at times troublesome assumptions and learning philosophies that do not necessarily promote the processes and the learning activities we would prefer for teaching academic writing. And, so, we find ourselves needing to share workarounds.

Anson's chapter from the joint keynote first elaborates on the assumptions and affordances of the various tools we might consider using. He presents us with a brief history of how our belief and trust in instructional technology has evolved from what may have been a naïve quasi-Skinnerian philosophy to more recent tools with additional affordances. But no tool is perfect or even suitable for all situations. Therefore, Anson offers a heuristic for helping colleagues decide whether or not to use a particular tool. Does it, in fact, hold the potential we need, and does it meet the requirements of inclusive support that facilitates disciplinary writing development as well as writing to learn? The tool Anson offers helps readers make more informed decisions based on a critical analysis of the tools and platforms available to us and our students.

Castelló, who offered the second keynote at the conference, takes a close longitudinal look at the writing processes of Ph.D. students. She follows the drafting and revision of articles, and we get to see how arduous the transition to writing for publication can be, even if we provide the support of some-

thing like an eight-week writing workshop. We believe many colleagues will recognize the challenges and the long processes; in this chapter, however, we also get additional perspectives for further understanding the processes. Castelló provides information also on the networking of the students and their self-assessed journeys of development. As we get to see connections between revision impact and the simultaneous aspects of the students' development, we begin to see a more systemic or holistic picture of graduate and professional writing development.

Machura studies an increasingly important challenge in education globally—what are the effects of studying in English medium education (EME) contexts and how can we help students and faculty reap the benefits of EME while also coping with the challenges? The research context is one of close collaboration between content specialists and English-specific-purposes (ESP) specialists on a multilingual interdisciplinary management degree program. Such integration of language or communication development into subject courses, rather than treating communication and language as stand-alone competences to be practiced, appeals since language is the carrier for learning and since, therefore, distinguishing between *language* and *content* is not really possible. Together, the team developed writing intensive assignments to promote learning and a shared discourse. While the study is set in Germany, it emphasizes the translingual affordances of English medium education and English as a lingua franca. The study shows how students' writing and self-assessment indeed improve along some dimensions and how faculty become more aware of the importance of a shared approach to writing development. An additional and important insight from the study is how our educational contexts limit the research designs available to us and how our interpretation of results is heavily situated and contextualized. This challenge of evaluating interventions and student learning in them is further accentuated for EATAW members as we try to adapt studies and interventions between our various higher education sites.

Dengscherz presents a case study of Austrian translation studies students' writing processes and argues that focusing exclusively on activities risks missing crucial aspects of writing processes. She continues to outline a model that also includes a number of factorial conditions. By specifying functions and effects of the challenges students face with heuristic and rhetorical requirements and by allowing room for the specifics of any one writing situation, Dengscherz arrives at a rich dynamic description of writing processes based on her cases. Her account of previous descriptions of writing processes and her addition of translingual dimensions of writing processes provide a good example of how the EATAW community and its conversation can enrich the

research and development in writing studies through its negotiation of central concepts in view of the numerous situated contexts it draws from.

Ankersborg and Pogner exemplify another closer look at the way in which our different educational contexts and traditions influence our negotiation of EATAW concerns. They describe and analyze supervisory roles and models and argue that a shift in responsibility can be detected in their Danish problem-oriented learning context compared to some models and roles described in the literature from contexts where English is a dominant language. Based on interviews with students, the study arrives at a matrix for supervisor roles and models based on student preferences at the master's level and finds that the partnership model is the one that students prefer. This partnership model enables a supervisor multiple roles including being a knowledge expert, a methods supervisor, and a process supervisor. It is also a model that allows the student far more room to negotiate a way forward with the supervisor.

Melonashi et al. account for a large sub-study in a five-year European COST project (<https://www.werelate.eu/>) exploring the shared dimensions and values across the many different ways of organizing support for writing, research, and teaching and learning at European universities. With data collected from 252 colleagues from universities across 31 European countries, they show first the degree of variation in support and the management assumptions that might explain the decisions for formats and levels of ambition in supporting these overlapping facets of university activity and academic writing. They also account for the suggestions resulting from the voices in the data; one recurring dimension of these visions, again, is the situated character of each context and the constant negotiation of core and periphery. They ask a question and provide a way to reflect on what we all must continually revisit: Is the model that grew out of the core really applicable in the specific context?

Zenger and Pill present a study that in many ways is pivotal to the EATAW scene. Interestingly, they do this from a site outside Europe as they account for and offer an analytical framework for the publishing work of Lebanese researchers and suggest that these researchers can be considered to be located in the semi-periphery. The study is important precisely because in a discussion of negotiating our respective contexts and conditions. As can be seen in the complex context of Lebanon, our relative geographical, political, linguistic, disciplinary, and conceptual locations and conditions problematize the mere concept of center-periphery. Situating and positioning our work in relation to a sense of core, a peripheral, and a semi-peripheral position becomes a recurring challenge for EATAW researchers as well as for the students whose writing development we aim to empower. Being successful in such an endeavor requires the kind of creative adjustments the researchers in

the chapter exemplify. Building models for understanding such challenging knowledge production dynamics is a necessary task for the EATAW and other writing studies communities.

The second part of the collection provides reflections on the collection chapters and the image they generate of EATAW work. We asked the EATAW chair **Leijen** to comment on the content and we similarly asked **Dafouz**, who gave a keynote at the conference, to add her perspective. Beyond the conference and the association, we asked our colleagues in two other European communities to reflect on the studies presented. **Vandermeulen, Meulemans, Paesen, and Limpo** relate the nine chapters to the work that is done in the EARLI Sig Writing sphere (<https://earli.org/SIG12>) and **Wilkinson** offers his view of the work in the collection from the point of view of Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education (ICLHE, <https://iclhe.org>) and our work supporting writing. The fifth reflection takes us outside Europe for a glimpse of writing studies in Latin America. **Espindola** reflects on the research in the collection from the point of view of the Latin American Association of Writing Studies in Higher Education and Professional Contexts (ALES, <https://www.estudiosdelaescritura.org>).

Trying to Get a Sense of EATAW

As expressed multiple times in keynotes, presentations, and workshops during the EATAW2021 conference “The residence of writing and writing support” (<https://www.eataw2021.org/>), describing something like an *EATAW profile* would be worthwhile. As an association, we are continuously at work on that rewarding task. The contributions in this collection are part of that rewarding long-term project of understanding our EATAW context.

In short, the collection does not provide an overview nor really a profile or state-of-the-art account of the research and development in the EATAW community. What we believe it offers is an account of the multidimensional and situated environment facing the community. It picks up some of the issues in an ongoing process of negotiating choices at intersections. Our respective situated contexts often prompt different responses, interpretations, and reaction to the themes, frameworks, languages, and philosophies we face. The collection, therefore, provides an insight into our negotiations and models on which colleagues might base their own decisions in a tangent situation.

However, we also need to distinguish between something vaguely thought of as *European writing studies* and *EATAW work*. EATAW publications definitely form a subgroup of European writing studies but there are multiple organizations, associations, and research programs with all their individu-

al researchers that are similarly dedicated to promoting the shared field of writing studies in Europe. We have captured a limited representation of that dimension of the tangent communities in the closing reflections, which we hope add further insights to the chapters.

Needless to say, one of the main and lasting motivation factors for the association was, has been, and is to provide a lively forum for discussing these many negotiations. These chapters contribute to that discussion, and we know the suggestions, conclusions, and recommendations brought to the table by these authors will spur continued conversation and future publications. In this way, we continue to develop our 20-year-old association such that it remains dynamic, progressive, and inclusive in the eyes of new and veteran members.