Voices, identities, negotiations and conflicts: Writing academic English across cultures
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The growing complexity in critical scholarship has given rise to the politics, struggles and tensions in writing. In this thematic strand of research, investigators have turned their attention to problematizing the seemingly essentialist and positivistic tradition of writing pedagogy by raising questions on the impact of structures of inequality, the search for agency and the struggle for third spaces.

Phan Le Ha and Baurain’s volume aptly reflects on this critical stance as it features a rich collection of papers that use a variety of theoretical and methodological frameworks. The collection has 12 chapters and is conveniently divided into two sections: Pedagogical and Psychological Journeys and Moral and Political Explorations. In chapter 1, Viete explores the rich intersections of language, creative writing and ethics in order to unpack the voices of hybridity. Also, she argues that teachers need to rethink practices that accommodate diversity in language use and creativity. Phan Le Ha, in chapter 2, challenges the existing notions of norms in standard language through an examination of Vietnamese and English academic writing in terms of argument development, coherency and cohesion. She claims that value practices embedded in politics greatly influence educators’ beliefs on literate forms and cultural influences in writing. Similar to Ha’s paper, Wang’s contribution is devoted to understanding the perceptions and practices of Chinese post-graduate students in academic writing in English. The investigation revealed that aside from linguistic problems, the students’ struggles
appear to be attributed to notions of audience. In chapters 4 and 5, both delve into different dimension of critical thinking. Tran’s case study on internal negotiations of critical thinking in academic settings among international students reveals different categories that show learners’ engagement, reflexivity and processing of knowledge production in demonstrating critical thinking in writing tasks. On the other hand, Hang explores staff perceptions on the development of critical thinking skills through writing. Aside from typical perceptions of critical thinking (analysis, evaluation and skepticism), Hang’s study emphasizes the need for teachers to develop strategies in structuring tasks and providing constructive feedback in facilitating the development of critical thinking skills among students. In chapter 6, McPherron investigates self-assessment of students in academic writing in a Chinese university. Interestingly, the types of comments made by students in portfolios show the mingling of insights concerning personal and professional growth as they develop favorable values in their struggle to learn academic writing.

The second section, which delves into the moral and political explorations of academic writing, opens with Baurain’s (chapter 7) contribution to the moral aspects of plagiarism from a cross-cultural perspective. His paper tackles a range of issues like intellectual property and cultural differences in language use which are central to his argument that moral duties of teachers should be founded on trust in students’ capacity in writing. Gu and Brooks in chapter 8 outline key stages in plagiarism among students. Specifically, they argue that different learning strategies are employed by students in grappling with complexities of avoiding plagiarism in academic writing. Similarly, Thompson’s case study (chapter 9) problematizes the notions of common knowledge and production of local knowledge in the context of academic writing. She posits that questions of agency, power relations and intertextuality are important in order to understand the complex nature of plagiarism. For chapter 10, Mukundan teases out the tensions between localized conditions of English Language Teaching (ELT) writing in Malaysia and influences of global scholarship in the profession. Interestingly, this chapter explicitly cites socio-political factors apparent in the community that have impacted directions of ELT in the country. Capping off the section, Piscioneri proposes a model of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) that reflects the pragmatic, critical and critical-pragmatic stance. It also considers aspects of an EAP program with the emergence of multilteracies and integration of technology. Tupas’ coda excellently sums up the collection by emphasizing that writing is founded on structures of inequality. Specifically, academic writing can be understood in the context of material, ideological and political struggles of learners.
As a whole, this collection coherently meshes different perspectives on social, political and economic influences on academic writing. This is apparent as the papers featured here document cases involving struggles of non-native speakers learning to write in English in academic contexts. Likewise, these struggles are not only discussed in the context of classroom processes, but the wider context of global inequality, which has perpetuated deficiency-oriented models of problematizing writing.

In terms of readership, this volume is quite accessible and may be of interest to graduate students and researchers specializing in TESOL given the multidisciplinary nature of this collection. Likewise, teachers in ESL and EFL settings may find this volume a welcomed addition to their resources for professional development.

Overall, this volume’s greatest strength is its goal of unpacking different complexities concerning writing pedagogy, which will give new spaces for discussion and constructive debate in the coming years.