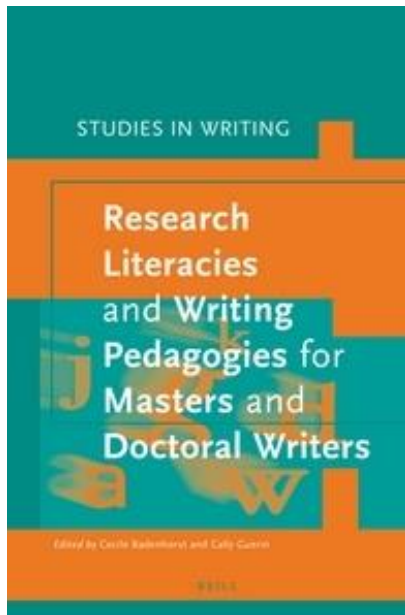


## BOOK REVIEW

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### SCHOLARLY WRITING SUPPORT FOR PLURILINGUAL GRADUATE STUDENTS IN GLOBAL HIGHER EDUCATION

**Cecile Badenhorst and Cally Guerin (Eds.).** RESEARCH LITERACIES AND WRITING PEDAGOGIES FOR MASTERS AND DOCTORAL WRITERS, Volume 31 (2016), Leiden: Brill Publishing. 435 pp., ISBN 9789004304321; E-ISBN 9789004304338.

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Part of a series entitled *Studies in Writing*, Badenhorst and Guerin's timely volume is chock-full of insightful contributions on the complexity of practices, policies, and pedagogies surrounding graduate<sup>1</sup> students' scholarly writing. This comprehensive volume, divided into five separate sections, includes pieces aimed at highlighting the individual and collective experiences and (pedagogical) responses to a changing landscape of research and writing at global research-intensive universities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Providing in-depth perspectives from multiple vantage points (graduate student, writing instructor, writing researcher, thesis supervisor), this collection should be of acute interest to those responsible for the production, instruction, and adjudication of graduate student writing across global contexts.

#### **PART I: Setting the scene for twenty-first century researchers**

*1. Post/Graduate Research Literacies and Writing Pedagogies*  
Cecile Badenhorst & Cally Guerin

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<sup>1</sup> I use the term *graduate* in reference to Masters and Doctoral studies.

In Part I, Badenhorst and Guerin foreground this volume's salient themes, including emerging scholars' (affective) challenges navigating the research writing journey and the efficacy of varying (multimodal) writing pedagogies employed to assist these scholars in differing global contexts. They thoughtfully frame research and writing practices within a broad conceptual lens of academic literacies through which research writing is understood as a fundamentally social practice (Lea & Street, 2014; Lillis & Scott, 2007). Importantly, they draw attention to the affective concerns abounding from the negotiated relations of power when students take on new identities as they shift from "the margins to the centre of discourse [communities]" (p. 12) during their graduate studies. Of note, the authors suggest that among the myriad challenges facing graduate student research writers is the conservative nature of institutions of higher education in a neo-liberal era, where pressures to meet increasing publishing expectations alongside epistemological and discursive norms potentially stifle creativity in research writing. Badenhorst and Guerin further point to the *affective* challenges graduate students face, including feelings of isolation and "de-authorisation" (p. 14) as their texts are shaped by what Lillis and Curry (2010) call English language and academic "literacy brokers" (p. 93).

## **PART II: Publication literacies**

### *2. Connecting the Dots: Writing a Doctoral Thesis by Publication*

Cally Guerin

### *3. Writing for Scholarly Publication in a Canadian Higher Education Context: A Case Study*

Pejman Habibie

### *4. Writing-for-Publication: Online Pedagogy for Post/Graduate Research Writing*

Natalia V. Smirnova

### *5. Challenges for Brazilian Post/Graduate Students Writing in the Academy: Insights for Future Pedagogical Interventions*

Marília Mendes Ferreira

Part II of this volume presents contributions investigating writing for publication pedagogies aimed at doctoral students studying both within *centres* of knowledge production (e.g. Canada and Australia) as well as in what are seen as more *semiperipheral* global contexts (e.g. Brazil, Russia) where plurilingual<sup>2</sup> scholars are using English as an additional language (Bennett, 2015). An important contribution to scholarship in the burgeoning area of English for research publication purposes, this section highlights not only the increasing pressures on

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<sup>2</sup> Throughout this review I use the terms *plurilingual* and *EAL* to refer to scholars using English as an additional language when writing for publication.

emerging<sup>3</sup> global scholars to achieve publication of research articles in their varying fields (Guerin, this volume; Hyland, 2015) but also the quest for better understanding the myriad challenges facing novice EAL scholars and the potential of particular pedagogies at addressing their challenges (see also Carrasco & Kent, 2011; Corcoran & Englander, 2016; Kwan, 2010). Included within are some intriguing perspectives of scholars' experiences with varying levels of writing for publication support, including the potential of multimodal support for scholars in an era of Web 2.0 (Guerin, this volume; Smirnova, this volume). While this section provides an informative mix of perspectives from centre, Anglophone L1 locales alongside global perspectives from more (semi) peripheral locales, there are clear tensions amid researchers' suggestions for the need to either attend to EAL scholars' needs in a similar (Habibie, this volume) versus differentiated (Ferreira, this volume) manner. Habibie's assertion (recently echoed by Hyland, 2016) that emerging EAL scholars are not necessarily at a greater disadvantage than English L1 scholars when it comes to achieving publication of their research writing will likely trigger some rather strong reactions among global EAL scholars who have fought to establish/maintain themselves in an inequitable market of global knowledge production. The inclusion of these contrasting, yet not incommensurate, viewpoints reflect major tensions within the field.

### **PART III: Writing and research identities**

6. *Exploring Post/Graduate Academic Writing Practices, Research Literacies and Writing Identities*

Amanda French

7. *"What Feelings Didn't I Experience!": Affect and Identity in PhD Writing*

Agnes Bosanquet and Jayde Cahir

8. *Together and Undone: Motion, Style and Stance as Post/Graduate Research Literacies*

Gretchen L. Dietz, Devon R. Kehler and K. Hyoejin Yoon

9. *Becoming a Post/Graduate Writer in a Social Science Discipline*

Clare Furneaux

10. *Agency and Articulation in Doctoral Writing: Building the Messy Research Journey into a Well-Constructed Thesis*

Gina Wisker

Part III provides interesting and informative case studies focused on affect, identity, legitimacy, and messiness in the laborious process of acquiring/developing academic literacy practices. These well-placed and well-organized contributions suggest the importance of researchers and supervisors becoming increasingly aware of the affective ramifications of the high-stakes

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<sup>3</sup> I use the terms *emerging* and *novice* to refer to graduate student scholars.

writing happening at global research institutions. An increased awareness of the development and/or negotiation of researcher voice (see also Burgess & Ivanič, 2010) could help inform our practices as writers, writing instructors, and disciplinary supervisors by challenging us to consider notions of subjectivity (French, this volume), power/legitimacy (Dietz, Kehler, & Yoon, this volume) and affect (Bosanquet & Cadir, this volume) during students' research journeys. This reflection could be even more fruitful for those of us working with emerging scholars who are attempting to develop their distinct disciplinary voices in an additional language. While several authors suggested the import of developing awareness of affect, identity, and authorial voice for pedagogical purposes (Dietz, Kehler, & Yoon; Wisker, this volume), one wonders at the operationalization of such practices and given instructional time constraints.

#### **PART IV: Writing networks and exchanges**

*11. The Symbolic Economy of Research Literacies: The Role of "Writtenness" in the PhD Thesis*

Joan Turner

*12. Negotiating Rich Response Networks and Textual Ownership in Dissertation Writing*

Marcia Z. Buell

*13. Post/Graduate Feedback in Second Language Writing: The Feedback Network on the Dissertation Proposal*

Kyung Min Kim

*14. Writing Beliefs and Mentoring Practices: Advisor Perspectives on Post/Graduate Writing Instruction in the Sciences*

Natalie Stillman-Webb

*15. Doctoral Supervisors as Learners and Teachers of Disciplinary Writing*

Michelle A. Maher and Brett H. Say

*16. Underground Murmurs: Disturbing Supervisory Practices of Feedback*

Sally S. Knowles

*17. Guide, Companion, Midwife: The Writing Advisor, the Post/Graduate Student and Relational Pedagogy*

Zinia Pritchard, Robert B. Desjardins and Stephen Kuntz

While exceeding a reasonable length (it could have been a stand-alone volume), Part IV is a must-read for researchers, supervisors, policy makers, and graduate student writers. It brings to the forefront the impact that various literacy brokers – from language experts to writing tutors to supervisors – can have on graduate student writing processes and products. Particularly interesting are contributions that focus on the impact of building and utilizing networks of literacy brokers in the production of theses and dissertations (Buell, this volume; Kim, this volume). Many of the contributions in this section not only highlight the lived experiences of

research writers, writing pedagogues, and disciplinary supervisors, but also build on a growing body of empirical work investigating the tensions surrounding negotiation of power and identities in these high-stakes interactions (Turner, this volume). Turner's excellent piece commenting on the political economy of written production in higher education raises important epistemological questions about whose knowledge is represented in the final written products and how such products carry particular value in a neoliberal global market of commodified knowledge production. Questions raised as to the role(s) of editors and supervisors' in the production of (EAL) graduate students' theses and dissertations are certainly worthy of greater critical reflection by those responsible for providing such support (see also Harwood, Austin, & Macaulay, 2012). Regardless of the ethics surrounding such support, increasing awareness among emerging scholars of available resources – including literacy brokers – may lead to more sustainable writing (for publication) outcomes (Curry & Lillis, 2013). This is potentially even more critical for scholars writing and working from global locales outside centres of knowledge production (Corcoran, in press).

#### **PART V: Contact zones, boundary crossings, and transitions**

*18. Thinking through Play: "Visual" Approaches to Post/Graduate Research Writing*

Cecile Badenhorst, Cecilia Moloney, Janna Rosales and Jennifer Dyer

*19. Play and Creativity in Academic Writing*

Mary Davies Turner and John Turner

*20. Flexibility, Hybridity and Writing: Theory and Practice for Developing Post/Graduate Literacies*

Tara Lockhart

*21. Post/Graduate Academic Writing Problems: A Pakistan Case*

Muhammad Ilyas Khan, Muhammad Iqbal Majoka and Shawana Fazal

*22. Teaching in the Cloud: A Virtualised Collaborative Writing Methodology to Support the Development of Post/Graduate Academic Literacy*

Nick Almond

The final section of this volume includes thought-provoking chapters that investigate alternative understandings and spaces in academic research writing. Of particular interest among these contributions are those that champion incorporating creativity and play into the all too often morose and severe spaces used to develop/conform to dominant research literacy norms (Almond, this volume; Badenhorst & Guerin, this volume; Davies Turner & Turner, this volume). Attending to the affective in high stakes writing is often a secondary consideration among those responsible for providing writing support to students; these chapters provide evidence that such considerations should be more central, especially for EAL students who are potentially dealing with the additional cultural and linguistic hurdles associated with writing for research purposes in an additional language.

This section also includes two excellent contributions that consider what pedagogies may best attend to the diverse needs of Master's students via both in-person (Lockhart, this volume) and online (Almond, this volume) modalities. As Lockhart notes, research into Master's level writing lags well behind that focused on undergraduate writing (and more recently doctoral writing). While Almond's suggestion of the possibility of digital spaces for developing critical academic literacies is intriguing, it highlights a question that creeps up at times throughout this volume: given the widespread acknowledgement of the importance of developing genre awareness (Swales & Feak, 2012; Tardy, 2009), how much space can/should we carve out for alternative considerations?

### Summary evaluation

This entertaining, informative, thought-provoking volume is a timely contribution to scholarship in the multiple sub-disciplines connected to graduate student research writing, including those focused on supporting plurilingual EAL scholars. Badenhorst and Guerin have managed to include an astonishing number of almost uniformly high quality chapters, placing them in a coherent fashion for those interested in reading the volume cover to cover. In an astute move – and perhaps to preempt critique of the volume length – there is a useful index following the final section, which may allow for a more targeted reading for those interested in a particular research topic/area. The editors have skillfully intertwined chapters highlighting the increasing diversity of research into graduate student literacies at universities from centres of global knowledge production like Canada and Australia (see Habibie; Guerin) to universities located more at the periphery of such knowledge production such as Brazil and Pakistan (see Ferreira; Khan, Majoka, & Fazal). However, the number of voices from those researching graduate student research and writing literacies in such global locales could have been greater: to better understand the global phenomena surrounding research and writing literacies we must hear not only from those of us researching scholarly writing within the Anglosphere but also from those dealing with the intensification of expectations surrounding English language writing (for publication) outside of centres of global knowledge production (Bennett, 2015; Flowerdew, 2015). As we take into account these global voices perhaps we can produce more effective, targeted pedagogies and equitable policies that more comprehensively support plurilingual EAL scholars.

An intriguing feature of this volume is its salient focus on emerging scholars' subjectivities, whether it be the fluid identity construction/negotiation of scholarly voices throughout thesis production, the trying nature of this high stakes writing, or the potential of particular writing support in addressing not only the cognitive but also the affective needs of graduate students. Considering writing through a critical academic literacies lens, whether it be for research publication purposes or otherwise, provides the potential for challenging stale top-down approaches

focused all too often on unquestioningly following discursive norms. This progressive volume provides space for suggestions on how to approach writing (instruction) in a way that allows for students of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds to find and negotiate their voices while engaging with new literacy practices.

Overall, this volume has something for everyone. Graduate students will find resources to better understand effective practices leading to thesis writing completion and sustainable writing practices over the course of an academic trajectory. Writing instructors can make use of the volume's reflections on specific strategies to support pedagogical decisions regarding curriculum content and instructional approaches. Supervisors will be able to understand and reflect upon how to best attend to students' affective and cognitive needs in meeting written thesis expectations. Finally, researchers will have access to a broad representation of the state of the art in graduate student research writing studies.

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