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Editorial Introduction

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JOURNAL OF RESPONSE TO WRITING

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Welcome to the first issue of the third volume year of the *Journal of Response to Writing*. We are very encouraged by the positive response from readers to our previous issues and are excited to share several excellent contributions in this collection. Before introducing those articles, we want to also welcome you to our first issue published under new editorship. Dana Ferris has rejoined the general editorial board while Grant Eckstein and Betsy Gilliland have been appointed as the new coeditors of the journal.

Grant Eckstein is a founding editor of JRW and served as the managing editor for three years. Betsy Gilliland has served on the editorial board since JRW first took shape and has been a guiding influence as we have grown and progressed. Of course, we want to publicly thank Dana for her tremendous vision and hard work in guiding JRW to what it is now. Although she is stepping down as editor in chief, she will continue to play an important advisory role on the journal board, for which we are all grateful.

Turning our attention to the current issue, we are pleased to offer a diverse set of feature articles in addition to one teaching article. Helen Dixon and Eleanor Hawe begin this issue with the article "Creating the Climate and Space for Dialogic Feedback in the Writing Classroom," in which they explore ways that two elementary-school teachers in New Zealand encouraged trusting relationships with their students in order to promote effective peer review interactions. They argue that trusting relationships in the context of a writing classroom are necessary in order to shift away from a judgmental review stance and encourage positive student–teacher and student–student dialogue about writing.

The authors of our next article explore response to English writing in a foreign language context. In their article titled "Teachers' (Formative) Feedback Practices in EFL Writing Classes in Norway," Drita Saliu-Abdulahi, Glenn Ole Hellekjær, and Frøydis Hertzberg examine whether foreign language writing teachers in Norway implemented national policies requiring the provision of formative feedback. They studied the feedback practices of ten upper-secondary English teachers and found that despite the acknowledged benefits of formative feedback on student writing and national requirements for its use, these teachers continued to offer mostly summative feedback. The authors offer insights for foreign language teachers and teacher training programs that could improve the alignment of writing response theory, practice, and national or institutional writing policies.

Our third feature article examines the provocative issue of written corrective feedback (WCF). Writing researchers and practitioners generally agree that students want and need corrective feedback, though consensus has yet to be reached on the best timing, amount of feedback, and approach to providing it. Ahsan Pashazadeh contributes to this discussion in the article "The Effect of Mid-Focused and Unfocused Written Corrections on the Acquisition of Grammatical Structures." Using a participant pool of 77 male, pre-intermediate EFL students at an Iranian university, Pashazadeh examined the use of three grammatical structures in three treatment groups and a control, each receiving slightly different feedback amounts. Results from a pretest, posttest, and 4-week delayed posttest design showed accuracy improvements for the three treatment groups on the posttest, but

no lasting gains on the delayed posttest. These findings partially contradict results from similar studies (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Van Beuningen, De Jong, & Kuiken, 2012), and by so doing, they offer some additional insights into the WCF issue and potential constraints to the effectiveness of WCF in particular scenarios.

Anna Grigoryan transcends national borders and student demographics in our final feature article, "Audio-Visual Commentary as a Way to Reduce Transactional Distance and Increase Teaching Presence in Online Writing Instruction: Student Perceptions and Preferences." With an increase in online learning programs in which the teacher is physically absent and students do not meet together, questions have emerged about the best ways to provide feedback on student writing. Several methods are available, including text-only feedback or a combination of textual and audio-visual commentary. In this study, Grigoryan collected survey data from 55 students in six freshmen composition courses. The surveys elicited students' perceptions of the effectiveness of teacher feedback and preferences for either text-only or audio-visual feedback. Although participants showed a preference for the kind of feedback they received, in interviews, students expressed stronger preferences for multimodal feedback, suggesting that "audio-visual commentary, by increasing dialogue and reducing transactional distance, may be an effective way to support learners" in tasks involving writing and revision.

Jennifer Ahern-Dodson and Deborah Reisinger focus on response to writing in L2 French in our issue's only teaching article, "Engaging Teachers as Readers." This article is an impressive alloy of concepts addressed throughout this issue. The authors advocate for formative response to foreign language writing that moves beyond WCF with a multimodal response approach. This exploratory investigation of one teacher's writing class showed numerous benefits to providing grammar correction through writing while providing content feedback through audio recordings. Students reported preferring audio feedback because it allowed them to hear the teacher's tone of voice and to absorb linguistically accurate phrases in the second language. The authors argue that offering audio feedback is freeing for teachers because it allows them to offer more feedback while being more engaged with students.

As a group, these articles demonstrate an array of issues addressed in response research that highlight the humanity of this endeavor. We thank our authors for their contributions and the reviewers who offered substantial and thoughtful feedback on each article. We hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as we enjoyed compiling it. We further hope that these articles are of use to you in your teaching and research activities.

References

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