

# INTRODUCTION TO SECTION 1

Section 1 focuses on the ways in which teachers are seeking to transform pedagogies around academic writing and reading and re-negotiate opportunities for teaching and learning. A key theme running across the chapters is a commitment to making visible the dominant conventions governing academic writing so as to facilitate access to such conventions, whilst at the same time creating opportunities for student choice and active control over the conventions they use in their writing. At the heart of this section is a concern with the pedagogic relationship and the ways in which teachers seek to transform this relationship in order to enhance students' academic writing, reading, meaning making and knowledge making practices. Transformation is explored along a number of dimensions drawing on a range of theoretical traditions and using a range of data, including teacher-researcher reflections, extracts from students' writing, drawings and sketches, students' talk about their writing and examples of curriculum design and materials. The section opens with a paper by Julio Gimenez and Peter Thomas who offer a framework for what they call a "usable pedagogy" or *praxis*. In offering this framework the authors are tackling head on the question of the *usability* of theory and principles developed in academic literacies work (and indeed theory more generally). Their framework for praxis includes three key goals: to facilitate accessibility, to develop criticality, to increase visibility. Transformation in their work draws on traditions of "transformative learning" foregrounding the importance of making students "visible participants of academic practices." They illustrate the use of their framework with undergraduate students in Art and Design and Nursing. The following chapter by Lisa Clughen and Matt Connell also centres on the transformation of the pedagogic relationship by explicitly connecting issues of concern in academic literacies work with the psychotherapeutic approach of Ronald David Laing (1965, 1967). They explore in particular two key challenges: how tutors can validate students' struggles around writing and reading without trapping them into feelings of stupidity, passivity or self-condemnation; and how tutors can share their power with students. Their dialogue is an instantiation of the collaborative relationship between "academic literacy" facilitator and discipline specialist—a relationship that is also explored in many chapters in the book—as well as an illustration of an alternative model of writing that can be used in knowledge making and a theme that is focused on in detail in Section 3.

Transformative pedagogy in the following two chapters seeks to tackle old or familiar problems with new approaches. Jennifer Good tackles what she describes as "theory resistance" by undergraduate photojournalism students through the active encouragement to use a semiotic resource they are more at ease with—visual

metaphor. She describes how she encouraged students to visually represent their feelings around attempting to engage with difficult texts and argues that an academic literacies model “provides a framework for acknowledging the pressure faced by students as they negotiate unfamiliar literacy practices.”

Joelle Adams likewise foregrounds the academic learning potential in the pedagogic use of visual rather than verbal (only) resources. Adams returns to a question that is nested in all contributions—how is “academic literacies” understood and taken up by practitioners?—focusing in particular on students taking on a tutoring role as part of an elective module in a Creative Writing course. Adams provides details of the kind of writing tutoring that student-tutors engage in, including designing subject specific writing workshops, but her main aim is to consider the ways in which student-tutors engage with academic literacy theory. Using sketches made by student-tutors as well as written extracts from their journals, she illustrates the ways in which student-tutors grapple with and take meaning from a key text in *Academic Literacies* (Lea & Street, 1998) and apply it to both their teaching and understandings about their own writing.

A theme prominent in *Academic Literacies* research and running across all contributions in Section 1 is the implicit nature of many conventions in which students are expected to engage and the challenges teachers face in working at making such conventions visible. The paper by Adriana Fischer, focusing on an undergraduate engineering course in Portugal, seeks to explore the extent and ways in which the implicit or “hidden features” (Brian Street, 2009) of academic literacy practices can be made visible to both students and tutors. Fischer outlines a specific programme of interventions involving an academic literacy facilitator working with discipline specialists and highlights both the possibilities and limits to practices involving ‘overt instruction’ (Bill Cope & Mary Kalantzis, 2000). Transformation in Fischer’s work centres on combining attention to overt instruction, alongside the creation of spaces for ongoing dialogue between subject specialists, academic literacy facilitators and students. She argues that overt instruction is important but that given the ideological nature of academic literacy practices, many specific understandings about these practices will inevitably remain implicit, an argument also made by Lawrence Cleary and Íde O’Sullivan in Section 4.

The final three contributions in this section focus on transforming pedagogic orientations towards language and literacy at graduate level. The paper by Kathrin Kaufhold explores specific instances of thesis writing by a sociology student, Vera, foregrounding the uncertainties the writer experiences and the choices she makes, particularly in relation to her decision to include both what she saw as “more traditional” sociological writing and her more alternative “auto-ethnographic” writing. A key emphasis in this paper is the relationship between supervisor and student-writer, which Kaufhold characterizes as dialogic, evidence of which she carefully traces in the text. The paper by Cecile Badenhorst, Cecilia Moloney,

Jennifer Dyer, Janna Rosales and Morgan Murray also focuses on graduate writing, outlining a programme of workshops in a Canadian university aimed at supporting graduate students' explicit knowledge of academic and research discourses, whilst encouraging their creative engagement with these. At the centre of this paper is a focus on "play," with the authors arguing that play is an important way to encourage "participants to move out of their usual ways of writing and thinking." The paper draws on comments by workshop participants to illustrate the value of the approach adopted and to explore the extent and ways in which such involvement can be considered transformative. The question as to what counts as transformative in graduate writing is also addressed in the final paper in this section by Kate Chanock, Sylvia Whitmore and Makiko Nishitani. Co-authored by a writing circle facilitator with a background in Applied Linguistics and two writing circle participants in an Australian context, the paper focuses on the question of "voice" and the relationship between writer voice, disciplinary field and the specific object being investigated. Using extracts from writers' texts and their concerns about these texts, the authors discuss how the writing circle provided a space for the consideration of how "academic socialization had shaped their writing" and opened up opportunities for taking greater discursive control. The authors argue for the value of "informed" choice around acts of writing.

This section of the book closes with reflections by Sally Mitchell on a conversation with Mary Scott, one of the key researcher-teacher participants in the development of Academic Literacies as a field. The question in the title, "How can the text be everything?" signals a key position in Academic Literacies which is that in order to understand what writing is and does we need to carefully explore written texts but not limit our gaze to texts alone. *Reflections 1* foregrounds the importance of personal trajectories and biography in the development of individual understandings how these are powerfully bound up with the ways in which areas of knowledge grow and develop.