

Why Writing Matters. Issues of Access and Identity in Writing Research and Pedagogy

Awena Carter, Theresa Lillis, Sue Parkin (eds).

Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2009. 254 pages. ISBN: 978-90- 272-1807-0.

The title of this festschrift in honour of Roz Ivanic *Why Writing Matters. Issues of access and identity in writing research and pedagogy* contains not only the buzz words indicative of this volume's content but the title also reflects the enormous influence Roz Ivanic has had in these areas. The book comprises three parts: Part I. Creativity and identity, Part II. Pedagogy, and Part III. Methodology. Each part is presented in an introduction by the editor who is most familiar with the subject and consists of four chapters which in turn are flanked by personal reflections making in total 12 chapters and 9 reflections. As is indicated in the preface, the mix of professional and personal writing in the book "demonstrates the intertwining of Roz Ivanic's writing and identity" (viii). The 22 contributors comprise colleagues and former students. All the chapters in this book are anchored in a social practices perspective with three overriding aims: first as a celebration of Ivanic's seminal work on writing in the academy, second, showing the influence she has had on other researchers in terms of theorising, teaching and researching and third, showing the way in which Ivanic's work on writing and identity has been further developed by others.

Part I is introduced with a reflection by COURTNEY CAZDEN on Roz Ivanic's concerns with "writer identity" embracing such terms as "self reflection" (page 3). Chapter 1 continues with MARY R. LEA writing about "ownership and authority" (page 7) in connection with on-line student texts discussing the way in which writers struggle with their own voices and identities in their endeavours to engage in knowledge making in the academy. In Chapter 2 SUE PARKIN discusses creativity in student writing using Ivanic's term "wrighter" (page 27), to illustrate when an art student writer uses visual and verbal resources to create a multimodal text. These chapters are followed by a reflection by JAMES PAUL GEE on the idea of "identity without identification". Continuing in the vein of the effects of information technology and identity, Chapter 3 by RICHARD EDWARDS discusses the

notion of the “plagiarising of the self” in connection with copy, cut and paste which can potentially undermine the idea of original research. This is followed by the last chapter in this section, Chapter 4 by MARY HAMILTON and KATHY PITT which returns to the idea of academic writing processes and describes how “power, identity and convention” (page 63) can have a restricting effect on the writer, at the same time acknowledging that an increase (in the West) in the number of people in higher education has meant that the diversity of writers has had an impact on writing style and genre. Part I is concluded with a reflection by MIN-ZHAN LU and BRUCE HORNER in which they sing the praises of Roz Ivanic not only as an accomplished writer but as an accomplished communicator in non-written discourse.

DENNY TAYLOR’s reflection opens Part II of this book with “Writing pictures, painting stories with Roz Ivanic” about a children’s project (page 85). Chapter 5 by AWENA CARTER on the teaching and learning of dyslexic primary school pupils is based on Ivanic’s conceptual framework of writing and learning to write which is applied to a nine-year-old learner. The following two chapters concern English as a foreign language (EFL). Chapter 6 by YIUNGHWA LEE discusses student writers of English in Korea including an “accommodation” view of learning personal opinion writing (page 113). This is followed by a reflection by KARIN TUSTING in which she recalls that one of the most important things she learnt from Roz Ivanic was “her profound concern for people as individuals” (page 128). Chapter 7 by DAVID CAMPS returns to the theme of EFL students and their revision practices. The last chapter in Part II by MARY SCOTT and JOAN TURNER looks at academic writing pedagogy putting emphasis on the tensions which exist in student writing rather than a skills perspective of fixing a text. NORMAN FAIRCLOUGH concludes Part II with a reflection of Roz Ivanic’s role to critical linguistics and critical discourse analysis at Lancaster University.

Part III concerns methodology and is introduced with a reflection by HILARY JANKS in which she discusses the impact Ivanic has had particularly in connection with late-entry, working-class students and their feelings of alienation. In Chapter 9 by THERESA LILLIS focus is given to a method developed by Ivanic known as “talk around texts” (page 169) in which the main aim is to put the writers at the centre of writing research. Chapter 10 by SUE SING and NIGEL HALL is similar to the previous chapter in that the writers, in this case young children, were asked to talk about the subject of punctuation and their reasons for using punctuation in an attempt to unpack children’s ideas of how punctuation works. This is followed by DAVID

RUSSELL's reflection of his encounters with Roz Ivanic and the magnitude of her work over the years which has been conducted with "a kind of unabashed joyfulness" (page 205). Chapter 11 by ZSUZSANNA WALKÓ concerns a dual focus of a study by combining a case study approach of two undergraduate students' writing with a linguistic analysis using Van Leeuwen's reconceptualization analysis. The final chapter in this volume, Chapter 12 is by SAMINA AMIN QADIR and concerns researcher identity when writing collaborative action-research in a non-Anglophone context. Ivanic's work concerning "consciousness-raising about the writing process" (page 242) is central to this study.

BRIAN STREET's reflection concludes this anthology by discussing a frequently asked question by students concerning authorial presence and the use of "I". To do this, Street refers to the introduction of Ivanic's (1998) book epitomizing the very core of her work, entitled *Writing and Identity* in which the value of first person narratives is explained.

In conclusion, *Why Writing Matters* is an impressive appreciation of the work done by one remarkable person. It includes research from within a social practices framework on academic literacy. The editors state that the aim of the volume is to cater to both scholars and practitioners. This ambitious goal has certainly been achieved. This collection of 12 chapters and 9 reflections, many of which are highly personal and anecdotal, seem to reflect the fact that Roz Ivanic is not only a highly respected researcher and prolific writer but also a very likeable, supportive colleague and friend.

[Review received March 2011]

[Revised review accepted April 2011]

Reviewed by **Rhonwen Bowen**
University of Gothenburg (Sweden)
Rhonwen.Bowen@eng.gu.se