

## INTRODUCTION

**Betty Bamberg**

University of Southern California

The 1960's marked the beginning of a renewed interest in the study of rhetoric as well as the emergence of composition studies as an area of research. These developments have not only changed our understanding of how written language is generated and shaped but, in turn, have led to dramatic changes in composition pedagogy. Today, rhetoric and composition studies constitute an interdisciplinary field which retains traditional ties between rhetoric and English literature and literary theory, but draws heavily on theories and research methods from other disciplines, most notably linguistics and cognitive psychology. Discoveries growing out of this interdisciplinary research and theory have resulted in a movement away from analyzing finished texts — products — to an emphasis on the act of composing these texts. This emphasis on the composing process has resulted in a "workshop" approach to writing instruction which assumes there will be an ongoing dialogue between student and teacher as a piece of writing evolves. Although products are evaluated at the end of the process, instructors intervene primarily during the composing process while the text is being generated and shaped.

Reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of the field, the articles in this issue draw on perspectives from linguistics, rhetoric, philosophy, literary theory, and cognitive psychology. The issue begins with two theoretical articles. In "Composition in Three Keys," Barbara Gleason and Mark Wiley present an overview of current composition pedagogy as they trace the origins of and differences among three approaches to composing and suggest the possibility of a fourth approach or "key." In "Reading and Writing Make You Smarter," Stephen Krashen reviews a large body of empirical research on reading and writing and interprets that research from a linguistic perspective on language acquisition. Krashen argues that language input from reading is not only a critical factor in developing writing style, but that writing is essential for cognitive development.

Following these theoretical articles are three more pedagogically oriented essays that are concerned with second language reading and writing. In "Improving College Students' Reading and Writing," Loni Taglieber reviews a number of methods for combining reading and writing instruction and describes her success in using dialogue journals in her EFL classroom. In "Reading and ESL Writers," John Edlund outlines a practical strategy for increasing the amount of reading that students do in their second language and discusses factors that teachers should consider when choosing texts for second language learners. Sandra Mano's article "Into, Through, and Beyond" presents a compendium of strategies designed to help intermediate ESL and EFL students read challenging texts in a second language.

The ways in which writing instructors respond to and evaluate student writing have been greatly influenced by the shift from the "current-traditional" paradigm, which emphasized the final product and surface correctness, to the process paradigm, which first emphasizes content and meaning and postpones consideration of correctness to the final editing phase. When using a process approach, the teacher is expected to act primarily as a coach and interested reader rather than as a judge or evaluator. However, Calvalcanti and Cohen's case study of a remedial writer raises questions about teachers' ability to assume this new role and give up an emphasis on mechanical correctness. Adopting a process approach has also created a need for new modes of response to student writing. The writing center, a campus facility where tutors help guide students through the writing process, is arguably the most important new approach. In "Why Writing Centers Matter," Irene Clark explains the theoretical rationale for developing writing centers and describes a model facility at the University of Southern California.

The next group of essays deal directly or indirectly with a topic raised earlier by Stephen Krashen — writing instruction in content classes. In "The Knowledge of Composition," Kathleen Landis draws on research in cognitive psychology to explain the role that topic knowledge plays in writing and the resulting implications for composition instruction. Peter Sotiriou's article "A Dialogic Perspective on Composition: The Classroom Responds to Gadamer" applies the hermeneutic theory of Hans-George Gadamer to the composition classroom. Along with describing a range of transactions that may occur between readers and texts, Sotiriou points out the potential a text has for transforming readers' assumptions and beliefs. Writing instruction in content courses has received considerable

attention in the United States during the last 10 years, and many universities have developed programs to increase the emphasis on writing and the connection between writing and learning. In "Writing Instruction Throughout the Curriculum," Betty Bamberg explains the rationale for writing-across-the-curriculum programs and describes strategies used to help instructors who teach content courses take greater responsibility for writing instruction and adopt a process pedagogy.

The three final articles review books with different perspectives on writing and literacy. Constance Gergen reviews *Social Linguistics and Literacies: Ideology in Discourses* by James Paul Gee, a leading theorist in what are known as "new literacy studies," a book that analyzes problems in giving marginalized, disenfranchised groups access to mainstream educational opportunities. *Second Language Writing*, edited by Barbara Kroll, is a collection of essays that applies L1 research and theory to L2 teaching is reviewed by Madeline Youmans. Finally, Dilvo Ristoff reviews *Reclaiming Pedagogy*, edited by Patricia Donohue and Ellen Quandahl, and comments on efforts to draw on critical theory to reconceptualize and critique current practices in composition instruction.

The issue concludes with a bibliography that lists key works by the most important and influential theorists and researchers in the field not previously cited in the articles contained in the issue. This bibliography along with references from the issue's articles offer a comprehensive introduction to the dynamic and rapidly developing field of rhetoric and composition studies.