

REVIEW/RESENHA/ REVISIÓN



THE LANDSCAPE OF SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING AND TECHNOLOGY IN A DECADE (2010-2020)

LI, M. *Researching and Teaching Second Language Writing in the Digital Age*. Palgrave Macmillan: Cham, Switzerland, 2021. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-87710-1_4.

Resenhado por Rafael Zaccaron*
Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina

'Researching and Teaching Second Language Writing in the Digital Age' is a book written by Dr. Mimi Li, who is a distinguished faculty member in the Department of Literature and Languages at Texas A&M University-Commerce. Her academic background includes a PhD in Second Language Acquisition/Instructional Technology from the University of South Florida. Li has made significant contributions to the field through publications in various esteemed journals focused on second language writing and computer-assisted language learning. Moreover, she serves on the editorial boards of several prominent journals within this domain.

If it was difficult to imagine teaching second language (L2)¹ writing without using digital technologies before the pandemic, now, even traditional teaching approaches have embraced the integration of digital tools and L2 writing. This fact adds to tremendous changes in how we communicate in the last decades (NLG, 1996), consequently impacting the teaching of L2 writing. Considering this context, Li's book is a timely addition to the field. This book describes the present while assisting L2 writing teachers and researchers in reflecting on the fast-changing landscape of their practice in the future. The book is divided into ten chapters. In the introductory chapter, Li states her intention to inform scholars about the latest developments in L2 writing and technology. Moreover, the book has two specific goals: to inspire innovative research in the field and equip teachers with the necessary tools and

* Doutorando em Inglês na Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (PPGI/UFSC). Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7796-501X>. E-mail: rafaelzaccaron@gmail.com.

¹ There has been considerable discussion surrounding the appropriate terminology to describe languages that are not one's mother tongue. The term second language (L2) is used in this book review in accordance with the writer's adoption. For a review on this matter, see Jordão (2014).

knowledge to incorporate current technologies into L2 writing tasks effectively. To establish the connection between these goals, Li splits most chapters into four subsections: (1) an introduction with definitions of key terms and rationale, (2) a selection of studies for the specific topic from the last decade (2010-2020), (3) new research paths, and (4) teaching recommendations. The last two chapters present a thoughtfully curated selection of useful resources and conclusions.

Chapter 2, '*New Landscape of L2 Writing and Theoretical Frameworks*', provides a concise summary of not only how technology evolved during the last decades but also the concept of literacy and how digital technologies allow new ways of writing, teaching writing, and assessing writing. Additionally, this chapter highlights key concepts in L2 writing research that will be explored in greater detail in the subsequent chapters. Li ends the chapter by discussing the predominant theoretical frameworks that have supported L2 writing research.

In Chapter 3 — '*Computer-mediated teacher feedback*' (CMTF) — Li starts with questions raised by L2 writing teachers and scholars of the field (e.g., is screencast video feedback effective on revisions?). She proceeds to define CMTF and examines various types of CMTF discussed in previous studies. Next, a selection of critical studies is presented chronologically in tables, briefly summarising each study. The selection criteria encompassed studies published between 2010-2020 in high-impact journals, and were also applied in the following chapters. The studies are then organised into thematic categories, highlighting the diverse methodological approaches and the focus on the nature of CMTF within these studies. Li ends this chapter by indicating gaps for new research and offering pedagogical recommendations, emphasising different modes of CMTF and their specific purposes. Additionally, she suggests helpful technology tools, such as Audacity for video feedback, for implementing CMTF.

Chapter 4 delves into the burgeoning topic of '*Computer-Mediated Peer Response*' (CMPR). First, Li contextualise this area by discussing a few studies that outline its benefits, such as facilitating different modes of communication and creating a less face-threatening environment for feedback. Next, CMPR is defined, and reasons for its implementation are provided. Then, 14 key studies on CMPR are summarised in tables. The analysis of these studies highlights that most studies investigated different modes of peer feedback using diverse technology tools for CMPE. Like other content chapters, the chapter identifies research gaps, suggests future research paths, and discusses pedagogical implications with tips for implementing CMPE. Notably, Li emphasises the importance of training, which aligns with previous studies on face-to-face peer feedback that highlight the crucial role training has for effective peer feedback (e.g., CHANG, 2016).

Chapter 5 — '*Digital Multimodal Composing*' (DMC) — focuses on the pedagogical response to a world where writing is progressively multimodal (ELOLA; OSKOZ, 2017). Li acknowledges the common occurrence of L2 learners creating digital stories (e.g., ROCHA; TUMOLO, 2020), writing scripts, and recording videos in their L2 classes. After the introduction, Li defines and explains the rationale for adopting DMC. Subsequently, a selection of key studies is presented chronologically in tables, revealing a prevalence of qualitative studies from the USA or Asia on DMC. The thematic analysis highlights that in the first half of the decade, studies focused more on the composing process and students' perception, whereas more recent studies shifted the attention to learning development and used various DMC tools, such as Moviemaker. When discussing research directions, Li calls for more quantitative studies conducted in different countries. The chapter ends with teaching recommendations and a compilation of useful digital tools for DMC.

Chapter 6 introduces the concept of '*Computer-Mediated Collaborative Writing*' (CMCW), which has gained increasing prominence. Notable examples of CMCW utilised in L2 classrooms are wikis and Google Docs. In the introduction, Li refers to Storch's influential work on collaborative writing (e.g., STORCH, 2005) and provides a definition and rationale for implementing CMCW in L2 classrooms. Next, 16 selected articles are presented in tables. This overview shows that most of these studies were grounded in sociocultural theory and involved university students as participants. Additionally, Li identifies four main themes in these studies: (1) interaction/writing process; (2) writing product/outcome; (3) factors influencing CMCW; and (4) L2 students' perceptions. Based on this synthesis, Li suggests new research directions, including the need for studies conducted in school settings rather than universities, the use of diverse methodological approaches (e.g. conversational analysis), and connect CMCW with digital multimodal composing. The chapter ends with teaching recommendations, a list of eight useful websites for CMCW, and final remarks pertaining to grouping, students' training, and assessment.

Chapter 7 explores ‘Automated Writing Evaluation’ (AWE). In the introduction, Li highlights the rapid development of AWE programmes, which have recently provided more refined outcomes and proven beneficial for L2 learning. Following the introduction, 16 studies organised in tables indicate the use of many different AWE systems (e.g., Criterion and Grammarly). These studies were mostly conducted in the USA and Asia, focusing on AWE’s validity, perceptions of students and impact on texts. Similar to other chapters, Li advocates for new research to investigate languages other than English and emphasises the need for longitudinal research focused on language acquisition stemming from AWE. This chapter ends with teaching recommendations encompassing a comprehensive list of tools, training, and guidelines for implementing AWE effectively.

In Chapter 8, ‘Corpus Analysis and Corpus-Based Writing Instruction’, Li addresses the positive impact of corpus-based pedagogy and data-driven learning on academic writing. Then, as in previous chapters, Li provides a definition and rationale for corpus-based analysis. The chapter also presents a selection of 13 studies, which shows the prevalence of studies conducted with university students in the United States. The analysis reveals a shift from earlier studies focused on corpus analysis of textual features to recent investigations of learner-corpus interaction. The newer studies employ data from different instruments, such as screen recordings and stimulated recall interviews. Furthermore, participants reported enjoyment of engaging in corpus-based pedagogy tasks. As for future research paths, among other suggestions, Li recommends exploring the use of corpus-based writing tools specifically designed for particular discourses (e.g., writing a bid proposal) in languages other than English.

Chapter 9, ‘Resources’, presents an invaluable curation of additional resources, including books, journals, conferences and websites dedicated to technology-based L2 writing. By detailing these resources, Li encourages readers to expand their exploration and discover new cutting-edge applications, publications, and events in this ever-evolving field.

In the final chapter, ‘Conclusions’, Li visually demonstrates, using two figures, the interconnectedness of the L2 writing areas discussed throughout the book. Technology emerges as the central driving force that connects these six areas. Li then acknowledges the limitations and concludes the book with her final remarks, expressing her hope for increased global accessibility to technological advancements that enhance the teaching of L2 writing.

This book is well-organised and written in a clear style, making it highly recommended as a practical textbook for MA and PhD programmes. While the entire book is a helpful resource, graduate students will particularly benefit from the curated studies analysed and the new research paths suggested by Li. Furthermore, L2 writing teachers can easily connect Li’s findings to their own practice, find inspiration to explore new technology tools, and, hopefully, adapt their use to suit specific contexts.

While Li explores various facets of L2 writing and technology in the book, one critique pertains to the concise discussion in each chapter, not delving into details. Another valuable addition for a second edition of the book would be the inclusion of a chapter dedicated to artificial intelligence. Moreover, it is worth noting that Li’s selection criteria may present challenges for research from the Global South to be represented. Despite this criticism, this book undeniably serves as a useful resource, providing L2 writing teachers and novice researchers with a wealth of insightful and relevant information about L2 writing in the digital age.

REFERENCES

CHANG, C. Y. Two decades of research in L2 peer review. *Journal of Writing Research*, v. 8, n. 1, p. 81-117, 2016. Disponível em: <https://www.doi.org/0.17239/jowr-2016.08.01.03>

ELOLA, I.; OSKOZ, A. Writing with 21st century social tools in the L2 classroom: New literacies, genres, and writing practices. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, v. 36, p. 52-60, 2017. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2017.04.002>. Acesso em 12 Mar. 2021.

JORDÃO, C. M. ILA – ILF – ILE – ILG: Quem dá conta? *Revista Brasileira de Linguística Aplicada*, v. 14, n. 1, p. 13–40, 2014. Disponível em: <https://www.scielo.br/j/rbla/a/VBC45fDYvxV5BXwvmLV Dh4m/abstract/?lang=pt>

NEW LONDON GROUP. A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures. *Harvard educational review*, v. 66, n. 1, p. 60–93, 1996.

ROCHA, V.; TUMOLO, C. H. S. Histórias digitais: percepção de alunos da contribuição de feedback para desenvolvimento de script em L2. *Texto Livre*, v. 13, n. 3, p. 357–375, 2020. Disponível em: 10.35699/1983-3652.2020.25106. Acesso em: 27 maio 2023.

STORCH, N. Collaborative writing: Product, process, and students' reflections. *Journal of Second Language Writing*. v. 14, n. 3, p. 153–173, 2005. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2005.05.002>. Acesso em: 27 maio 2023.



Received May 28, 2023. Accepted on July 24, 2023.