

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION TO ISSUE 12.2

Welcome to our 2026 open issue. Alongside our readers, we at *Literacy in Composition Studies* join the growing chorus questioning the relevancy of scholarly work—of language and literacy studies, and of composition studies more broadly—in our current cultural and political climate. Sustaining long-term intellectual inquiry while our social systems, democracies, and academic institutions are under attack is hard. We acknowledge this challenge in solidarity with you. The topics discussed in this issue reflect our hope to contribute to ongoing efforts toward a more equitable and just society by drawing on the specific tools, training, and commitments that shape our field. As a preview for the rest of 2026 and reflective of our commitment to justice, we look forward to publishing two special issues in the works. This spring, Alexandra Cavallero, Erin Green, Logan Middleton, and Marco Navarro will bring us a special issue on *Abolition Literacies: A Call for Critical Resistance in Writing and Literacy*, and this fall we look forward to Antonio Byrd and Alfred Owusu-Ansah's special issue entitled *Tracing Generative AI in the Life of Marginalized Writers*. We are excited about this range of innovative and expansive work and hope you will join us by sharing them with your networks far and wide.

Jason Hockaday (Karuk) opens this issue with “Refusal of Translation: Unsettling Writing Studies.” Drawing upon his own identity and experiences as a student and teacher, scholarship in cultural and Native American rhetorics, and an array of scholarly work in Native American and Indigenous Studies more broadly, Hockaday stresses that for Indigenous students in particular, refusing to write in English is a matter of survivance. Through engaging with composition studies scholarship on equity-minded teaching practices like labor-based grading, Hockaday expands his focus from the unique position of Native American students in U.S. writing classrooms to all multilingual students, pointing out that we already have principles and practices in place to decenter English in the writing classroom, and imploring writing teachers to embrace being “unsettled” by a lack of knowledge of or control over students’ writing.

In this issue’s second article, “The Schooling of Gestural Listening,” Laura Feibush expands our field’s understanding of the affordances of a full range of embodied listening practices. Through an analysis of how gestural listening—defined as all of listening’s embodied manifestations, such as nodding and nonverbal backchanneling—is leveraged, shaped, and ultimately evaluated in literacy instruction, Feibush demonstrates how gestural listening is eventually fused with notions of classroom management and student attitude. Such judgements can often disproportionately affect neurodiverse students. By highlighting the writing of two students with self-disclosed ADHD diagnoses, Feibush seeks to reanimate and reembody the full range of gestural listening’s possibility beyond “correct” conduct.

This issue also features a symposium essay, our invitation for readers to take up issues circulating in the field or in the pages of *LiCS* with the goal of starting or contributing to a conversation. In “Literacy Sponsorship, GenAI, and the Entangled Economies of Experiential Learning,” Kristi Girdharry examines the overlapping, fluid, and recursive nature of literacy sponsorship that can happen in community partnerships. Analyzing participants’ experiences at the AI Innovators

Bootcamp—a one-day workshop at Babson College, where students lead workshops with local businesses on generative AI—Girdharry contends that “sponsorship did not follow a single path. . . . What emerged were reciprocal moments not necessarily equal in power but collaborative in spirit” (48). Girdharry further reflects on the similar way literacy sponsorship occurs bidirectionally in students’ learning with generative AI. Ultimately, Girdharry’s analysis invites us as writing studies teachers and researchers to consider different questions concerning literacy sponsorship, “asking not only who sponsors literacy but how sponsorship itself is being reimaged and redistributed” (50).

Carina Jiaxing Shi’s book review of Zhaozhe Wang’s *Doing Difference Differently: Chinese International Students’ Literacy Practices and Affordances* highlights Wang’s ecological analytic approach to a literacy ethnography. Wang follows four Chinese international students in the U.S., emphasizing the “rich repertoire and rhetorical sensitivity” in an expanded “range of literacy practices” (55). Shi calls this book “a timely contribution” to translingual research because of its focus on ethnographic research (*ibid.*).

We end this issue with an expanded review that models our newly minted Review+ section, where we hope to contribute to a wider interrogation and re-envisioning of the idea and purpose of a “review.” More than ever before, the traditional book review must open up to the rapid changes in academia’s and society’s meaning-making. Scholarship and academic discourse are no longer only (and have not been for a while) presented in the two limited genres of articles and books. Rather, we see the increasing value of editorials, symposia, annotated assignments and syllabi, and audio/video formats. We therefore recently invited submissions of reviews to be more open, inclusive, even experimental both in terms of the content being reviewed and the format of the review itself. We hope readers will be inspired to play with formats and modalities.

Following this invitation, Jennifer Trainor’s essay, “AI is Manna for Writing Studies or, How to Stay Calm in Troubled Times” creates a conversation among a variety of authors and genres to engage the “intermingling sense of overwhelm and doom” experienced by so many writing teachers in the context of AI (58). Trainor follows Jennifer Sano-Franchini in resisting the “camps’ discourse” about AI and neatly sidesteps the “resist’ vs. ‘lean in” binary the conversation about AI in composition/rhetoric has adopted (59). Trainor revisits conversations that have been sorted into these camps, but by refusing to frame them through the binary, she is able to link our “overwhelm and doom” to much longer-term conversations in the field about sponsors of literacy, the composing processes of novices, the disruption and affordances posed by computing technology, and—most generatively—to the negotiation of authority first framed by David Bartholomae in “Inventing the University” and extended by Annette Vee. We hope readers get as much from reading this Review+ essay as we did and see it as an invitation to compose one of their own.

We’d like to highlight that this issue includes manuscripts developed through collaborative mentoring relationships between authors and mentors. These partnerships reflect our commitment to the recruitment, support, and visibility of marginalized, early career, untenured and graduate student scholars by emphasizing developmental and transparent editorial practices. As we end 2025, the Editorial Team is expanding our mentorship model to ensure we are supporting potential authors at multiple stages of the composing and publishing process and tailoring mentorship to authors’

needs and preferences. We invite prospective authors and mentors to connect with the Editorial Team to explore mentorship opportunities with *LiCS*.

—*Alanna Frost, Brenda Glascott, Al Harahap, Brian Hendickson,
Tara Lockhart, Juli Parrish, Katie Silvester, Lisa Termain, and Chris Warnick*