ATESOLnsw

2026 ACTA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Shaping critical writers in multilingual classrooms

Featured Symposium

Honglin Chen, Margarette Turnbull, Erika Matruglio, & Emma Rutherford Vale
University of Wollongong · University of Tasmania
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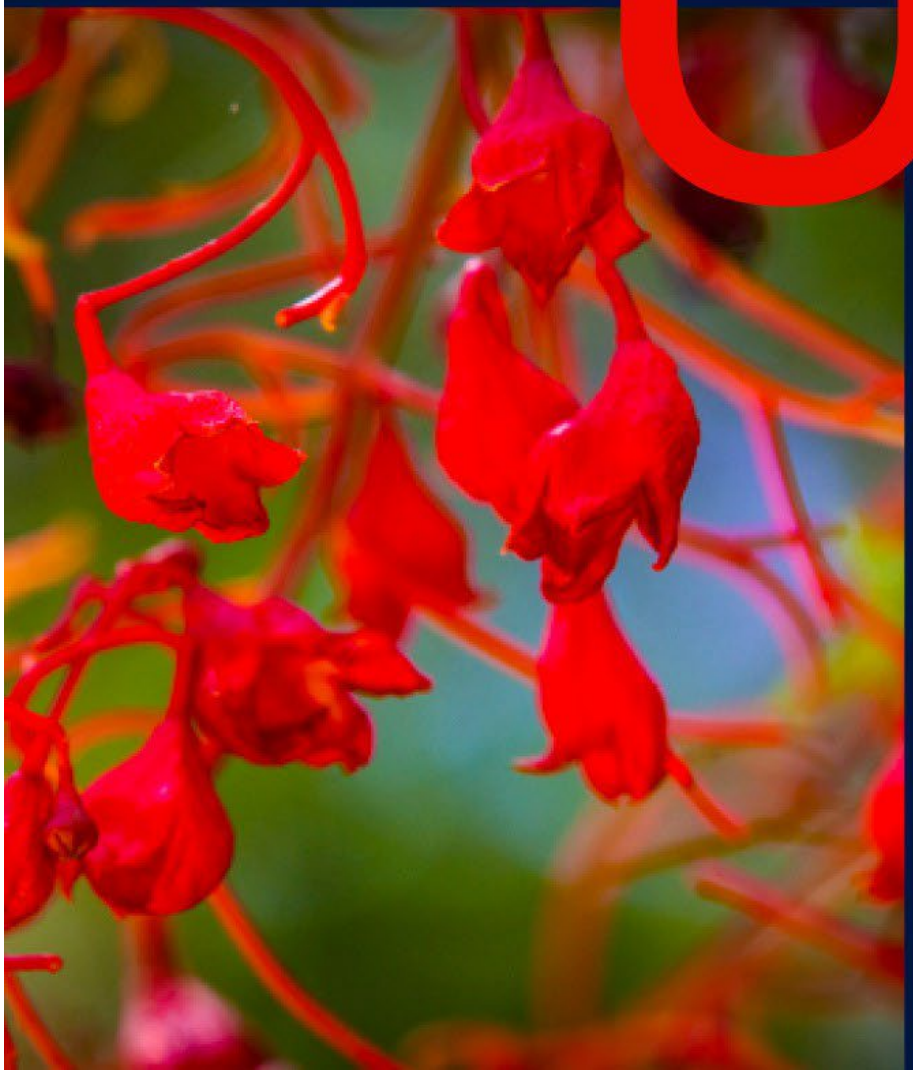

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge that Country for Aboriginal peoples is an interconnected set of ancient and sophisticated relationships.

The University of Wollongong spreads across many interrelated Aboriginal Countries that are bound by this sacred landscape, and intimate relationship with that landscape since creation.

From Sydney to the Southern Highlands, to the South Coast. From fresh water to bitter water to salt. From City to Urban to Rural.

The University acknowledges the devastating impact of colonisation on our campuses' footprint and commit ourselves to truth-telling, healing and education.

WHY WRITING MATTERS NOW

Why does writing matter more than ever in the age of AI?

THE PROBLEM

Written text can no longer serve as valid evidence of learning (Chen, Matruglio & Jones, 2026).

EAL/D students are doubly disadvantaged: generative AI obscures the academic register they are developing, while authentic progress attracts suspicion.

Teachers are positioned as judges of authenticity, but without shared criteria.

OUR RESPONSE

Teach and assess writing as a process of thinking, not the production of text.

Purposeful talk · scaffolded academic literacy · meaning-making as critical choice.

Three papers, one question: how do we continue to cultivate EAL/D students as the authors of their own meaning?

Chen, H., Matruglio, E. & Jones, P. (2026). Are teachers the AI police? How do they judge authentic student writing? *EduResearcher Matters*. https://blog.aare.edu.au/2026/09/03/are-teachers-the-ai-police-how-do-they-judge-authentic-student-writing/

Symposium Overview

01 **Context: Shaping critical writers in multilingual classrooms**

Honglin Chen, University of Wollongong

02 **Paper 1: Shaping the future: Purposeful talk for discipline thinking and writing**

Margaret Turnbull, University of Wollongong

03 **Paper 2: Scaffolding academic literacy at the transition from primary to high school: Building critical resources for success**

Emma Rutherford Vale, University of Tasmania

04 **Paper 3: Writing for power: Meaning as critical choice**

Erika Matruglio, University of Wollongong

05 **Questions & Discussion**