Call for papers for a special issue on Automated Writing Evaluation: Impacting Classrooms, Supporting Learners

About This Special Issue

Guest Editors: Volker Hegelheimer and Jim Ranalli

The current global pandemic means much learning and social interaction have moved online, translating into an increased need for writing. Commensurately, the need for feedback on writing has also increased. Fortunately, developments in the field of automated writing evaluation (AWE) have shown no signs of slowing in recent years. AWE systems continue to become more powerful, more varied in terms of their focuses and target audiences, and more accessible with regard to the contexts and platforms in which they are designed to work. Current AWE systems can provide feedback on the use of writing strategies, conformity with genre conventions, and synchronous identification and correction of common types of context-dependent L2 written error. Questions remain, however, about the potential of AWE to perform functions beyond that of mere revision aid. For example, studies have shown improvements in grammatical accuracy across drafts of the same text, but little evidence of gains across writing tasks. And while research has demonstrated that L2 students’ use of AWE tools is complex, the individual and contextual factors that influence engagement with AWE feedback, and thus users’ ability to benefit from it, remain poorly understood.

This special issue seeks to shed light on the current state of AWE, addressing questions that have remained unanswered and those that have emerged alongside developments in the field. We seek proposals that present theoretically grounded and methodologically rigorous empirical studies, including reports on longer-term implementations and case studies of individual users observed over time. Evaluations of AWE systems should be user-centric in nature; that is, focusing on users’ behavior or the effects of the system on the user rather than on system performance (Chodorow, Gamon, & Tetreault, 2010). Ideally, evaluations will also combine process and product approaches (Long, 1984; Warschauer & Ware, 2006) to investigate how the system is used by participants as well as the influence of that use on learning outcomes. Studies entailing novel methodological approaches are encouraged as are L2 classroom-based investigations that have clear implications for curricular integration. Finally, we seek studies based on AWE systems that work with languages other than English and those involving L2 contexts other than four-year universities, including professional and sub-tertiary educational settings.

Guidelines for Authors

Articles should be no longer than 8,500 words (including references, but not appendices). For specific guidelines, refer to the LLT submission guidelines.

To be considered for this special issue, which will appear in volume 26, issue 2 in June of 2022, please submit a title and a 300-word abstract through this online form by October 1, 2020.

Publication Schedule

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March 1, 2021  Submission deadline for first drafts of manuscripts
November 1, 2021 Submission deadline for revised manuscripts
March 1, 2022  Submission deadline for final drafts of manuscripts
June 1, 2022   Publication of special issue

For Further Information

Please contact the Managing Editor at llt@hawaii.edu with questions.

References

