

Call for proposals for a special issue of *Composition Forum*, “The Discourse-Based Interview: Forty Years of Exploring the Tacit Knowledge of Writers”

Guest editors: Neil Baird, Bowling Green State University, and Bradley Dilger, Purdue University

In 1983, Lee Odell, Dixie Goswami, and Anne Herrington published “The Discourse-Based Interview: A Procedure for Exploring the Tacit Knowledge of Writers in Nonacademic Settings.” Since that time, over 250 published articles and 100 dissertations have cited this landmark essay, underscoring its enduring value for empirical research in writing. Researchers have extended the original scope of the discourse-based interview by developing new techniques for discovering the questions to ask participants and adapting the interview process to study multimedia-rich texts. In the forty years since Odell, Goswami, & Herrington wrote, writing has changed immeasurably, yet discovering writers’ tacit knowledge remains incredibly valuable—especially because, as Goswami and other scholars have pointed out, writing researchers and teachers have strong exigences to identify and explore the knowledge of all writers, not only those working from positions of privilege.

In this special issue, we invite scholars to explore how writing research and the discourse-based interview (DBI) have changed since the publication of Odell, Goswami, & Herrington’s landmark essay nearly 40 years ago. We invite proposals for feature articles that address relevant issues:

- Ethical concerns related to any aspect of the DBI, but especially issues such as authorship, collaborative writing, and/or representation of participants in research;
- New contexts or exigences for using DBIs, such as engaging the knowledges of indigenous and under-represented communities;
- How changes in technologies for reading, writing, and publishing should be reflected in the DBI to best capture the tacit knowledge of writers;
- How emergent digital tools impact DBIs methodically: developing interview questions, identifying relevant alternative choices, analyzing data, and representing tacit knowledge accurately;
- Implications of changes in scholarly approaches to tacit knowledge, expertise, and disciplinary knowledge;
- Implications for the DBI of the increase in collaborative writing in both academic and workplace contexts;
- Methodological issues related to the use of stimulated elicitation or stimulated recall in qualitative research;
- Meta-analysis or systematic review of studies that use DBIs.

We are especially interested in proposals for articles that would, in the tradition of *Composition Forum*’s “Retrospectives” section, reflect on and update prior methodological work by examining how thinking about tacit knowledge has changed since the publication of “The Discourse-Based Interview” in 1983.

Following the tradition of *Composition Forum*’s “Program Profiles,” we also plan an “Approaches, Practices, and Applications” section that includes articles focused on practical application, in contrast to the more theoretical or empirical pieces above. These articles would be written in a manner that facilitates engagement by those seeking to adapt the discourse-based interview in research, teaching, or other contexts, such as:

- The use of discourse-based interviews in teaching, mentoring, or other areas adjacent to writing research;

- Mentoring novice researchers who want to integrate the DBI in their own work;
- Innovative techniques for conducting discourse-based interviews;
- The integration of discourse-based interviews into mixed-methods research designs.

We also seek contributors for book reviews that speak to the methodical and methodological universe of the discourse-based interview: subjects such as tacit knowledge, expertise, intersectionality in empirical research, and collaborative writing. Please see the list of titles on [our web site \(https://dtext.org/dbi\)](https://dtext.org/dbi), and [contact the editors](#) if you are interested in writing a review. We welcome suggestions for other relevant titles.

This special issue is part of a larger project exploring the discourse-based interview methodologically. For more background, see dtext.org/dbi/.

Calendar

Fri July 30, 2021	Pre-submission deadline for review of draft proposals.
Wed September 1, 2021:	Deadline for submissions (11:59pm Hawai'i time).
Mon October 4, 2021:	Notification of submission decisions.
Fri January 14, 2022:	Deadline for manuscript drafts.
Fri March 25, 2022:	Feedback shared with authors.
Fri June 17, 2022:	Final manuscripts due.
Mon August 15, 2022:	Publication.

Submission Guidelines

Please [download our proposal template](#), fill it out, and email your proposal to dbi@dtext.org. Proposals should be no more than 500 words, excluding Works Cited. Indicate the type of contribution you're proposing: an article, retrospective, or approaches & practices. We are especially interested in proposals from emergent scholars, scholar-teachers from teaching-intensive institutions, and scholars who study under-represented communities.

Following [Composition Forum guidelines](#), expect the following length for contributions if accepted:

- Articles: 6,000 to 8,000 words
- Retrospectives: 3,000 to 5,000 words
- Approaches, practices, and applications: 5,000 to 7,000 words
- Book reviews: 1,500 words
- Review essays: 2,500 words

All accepted articles will be peer-reviewed by the guest editors and members of the *CF* editorial review team, following the [Anti-Racist Scholarly Reviewing Practices](#) developed by a coalition of technical communication journal editors. Our style reference will be the *MLA Handbook*, ninth edition.

We welcome your questions. The editors are happy to read and comment on draft proposals shared before July 30. Please contact the special issue editors: dbi@dtext.org.