What Can Citations Tell Us about the State of the Discipline Now? Author and Citation Patterns in *Journal der Schreibberatung*, 2010–2016

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Introduction

More than twenty-five years have passed since the first writing center outside North America was founded in Bielefeld. As the number of Germanic writing centers and similar initiatives has grown exponentially in the past decade, from 7 in 2007 to over 70 by 2018 (Girgensohn 2017: 19; Schreiblabor 2018), writing center research is at a crossroads. Now with a critical mass of practitioners, it arguably constitutes an "organizational field" in which diverse actors share an understanding of their domain and are more comfortable interacting with each other than with those outside their field (Brinkschulte et al. 2017: 61). As Breuer und Schindler put it, writing centers, despite their uncertain futures (Girgensohn 2017; Lahm 2016; Ruhmann 2014), "have [now] become an integral part of university life and research" (2016: 98). The idealism of the field's early years has been channeled into the pragmatic project of discipline-building. Such professionalization is at the heart of the many Special Interest Groups (SIGs) of the *Gesellschaft für Schreibdidaktik und -forschung* (hereafter *gefsus*), for example, which are moving the organization toward shared understandings of the field, most recently around peer tutor education (Breuer/Schindler 2016: 98; Brinkschulte et al. 2017: 61–62; *spezielle Interessensgruppen (SIGs), gefsus* 2018). The field as a whole seems to be asking: what is this discipline and how can it secure its future?

As writing center professionals in the United States, we have followed this phenomenon with interest. What might our colleagues on the other side of the Atlantic learn from these efforts, as US-based research tends to be inward-looking (Lerner 2014) and monolingual (Horner et al. 2011)? We both study writing centers in global contexts in part for the potential of this research to de-center US-based assumptions with new perspectives (Bromley 2016, 2017; Scott 2016, 2017a, 2017b).

Recent disciplinary histories in Germany suggest the field imagines itself as influenced by US-based research on writing and writing centers, but distinct from it, given differences in Germanic – and European – higher education policies and research cultures (e. g., Bräuer 2002; Breuer/Schindler 2016; Brinkschulte/Kreitz 2017; Dreyfürst/Sennewald 2014; Ruhmann 1997; Ruhmann/Kruse 2014). The discipline also seems to share a sense of the growing importance of peer tutoring and collaborative learning to the field's

identity since 2002 (e.g., Brinkschulte et al. 2017; Dreyfürst/Sennewald 2014; Girgensohn 2017; Ruhmann 2014; Santa 2009).

Where does *JoSch: Journal der Schreibberatung* (hereafter *JoSch*) stand vis-à-vis these disciplinary commonplaces? While there are myriad reasons why individual authors cite specific sources in a specific article (Lerner/Oddis 2017), looking at citation practices in a journal over time allows us to see what a field values – and what it neglects. What might an empirical analysis of author and citation patterns in *JoSch* reveal about the state of the discipline in a Germanic context? To what extent are emerging disciplinary self-understandings – such as a commitment to collaborative learning and peer tutor engagement – reflected in the journal's publishing practices?

In the data evaluated in this article, we focus on categories we hypothesized might capture the uniqueness of the culture of Germanic writing research; we modeled our study on Lerner's 2014 study of *The Writing Center Journal* (hereafter *WCJ*) to allow for transatlantic comparisons when possible. Our analysis of authors and their citations in *JoSch* confirms some commonplace beliefs about the field and highlights some unexpected findings:

- Peer tutors appear frequently as authors or co-authors. Co-authorship is also common.
- Authors publish largely in German, the official language of the countries in which they reside, but *JoSch* also contains articles written in English.
- *JoSch* cites a largely Germanic scholarly conversation, though sources from other countries in other languages are also present.
- The transatlantic history of writing centers in Germany seems to be reflected in citation practices, since Anglophone research constitutes the second largest percentage of cited sources.
- *JoSch* authors privilege the book as a genre in their bibliographies. While edited books are the most commonly cited source, guidebooks are a growing source.

In sum, our study provides empirical evidence supporting the field's recent genesis narratives about its regional distinctness. *JoSch* appears to be publishing more articles authored by peer tutors than the US-based venue, *WCJ*. The journal is multilingual in its citation patterns while maintaining a Germanic identity through the prominence of sources and authors situated in German-speaking countries. Together these findings suggest the journal plays an important role in establishing a regional and expansive identity for writing studies in the German-speaking world.

A Brief Survey of Disciplinary Self-Understandings

Although the first issue of *JoSch* was published nine years ago, it seems to belong to another era. Peer tutoring was in the midst of an *Aufbruchstimmung*, as they say in German, given its novelty at European universities. The roots of the peer tutor model have been

traced back to a three-day workshop on peer tutoring led by Paula Gillespie and Harvey Kail and organized by the Bielefeld Writing Lab in 2002 (Bräuer/Girgensohn 2012: 236). A version of the workshop was offered at the 2002 EWCA gathering in Greece as well, which took place the same year Germanic universities institutionalized competency-oriented teaching in the wake of the Bologna Process, which boosted *Schlüsselkompetenz Schreiben* initiatives (Ruhmann 2014: 44). Just five years later, peer tutoring spread to German-language universities (Ruhmann 2014: 44-45), including the Writing Center at the European University Viadrina (EUV), which was founded in 2007 (Bräuer/Girgensohn 2012: 236; Girgensohn 2014b). A year later, the first transregional Conference for Peer Tutors took place at the EUV (Ruhmann 2014: 46). Shortly thereafter in 2010, Patrick Kowal, Franziska Liebetanz, Nora Peters, and Simone Tschirpke launched *JoSch*.

JoSch's first issue embodies this enthusiasm for peer tutoring and its untapped potential at Germanic universities. After comparing writing to a journey into the unknown, the editors make the case for the value of peer tutors who can serve as guides during the writing process. In the issue they engage in a kind of *Aufklärungsarbeit,* since peer tutoring, and writing support more generally, were still unfamiliar concepts at many universities. Prior to the Bologna Accords, universities aimed to foster what Breuer and Schindler (2016) have called "independent, self-regulated student learning", where the burden of learning was placed squarely on the shoulders of students as opposed to institutions (92).[1] Within this context, the editors implore: "It should be [...] possible and self-evident that all writers be able to ask for directions", and "writing consultations offer one such opportunity by accompanying students", offering a "place for exchange, feedback, and support" (Kowal et al. 2010: 2). The journal's lead article, *Writing Consultations in Higher Education: A Plea*, elaborates on this need, calling writing center consultations a "new branch" in the "young field of writing research and didactics" (4) – and one that ought to be made a part of the "educational content of German universities" (Arnold 2010: 5). A few years later the first German-language guidebook for writing consultants, *Writing Consultations: A Model for the Future*, appeared with a similar invitation in a chapter dedicated to professionalization. "A new field is emerging", the authors proclaim, "and you can participate in its formation" (Grieshammer et al. 2012: 279).

This euphoric sense of new beginnings is part of the genesis narrative of *JoSch* – which, like much university-based research on writing, emerges "from praxis for praxis" (Brinkschulte/Kreitz 2017: 13). In the first issue, the editors hoped to reach "not just those who are engaged with writing consultations but to open the topic to … students, faculty, and interested parties" (2). Instead of publishing only the work of established scholars, they sought to facilitate "transgenerational exchange", providing "first and foremost student writing consultants a platform to contribute actively to scholarly discourse" (2). By

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1   Andrea Scott translated the German sources into English for the purposes of this article. Titles are also translated in order to make their contents accessible outside of German-speaking circles. All works are cited in the original German version, where applicable, in the bibliography.

publishing the work of peer tutors, *JoSch* claimed collaboration and mentoring as core disciplinary values. This move also likely played a role in professionalizing peer tutors, who are now represented in scholarship as an integral part of the writing center community (e. g., Brinkschulte et al. 2017: 61–62; Girgensohn 2017: 17–18; Scott 2017a: 46).

In the wake of these developments, we wondered to what extent this ethos plays out in the publishing practices of *JoSch*. How often are peer tutors included in the journal as authors and has this frequency changed over time, given the rapid consolidation of the field in recent years? If writing centers in German-language countries understand themselves as collaborative (see, e.g., Girgensohn 2012; Girgensohn 2014a; Ruhmann 2014: 51), how frequently does the journal publish co-authored research? Our perspective as US-based writing professionals also made us wonder how findings from *JoSch* would compare with citation practices in the US-based *WCJ*, which has recently been evaluated (Lerner 2014; Lerner/Oddis 2017).

Another truism we were interested in scrutinizing is the discipline's sense of itself as networked – both regionally and internationally. As mentioned previously, in Germanic publications about writing pedagogy and initiatives, it is common to cite the influence of US-based scholarship (e. g., Dreyfürst et al. 2018; Frank et al. 2003: 165; Frank/Lahm 2013: 10), which can be traced back to important early works of "translation" (e. g., Bräuer 1996; Kruse 1997) and transatlantic exchanges (e. g., Girgensohn 2014a). Yet disciplinary histories also describe the vitality of German-language research, which is situated in regional and European research traditions and cultures (e. g., Bräuer 2002; Breuer/Schindler 2016; Brinkschulte/Kreitz 2017; Dreyfürst/Sennewald 2014; Ruhmann 1997; Ruhmann/Kruse 2014). Concepts and practices cannot simply be imported from abroad and applied at will. As Bräuer (2002) puts it, "structural change in institutions needs to grow directly out of existing structures and their cultural contexts" (62). Given the growth in writing centers and professional organizations, practitioners in German-speaking countries are more likely to look to their own regional and European networks for support and exchange. In fact, the field is now so networked that writing centers in Germany are now the object of international attention (Girgensohn 2017: 19). This study, too, is part of a growing body of research marking something of a reversal of influence, with global scholars studying the Germanic case in order to enrich writing research and support on the other side of the Atlantic and around the world (Datig/Herkner 2014; Guenzel 2016; Nelson Christoph 2017; Scott 2016, 2017b, 2017a).

If the field has matured as autonomous but networked, what genres of research are published most frequently in *JoSch*, one of the field's flagship journals? Do guidebooks, for example, remain a popular source of applied research, as they did during the field's formative period (e.g., Bräuer 1996; Kruse et al. 1999; Kruse 1997)? If Germanic writing studies is its own discourse community, how often is German-language research cited in the bibliographies of *JoSch*? What might citation practices tell us about the continued or waning influence of US-based research? And finally, while scholars are careful not to conflate Germany with German-language research, recognizing the role of practitioners in

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Austria, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, and Northern Italy, what can citation practices tell us about the role of German institutions in disseminating Germanic research, using the location of cited publication presses and journals as a guide?

Evaluating the authors and their cited sources in the first seven years of the first writing studies journal based in Germany gives us insight into what constitutes the scholarly conversation and how that conversation may be shifting. Considering citation practices allows us to track "the evolution of scientific and scholarly ideas" within and beyond a given research field (White 2004: 89). This study falls in line with calls for methodologically sound, data-driven research in writing studies (Haswell 2005; Anson 2008) and writing center studies (Driscoll/Perdue 2012; Driscoll/Perdue 2014; Kjesrud 2015). We hope that our findings illuminate the role of peer tutors as authors, the language and publishing locations of sources cited, and the principal types of materials cited in the journal – providing insights into who and what is – and is not – included in this scholarly conversation.

All of these questions gesture toward a larger one: what might citation practices tell us about the state of the field in this region right now?

Methodology

Our study reproduces many categories used by Neal Lerner (2014) in his study of author and citation patterns over thirty years of *WCJ* and applies them to *JoSch.* Lerner examined number and gender of authors, most frequently cited sources and authors, how many times sources were cited, and number of citations per article. We will investigate our findings in these categories in a future article. In order to capture what we hypothesized might be distinct about Germanic writing research, we added several additional categories, including trends in peer tutor authorship, the language of authors' articles and cited sources, and the genre and country of origin of cited sources. We explore our findings in these categories below, as we think that they will be of most interest to *JoSch* readers.

As regular readers know, each issue of *JoSch* includes four types of articles: research on writing and the tutoring of writing; field reports; methods and techniques for tutoring; and book reviews. Each issue also includes editors' introductions and calls for papers. We began by examining every piece included in the first 12 issues of *JoSch*, which were published between 2010 and 2016, arriving at 126 pieces. In this set of 126 pieces, we found 100 articles with citations; the 26 pieces without citations included editors' introductions, calls for papers, as well as occasional field reports. Since we were interested in studying what authors and their citations reveal about scholarly conversations, we analyze just the 100 *JoSch* articles with cited sources, arriving at a total of 818 citations. We used Excel Pivot Tables to do the counting that allowed us to arrive at the numbers and percentages in the below analysis.

Analysis and Discussion

We discuss four areas of authorship and citation practices we think may be especially relevant to the Germanic context: the role of peer tutors as authors; article authors' institutional affiliation and publication language; the language of authors' citations and the press location of those sources; and the types of pieces cited by authors.

Peer tutors

Peer tutors appear frequently as authors or co-authors in *JoSch*: 31% of all articles include peer tutors as authors. This is not surprising, as the foreword for *JoSch*'s first issue welcomes submissions by both peer tutors and all types of professionals and includes their contributions (Kowal et al. 2010: 2). The strong inclusion of peer tutors in *JoSch* from the beginning and throughout its publication stands somewhat in contrast to the United States. Calls for undergraduate research in writing studies in the US are increasing (Fitzgerald 2014) and tutors are more and more frequently involved in conducting and disseminating research (Ervin 2016). However, the vast majority of US peer tutors present at local conferences, rather than publish in peer-reviewed journals (Ervin 2016: 67).

Figure 1 shows the breakdown of authorship by issue. It is clear that there has been a shift between the first issues of *JoSch* and the later ones. While peer tutors contributed to 58% of the articles in the first two issues, they authored just 25% of articles in the last two issues. This could be a sign of a field maturing; certainly, many authors who were writing as peer tutors in the first issues of *JoSch* are contributing as professionals in later issues. This could also be a sign of a slow shift away from inclusion of peer tutors in *JoSch*. Still, it is interesting to note that almost a third of articles are written by peer tutors.

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Figure 1

Inclusion of peer tutors as JoSch authors by issue (2010−2016), %

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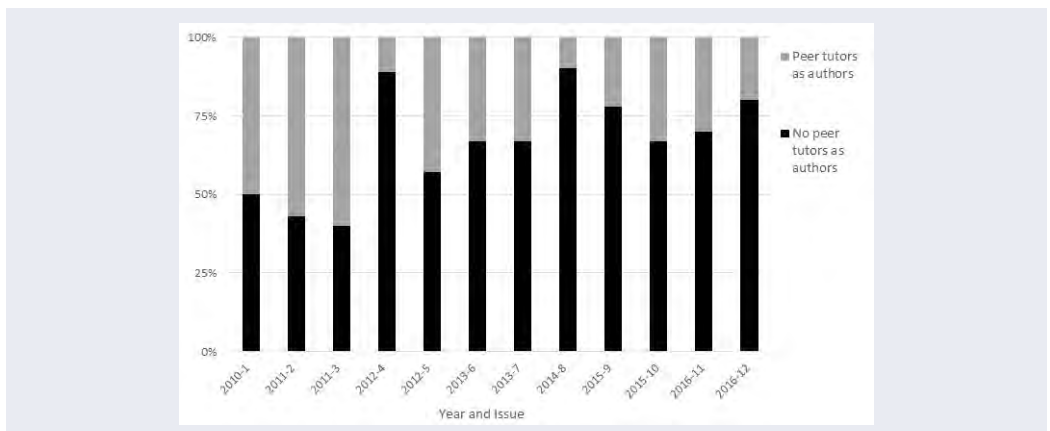
Article language and institutional affiliations

JoSch accepts publications in German and in English. This remains true even though, now, as a journal that is distributed to all members of *gefsus* (as of September 2015), it could opt to accept articles only in German. Of the 100 articles with citations, 95% were in German, while the remaining 5% were in English; the English articles appear in a range of volumes, the earliest in 2011 (issue 3) and the most recent in 2016 (issue 11). Of the 100 articles with citations, 89% had authors with institutional affiliations in Germany, 4% had authors from Germany and other locations, 4% were from Austria, and 1% each from Switzerland, Albania, and the United States. Germany, then, is the principal institutional location for authors publishing in *JoSch.* Using higher education enrollment as a proxy for expected publication rates, Germany has 80% of students in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, followed by Austria (12%) and Switzerland (8%) (UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2018); thus, it seems German scholars are publishing more in *JoSch* than would be expected based on enrollments.

Citation language and press location

JoSch cites a largely Germanic scholarly conversation, though sources from other countries in other languages are also present. The transatlantic history of writing centers in Germany seems to be reflected in citations, since Anglophone research constitutes the second largest percentage of cited sources. Below, we analyze the language and press location of cited sources. While these two areas are similar, they are also distinct and worth investigating separately.

Figure 2 showcases the language of articles cited in *JoSch* by issue. Overall, 78% of sources cited are in German, 19% in English, and 3% in other or multiple languages. While there has been some variation in the use of cited sources in other languages, the percentage of sources in German and other languages has remained relatively steady even as the field has grown: 78% of sources in the first two issues and 79% of sources in the last two issues were in German. Just 19 (2.3%) sources were German translations, of which 15 (1.8%) were translated from English.

Figure 2
Language of citations in JoSch by issue (2010–2016), %
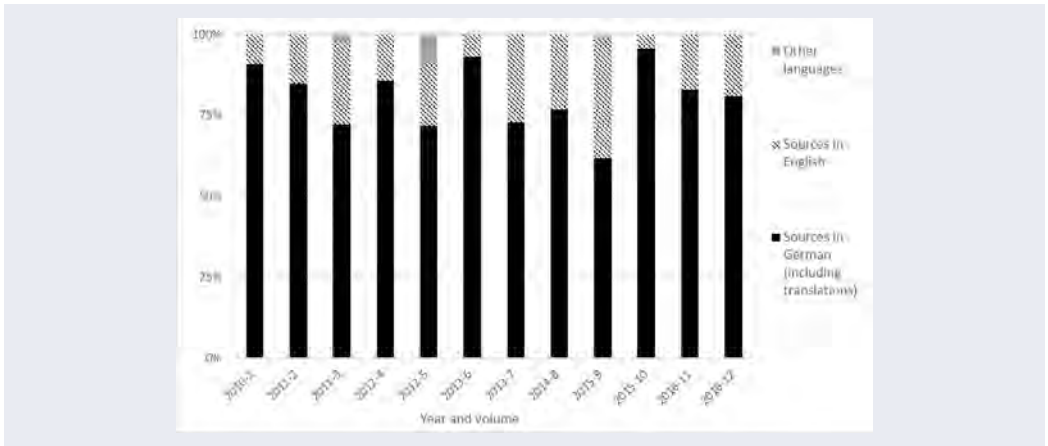
Interestingly, the language of a *JoSch* article does not seem to make much impact on the location of the cited presses or the languages of the cited articles. Articles written in English appear in issues 3, 4, 5, 9, and 11. With one exception, all issues have at least 70 % of sources cited in German and from Germanic presses, and one quarter of issues have more than 90 % of sources cited in German and from Germanic presses. Issue 9 is something of an outlier, with just over 60 % of sources cited in German and from Germanic presses. Over half of the articles in English are cited in one article (typically English sources are sprinkled throughout articles) which focuses on the way students use the internet for their academic work and much of the work in this area has been done in English; if this piece is removed from our analysis, the issue includes 76 % of sources cited in German, in line with other *JoSch* issues.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, while German-language sources predominate *JoSch*, the journal is much more multilingual than major journals in composition studies in the U.S. Non-English citations are rare in U.S.-based journals in writing studies. A study of the bibliographies of *College English* and *College Composition and Communication*, the field's two most competitive journals, reveals that only 5 % and 1.4 % of sources are cited in languages other than English, respectively. These figures are fairly representative of the spectrum. The one outlier journal, *Written Communication*, cites sources published in English 83.7 % of the time (Horner/NeCamp/Donahue 2011: 275), making it still significantly more monolingual than *JoSch*.

We also found the Germanic scholarly conversation is strong and consistent when looking at the location of presses that appear in *JoSch* citations. Looking at all issues, 72.4 % of cited sources are published in Germany, while 4.3 % are published in Austria and 3.4 % in Switzerland: thus, Germanic presses are the origin of over 80 % of all cited sources. The United States is the next largest contributor of citations, with 11.7 %, followed

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by other English-language countries with 4.4%. European presses not included in the other categories and international presses encompass the remaining 3.8% citations. Evaluating press location by issue, as shown in Figure 3, there is variability, but again with the exception of issue 9, which includes one article written in German that cites 15 sources from Anglophone presses, at least 70% of citations in each issue are published by Germanic presses.

Figure 3
Location of presses cited in JoSch by issue (2010–2016), %
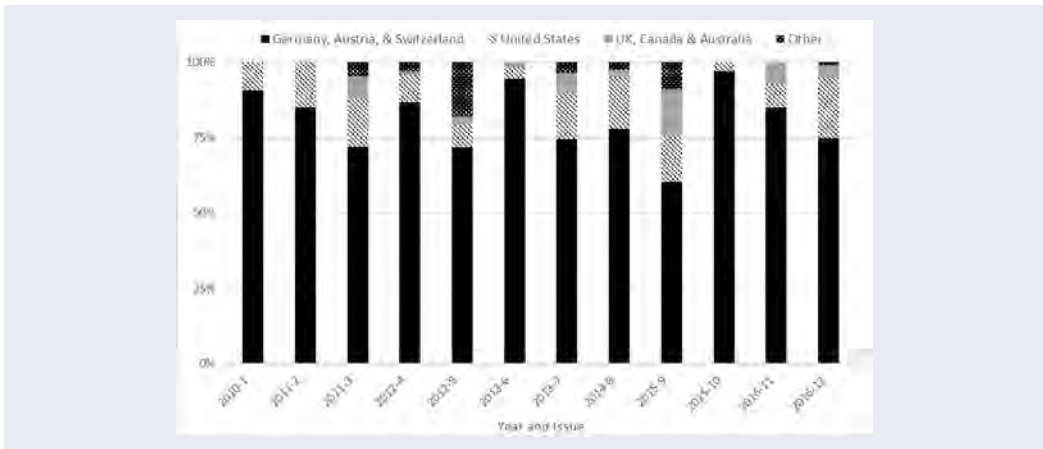
Types of Cited Sources Over Time

We were interested in learning what types of texts *JoSch* authors cite and how this may have shifted as the field becomes more established. Splitting the journal's issues into three time periods enables us to see potential shifts in authors' use of sources. In Table 1, we compare the types of sources cited in the first four issues, the last four issues, and all issues.

It is clear that *JoSch* authors privilege the book in their bibliographies, whether as entire edited collections, authored books, guidebooks or chapters from these sources; these three sources comprise at least 70% of *JoSch* citations regardless of time period, and reliance on book sources seems to be increasing over time. Journal articles and other types of sources (often online resources) comprise the remaining sources. While in the sciences, books are seldom cited, most humanities and social science disciplines cite books more often than articles. In literature research conducted in Dutch and Anglo-Saxon journals, over 70% of cited sources were books and book chapters (Nederhof 2006: 85). A recent study of citation practices in second language writing, like writing studies an emerging field, found that the top two cited publications were books, as were three of the top eight sources (Arik/Arik 2017: 7).

Table 1

Types of sources cited in *JoSch* by time period, 2010–2016

Type of Source	Issues 1–4 (2010–2012)		Issues 9–12 (2015–2016)		All issues (2010–2016)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Edited book and edited book chapter	63	32 %	104	30 %	236	29 %
Authored book	50	26 %	72	21 %	216	26 %
Guidebook and guidebook chapter	27	14 %	88	25 %	137	17 %
Journal article	35	18 %	48	14 %	137	17 %
Other	21	11 %	34	10 %	92	11 %
TOTAL	**196**	100 %	**346**	**100 %**	**818**	**100 %**
Book sources	*140*	*71 %*	*264*	*76 %*	*589*	*72 %*

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While careful not to draw too much from a shift of a few years, we were interested to see that *JoSch* authors steadily cite a similar proportion of edited books, but their citation patterns for other types of sources have shifted over time. Later *JoSch* authors are more likely to cite guidebooks and somewhat less likely to cite journal articles and authored books than earlier *JoSch* authors. Perhaps, as the field has grown, there are more relevant guidebooks that provide foundations for authors' work.

Conclusions

Citation and authorship analysis can tell us things about a discipline we would not necessarily know. We believe it is an especially interesting methodology for studying the state of a field. Disciplinary histories of writing studies are often influenced by the author's perspective, and citation analysis offers a more distanced way to analyze how the field represents itself through its scholarship. Who is speaking in the scholarly conversation? Where are they located institutionally? What languages do they use? And what kinds of sources do they rely on?

We arrived at some interesting findings from the process of completing this study of *JoSch*, including:

- Peer tutors are important authors, but their authorship in *JoSch* seems to be diminishing somewhat.
- Reliance on the US conversation is present, certainly, but it is not, and never has been, the central focus of conversations in *JoSch*, which relies mostly on German-language and German-published sources.

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- Germany seems to be over-represented in the institutional homes of *JoSch* authors.
- The book is the principal genre for citations. Guidebooks, monographs, and edited collections predominate the scholarly conversation.

These findings raise more questions than they answer. For example, will peer tutor authorship continue to decrease in *JoSch*, particularly now that the journal is distributed widely to members of *gefsus*? Publication is likely to become increasingly competitive as the field grows and the venue is viewed as a flagship journal for publishing research in the field. Since *gefsus* was founded in Germany, after the creation of the Austrian Society for Academic Writing (*GeWissS)* and the Swiss Academic Writing Forum (*Forum wissenschaftliches Schreiben*), will Germany be the institutional home for even more of its authors in the future? Or will the networked status of the field mean that colleagues from the region and beyond increasingly share its pages?

We also wondered more broadly how representative our findings might be for Germanic writing studies as a whole? Would the findings for other venues – like *Zeitschrift Schreiben,* the first German-language peer-reviewed journal for writing research – be different? Which writing centers are absent from the scholarly conversation in *JoSch* (and perhaps elsewhere) and why?

Additional research is needed to answer these questions. In the meantime, we hope to offer a preliminary answer to one question the field seems to be asking now. In late May/early June 2019, *gefsus, GeWissS,* and *Forum wissenschaftliches Schreiben* are hosting their first joint conference in Klagenfurt, Austria organized around the question: "Is there a German-language writing studies?" Based on our study, the answer appears to be a resounding yes. And, as represented by *JoSch*, writing studies in German-speaking countries is particularly collaborative, diverse, and networked.

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