

Perceptions of Kuwaiti EFL Student-teachers towards EFL Writing, and Methods of Teaching and Learning EFL Writing.

Submitted by

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the perceptions of Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers to methods of teaching and learning EFL writing in Kuwait, and the extent to which their perceptions of EFL writing may be affected by these methods. It draws on the finding of ten interviews with student-teachers from one of the higher educational colleges in Kuwait. Students were asked to describe how they perceive EFL writing and methods of teaching and learning practices in their EFL writing classrooms. They were invited to discuss the nature of their teachers' role in their classrooms and assess the extent to which that role enhanced or undermined their attitudes to EFL writing. Students discussed how they felt about EFL writing and their teaching practices. They discussed ways in which their perceptions of EFL writing could be enhanced and explained how their teaching practices influenced their views of themselves as writers.

In the literature, there are no theories for L2 writing to date and L2 researchers have tended to assume that the models of L1 would apply equally to L2 writers, with appropriate modifications. This, it is argued, is not necessarily the case as cultural and language differences between L1 and L2 create difficulties that are not accounted for by L1 research, as L2 writers use their identity and their way of making meaning when they write in L2. The study addresses the gap in L2 writing literature, and more research is needed to understand how to support L2 writers in achieving writing fluency.

This research suggests that change is needed in pedagogical practices in the teaching of EFL writing. EFL writing teachers in this study demonstrated little awareness, both of how to acknowledge their students' out-of-school experiences of writing and of writing as a social practice. The study recommends that the teaching of writing takes more account of the 'writing process' approach, with attention given to pre-writing activities and to revision processes, and that more attention is paid to genres in writing, as socially-constructed forms of meaning-making. It also recommends that teacher feedback is developed to be more purposeful and formative. Writing needs implicit learning and intensive practice and it cannot be acquired like speaking. Through learning EFL learners will be more familiar with the structure of EFL language and they will understand how use this structure to achieve different social purposes in particular context of use.

Well-trained EFL writing teachers will have the ability to help EFL learners write more efficiently. Thus, this research suggests that the students' pre-service training programme and teachers' in-service professional developmental programme for EFL writing need to be seriously improved to cope with the social needs of their students, the needs of their society and the needs of developing education internationally. EFL writing needs to be viewed as a vital communicative medium and students should be taught in a way that helps them interact with others by that medium.

This research recommends further studies to explore methods of teaching and learning EFL writing and EFL in general to develop a strong voice in debate, to listen to the voice of EFL students, to enhance the methods of teaching practices, and to increase students' self-efficacy in their ability to be efficient in their EFL writing in particular, and EFL in general.

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