

A Glance at EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching Writing Skill

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Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: May 18,2026 Accepted: August 19,2026	<i>It can be said that writing is one of most important parts of our life. It is widely accepted that nobody is born with good writing ability, but gains it through practice and acquiring effective strategies. Poor writing is a kind of imperfection both in daily life and in academic context. Chastain (1988) emphasized the importance of writing: "writing is a basic communication skill and a unique advantage in the process of learning a second language". Thus, the current study was an attempt to provide the readers with an introduction to writing skill and teachers' perceptions towards different teaching approaches of which they practically apply in classrooms. Literally speaking Teaching writing is not simple and should be creative to help students understand given that they have to master the way of organizing a good paragraph or text. In expanding the paragraph in a text, students need to know some theoretical agendas about tenses, punctuation, grammar, spelling, etc. The teachers teach writing, should help the students all the basics of building a good writing, all of which influenced by the perceptions of the teachers towards the teaching writing skill.</i>
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Introduction

As the world gets constricted because of the democratization of travel, the need for a common language to be spoken among individuals of diverse cultures is increasing. It seems that due to the fact that there is a need for a common language, English has been accepted to be the default language in the world. With the intention of helping students to learn English, who are not living in English speaking countries, the need for proficient English- teachers has been increased (Hayden & Thompson, 2013). Being in a non-English speaking environment, Iranian university EFL learners may not have a source to resort in producing academic written work except for their writing teachers. The students in Iran's settings who are learning English as an additional language are called English as Foreign Language Learners (EFLs). These students have limited opportunity to make use of the learnt skills and items with students / teachers. Because of the context of EFL students, the instructors that teach them come from various educational and language backgrounds. Since the background of the teachers is so diverse, it is hard to accept that all teachers have the same knowledge or expectations for students. This can particularly be true for teachers from different backgrounds, as education is viewed and taught differently around Iran. Not only are there educational differences, there are cultural ones as well. Teachers normally make decisions in teaching activity based on their own experiences, perceptions, values and beliefs about their roles, activities, and responsibilities in schools. Research has designated that positive teachers' perceptions are important for effective teaching, and teachers' beliefs, perceptions affect their actual practices in classrooms and influence the students' performance (Eggen & Kauchak, 2001). In EFL contexts, writing is regarded as one of the most complex skills to learn and to teach as well. Thus, because of the complexity of the nature of writing itself, learners face difficulties in learning such a skill. These complexities of writing and learning to write complicate the role of the teachers and create difficulties of teaching writing. Undoubtedly such a complicated skill cannot be mastered simply, and is affected by lots of issues one of which is teachers' perception. As Hedgcock and Ferris (2009) point out, a close examination of the related literature shows that the role of the teachers' factors has not been examined in the empirical studies of the teaching writing skill. They further explained that, among these factors' teachers' perceptions are regarded to be more significant than the others in the process of teaching writing. The teacher's perception refers to the thoughts or mental images which teachers have about their professional activities and their students, which are shaped by their background knowledge and life experiences and influence their professional behavior.

Theoretically, perception refers to the process of recognizing and understanding events, objects, and stimuli through the use of sense such as sight, hearing, and touch (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Perception cannot be separated from action because perception is filtered by action (Borghi, 2005). Perception is linked to action in some obvious ways. The connection between them is intimate enough. Perception is a key mediator of attitude-behavior consistency (Bodenhausen & Hugenberg, 2009). Hedgcock and Ferris (2009) concluded that, the teacher perceptions may influence the effectiveness of the teaching in second/foreign language writing courses. Totally, all of these finding has highlighted the need for finding the match between teachers' perceptions and

actual practices in classrooms. It is crystal clear that finding such a relationship is not single and simple. In this study the researchers suggest a mixed method design.

1. Research Questions

To reach the exact result of study, there are some questions which they would be answered:

RQ1: What are the EFL teachers' perceptions about teaching writing to Iranian university students?

RQ2: How teachers teach EFL writing to their students in the classrooms?

RQ3: Are there any differences between teachers' perceptions and their practices concerning teaching writing?

RQ4: How EFL writing is taught at Iranian universities?

2. Review of the literature

Writing instruction is an essential part of providing the students with the necessary tools to be able to meet the requirements of their language programs. Besides, examining EFL writing teachers' practices and influences on these practices may help raise the teachers' awareness of their current knowledge and also enhance reflection on their teaching (Bartels, 2005b).

According to Chastain (1988), in teaching the second language writing, teachers may follow different goals due to the needs of the language learners. She further argued that, due to these needs, the teachers may put emphasis on the forms of the language, the functions of the language, or both the forms and functions of the language. As stated by her, when the teachers put emphasis on the language forms, the core aim of writing is enabling the learners to produce the letters and to employ the grammar of the language in a correct way. Though, when the focus of the teacher is on the functions of the language, the core aim of writing is enabling the learners to communicate their intended meanings in a manner that is appropriate for the needs and expectations of the reader.

Despite being socially constructed, writers' identity is open to constant change and development and the writers can transform their identities in response to the dynamics of both discursive practices and social interactions (Ivanic, 1998; Liming, 2012). In fact, in such ways, writers will be able to assert their distinctive "voices" based on the awareness of the context and the audience of a specific discourse act. Encouraging students to write with a strong voice which can reflect the individual identities is also an important feature of expressive discourse of writing (Ivanic, 2004).

Writing in academic contexts is an important achievement that university students must acquire during their graduate studies. Academic writings like thesis, dissertations, research papers, reports and book summaries are examples of writings that postgraduate students must write as their requirements of their courses and graduate program. As such, academic writing can be regarded as an important demonstration of academic achievement.

The ability to write in English as a second/foreign language (ESL/EFL) is an important skill in academic development, particularly for the students majoring in English. However, not all the students enjoy the same level of L2 writing ability in spite of the courses they take at the university. In fact, since writing is a complicated skill demanding a lot of other minor skills, developing mastery over the skill is one of the obstacles facing all learners of English as a foreign language in general, and Iranian students majoring in English in particular. On the other hand, every individual learner is characterized by unique attributes which may impinge upon their individual process of learning and learning outcome. Obviously, the development of L2 learners' ability to write is no exception. Undoubtedly knowledge of language teachers' beliefs is of paramount importance on how they perceive and accomplish their work. Focusing on teaching methodologies exclusively results in overlooking other dimensions of the learning process, namely the teachers' beliefs and perceptions, and the role teachers play in facilitating the learning process which influences students' performance. Teachers have a strong impact on "... how students learn, what they learn, how much they learn, and the ways they interact with one another and the world around them" (Strong, 2007, p. 9). In EFL, teachers' perceptions are "founded on the goals, values, and beliefs" which they "hold in relation to the content and process of teaching, and their understanding of the systems in which they work and their roles within it" (Richards & Lockhart, 2007, p. 30 cited in Graham, 2011). In other words, perceptions are not completely new. Namely, teachers are of pre-terminated stands and viewpoints on account of having past experience, knowledge of different approaches to teaching, either experienced or learned, or both, or successful practices with language learners. These perceptions aid teachers to have their own choices in choosing methods for and approaches to language teaching and learning (Graham, 2011).

In the same vain, William and Burden (1997) have stated that teachers' beliefs, whether implicit or explicit, about teaching, learning, and learners have a significant effect on everything they do in the classroom "no matter what syllabus or course book they use" (p. 65). Teachers' beliefs can generally be defined as firm opinions that are shaped by teachers' experience (personal and professional) and general knowledge, and that in turn becomes internalized to the extent of becoming subconscious knowledge, but that is actively influencing individuals' choices and practices (Bellaleem, 2015, p. 94).

Thus, it is a safe claim that beliefs or perceptions are important matters in every area that is related to human behavior and learning (Ajzen, 1988). Richards and Rodgers (2001) declare that teachers have beliefs about language learning and these aids them get a special approach to language teaching. Teachers' beliefs strongly predict their decisions and classroom practices.

Zheng (2009) is amongst the researchers who asserts that teachers' beliefs are momentous ideas in understanding teachers' thought processes, teaching methods, and learning to teach. He also asserts that teacher perceptions are important themes in teacher education that have been intended to help teachers develop their thought and principles.

In his seminal work Li (2012) has shown that perceptions and beliefs play a critical role in language teaching. Namely, through perception people perceive the world, comprehend how new information is perceived, and whether it is accepted or rejected.

He further asserts that perceptions describe memories and regulate the understanding of incidences. Thus, it is undoubted that teachers' beliefs are of a crucial effect than the teacher's knowledge on planning their lessons, on the types of decisions they assume, and on classroom practice. In other words, for him teachers' perceptions categorize their real behavior towards learners. It is definitely clear that if teachers have the ability to determine and regulate their learners' abilities, they will be able to pick and adapt their behavior and educational choice more properly (Li, 2012).

There are some studies that have reported the inconsistency between teachers' perceptions and their actual practices. One of which reported by Ferede, Melese and Tefera (2012). Their study identified a weak correlation between teachers' beliefs and their actual teaching practices. That is to say, though the teachers are certain of that writing is as vital as listening, speaking, reading, grammar and vocabulary, and that it requires regular practice, they have not put their views into practice. Then, they reported that despite teachers' expression of views that the process approach to the teaching of writing is preferable to the product approach, the majority of the teachers were not perceived frequently exposing their students to writing activities which allow them to practice the writing process, namely, prewriting, drafting, checking and writing final draft. Thus, the problem associated with the teaching of writing to school students appears to be the result of teachers' lack of practical skills, courage and determination to practice what they preach, and the resulting loose correlation between their perception of writing and their practice of teaching this skill.

Literally speaking mixed method research studies have been applied wherein there is be collecting, analyzing and integrating quantitative and qualitative research data. Since Qualitative research can help researchers to gain access to the views of participants while quantitative research allows researchers to explore their own agenda. Regarding the type of mixed method design the Sequential Explanatory Design has been mainly used. (This method is a two-phase design where the quantitative data is collected first followed by qualitative data collection. The purpose is to use the qualitative results to further explain and interpret the findings from the quantitative phase. The first phase has always been conducting a questionnaire with intention of collecting numerical data on teachers' perceptions regarding the act of teaching writing skill. After that an interview should has been conducted in order to gain a deeper understanding of the teachers' perceptions and taking out the important themes accordingly. Then there is a set of observations to gain an understanding on teachers' perceptions and their actual practices to teach writing skill in classrooms. *Triangulation* seeks convergence, corroboration, correspondence of results from different methods. It has been found that in order to find out the teachers' perceptions on teaching writing the mentioned method has been effective since triangulation has confirmed and validated the quality results using quantitative studies. Besides, making use of multiple sources and methods have resulted in minimizing of inadequacies in one approach or process More insights can be obtained by using multiple methods. And that, most of the inconsistencies have been be recognized and removed. It is also reported that the mentioned ways have increased and strengthened the credibility and validity of the data and has led to stronger research design.

It is a safe claim that the conducted studies on the importance of teachers perceptions and their actual practices have been influential since they field of foreign language writing since they provide sufficient information about the field of second and foreign language writing; they also review the related literature regarding the writing skill and make the EFL teachers and syllabus designers aware of the importance of this skill in various kinds of writing tasks; they discuss the common approaches to the teaching writing and highlight their weaknesses in preparing the second/foreign language learners for writing appropriate texts of various types of texts; besides they review the empirical studies which have investigated the various aspects of the writing skill based on the traditional approaches to the teaching of text development; they provide useful information regarding the modern approaches to the teaching writing (e.g. genre-oriented teaching) in second/foreign language writing; they review the recent studies which have investigated the importance of the writing skill based on the modern approaches, and investigate the importance of teachers variables including teachers perceptions in second /foreign language teaching; they deal with the role of teachers perceptions in the field of second/foreign language writing; they investigate the usefulness of the commonly used approaches of teaching writing in EFL contexts and find out how teaching EFL writing is carried out at EFL universities; they also

clarified EFL teachers' perceptions about EFL writing and discover if EFL teachers' perceptions about writing match their actual teaching in their classrooms; Then they discover how teachers actually perform in teaching EFL writing in their classrooms; they offer suggestions about how EFL writing must be taught in classrooms based on the data collected from teachers; and finally and maybe the most importantly they definitely has motivated further studies of the writing skill and influential factors in foreign language contexts.

3. Data Gathering and Analysis

In order to answer the first research question, the researcher examined the characteristics of the quantitative data of the utilized writing instruction questionnaire of the study. More specifically, first, the researcher classified the items of this questionnaire into four categories including: *product-oriented*, *process-oriented*, *genre-based*, and *process-genre*. Each of these categories encompassed 5 items of the pertinent questionnaire. Second, the researcher examined the characteristics of the collected data on each of the aforementioned categories. The results of the analysis showed that, the collected data on all of the categories did not violate the assumptions of the parametric statistical tests due to the fact that they were: a) interval data; b) collected independently; and c) normally distributed based on the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. Table1 provides the results of these tests:

Table 1. Tests of Normality for the EFL University Lecturers' Responses to the Product-Oriented, Process-Oriented, Genre-Based, and Process-Genre Writing Instruction Items of the Writing Instruction Questionnaire

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Product-Oriented	.175	70	.237	.954	70	.374
Process-Oriented	.187	70	.376	.839	70	.257
Genre-Based	.123	70	.223	.867	70	.338
Process-Genre	.149	70	.389	.961	70	.253

As shown in table1, all of the p-values (marked as *Sig.*) in the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests were more than .05. Consequently, it was argued that the data on the EFL university lecturers' responses to the items of the categories of the writing instruction questionnaire were normally distributed. Based on these resulted, the researcher used the *one-way between-groups ANOVA* test with post-hoc tests in order to analyze the obtained data. In this part, the data are analyzed based on the objective of the first research question:

RQ1: What are the EFL teachers' perceptions about teaching writing to Iranian university students?

In order to specify the differences among the EFL university lecturers' responses to the items of the aforementioned categories, the researcher compared their performances on the relevant categories of the writing instruction questionnaire. Table2 provides the results of this comparison:

Table 2. Comparison among the EFL University Lecturers' Perceptions of Product-Oriented, Process-Oriented, Genre-Based, and Process-Genre Writing Instruction Approaches

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Product-Oriented	70	7.36	2.050	.245	6.87	7.85	3	14
Process-Oriented	70	9.27	1.128	.135	9.00	9.54	7	12
Genre-Based	70	10.63	1.079	.129	10.37	10.89	8	13
Process-Genre	70	13.74	3.082	.368	13.01	14.48	8	20
Total	280	10.25	3.071	.184	9.89	10.61	3	20

As shown in Table 2, there were differences among the university lectures' responses to the items of the aforementioned categories of the relevant questionnaire. Notwithstanding, the researcher utilized a one-way between-groups ANOVA test with post-hoc tests in order to determine the significance of the above-mentioned differences. It was necessary to check the assumption of the homogeneity of variances prior to the examination of the results of the one-way ANOVA test. Table 3 shows these results:

Table 3. Test of Homogeneity of Variances for the EFL University Lecturers' Perceptions of Product-Oriented, Process-Oriented, Genre-Based, and Process-Genre Writing Instruction Approaches

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
29.992	3	276	.671

As shown in Table 3, the p-value .671 in the results of the Levene's test for homogeneity of variances was greater than .05 and highlighted the fact that the assumption of the homogeneity of variances was not violated. As a consequence, the researcher examined the results of the one-way ANOVA test. The results of this test are provided in Table 4:

Table 4. ANOVA Test of the EFL University Lecturers' Perceptions of Product-Oriented, Process-Oriented, Genre-Based, and Process-Genre Writing Instruction Approaches

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1516.871	3	505.624	125.313	.000
Within Groups	1113.629	276	4.035		
Total	2630.500	279			

As shown in Table 4, the p-value .000 in the results of the one-way ANOVA test accentuated the fact that there were significant differences among the university lectures' responses to the items of the aforementioned categories of the relevant questionnaire. Nonetheless, the researcher had to examine the results of the Tukey post-hoc test in order to determine the location of the above-mentioned differences. Table 5 provides these results:

Table 5. Tukey Test of Multiple Comparisons for the EFL University Lecturers' Perceptions of Product-Oriented, Process-Oriented, Genre-Based, and Process-Genre Writing Instruction Approaches

(I) Instruction Categories	(J) Instruction Categories	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Product-Oriented	Process-Oriented	-1.914*	.340	.000	-2.79	-1.04
	Genre-Based	-3.271*	.340	.000	-4.15	-2.39
	Process-genre	-6.386*	.340	.000	-7.26	-5.51
Process-Oriented	Product-Oriented	1.914*	.340	.000	1.04	2.79
	Genre-Based	-1.357*	.340	.000	-2.23	-.48
	Process-genre	-4.471*	.340	.000	-5.35	-3.59
Genre-Based	Product-Oriented	3.271*	.340	.000	2.39	4.15
	Process-Oriented	1.357*	.340	.000	.48	2.23
	Process-genre	-3.114*	.340	.000	-3.99	-2.24
Process-Genre	Product-Oriented	6.386*	.340	.000	5.51	7.26
	Process-Oriented	4.471*	.340	.000	3.59	5.35
	Genre-Based	3.114*	.340	.000	2.24	3.99

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The examination of the asterisk marks in the *Mean Differences* column in Table 5, highlighted the fact that there were significant differences among the university lectures' responses to the items of all of the aforementioned categories of the relevant questionnaire. Moreover, the examination of all of the p-values (marked as *Sig.*) showed that they were less than .05. To be more specific, the process-genre approach was the most preferred approach based on the university lecturers' perceptions of writing instruction. On the other hand, the product-oriented approach was the least preferred approach on the basis of these lecturers' perceptions. Finally, the EFL university lecturers had more favorable perspectives on the genre-based approach in comparison with the process-oriented approach. Figure 1, shows these results:

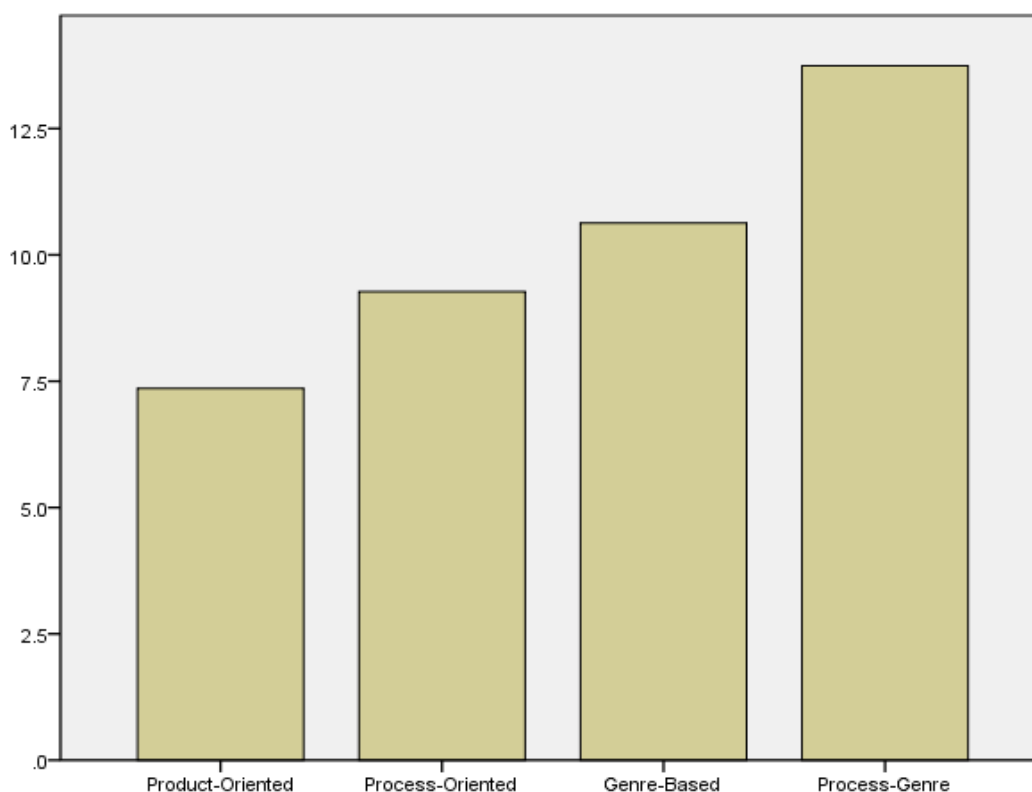


Figure 1. Comparison among the EFL university lecturers' perceptions of product-oriented, process-oriented, genre-based, and process-genre writing instruction approaches.

In the second phase of the qualitative data analysis, the researcher made an effort to answer the second research question of the present study based on the data that he had collected during the observation sessions in the classrooms of the participants of the study. This section answers the second research question based on the analysis of the collected observation data:

RQ2: How teachers teach EFL writing to their students in the classrooms?

In order to determine the EFL lecturers' approaches to the instruction of the second language writing, the researcher analyzed the notes that he had taken during the observation sessions in the classes of each of the participants. The close perusal of these notes accentuated the fact that, there were large discrepancies between these lecturers' perceptions of their writing instruction and their actual instructional practices in the context of the classroom. More specifically, the majority of these lecturers adopted a product-oriented approach to the teaching of writing in their classes. Contrary to the obtained data on the participants' perceptions of writing instruction, fifty-six of the participants provided their learners with model texts and asked them to write a similar text based on their analysis of the target language. Moreover, forty-three of the participants taught certain vocabulary items and grammatical structures prior to the beginning of the writing tasks in order to facilitate the process of the learners' writing. Furthermore, fifty-eight of the participants asked the learners to carry out the writing tasks in an individual way. Finally, fifty-two of the lecturers highlighted the significance of the use of accurate second language forms in the final product of the learners' writing tasks.

In addition, the close examination of the observation data showed that a minority of the university lecturers adopted the process-oriented, genre-based, and process-genre approaches to the teaching of writing in their classes. For instance, seven of the participants (e.g. participant 18 & participant 67) adopted a process-oriented approach to the instruction of writing. These lecturers prompted the learners to review their classmates' writing tasks during the process of writing. Moreover, they held conferences with the learners at various stages of writing task performance and provided them with constructive feedback on the diverse aspects of their writing tasks.

Moreover, three of the university lecturers (e.g. participant 37) adopted a genre-based approach to the teaching of writing. These lecturers followed the stages of the process-oriented approach, made an effort to pay attention to the social and cultural considerations, made the learners aware of the genre-based features of diverse pieces of writing, and assisted the learners to develop effective problem-solving skills. Finally, two of the participants (i.e. participant 14 & participant 48) adopted a process-genre approach to writing instruction. The

observation of these lecturers' instructional practices accentuated the fact that they integrated the product-oriented, process-oriented and genre-based approaches. These lecturers encouraged the learners to collaborate with their peers during their task performance, made an effort to empower the learners to develop critical thinking skills, and monitored the learners' writing task performance when they completed the pertinent tasks with the assistances of their group members.

Subsequent to the quantitative and qualitative data analyses of the present study, the researcher strived to examine the differences between the results of these types of analyses. This section makes an endeavor to answer the third research question of the present study:

RQ3: Are there any differences between teachers' perceptions and their practices concerning teaching writing?

The examination of the results of the quantitative and qualitative data analysis of the writing instruction questionnaire and interview data highlighted the fact that, the process-genre approach was the most preferred approach based on the university lecturers' perceptions of writing instruction. On the other hand, the product-oriented approach was the least preferred approach on the basis of these lecturers' perceptions. Finally, the EFL university lecturers had more favorable perspectives on the genre-based approach in comparison with the process-oriented approach. In stark contrast to these results, the findings of the qualitative data analysis of observation data showed that the product-oriented, process-oriented, genre-based, and process-genre approaches were the first, the second, the third, and the fourth most widely adopted approaches to the instruction of the second language writing in the relevant classes. Consequently, it can be argued that, there were great differences between the lecturers' perceptions and their practices concerning writing instruction. After comparing the university lecturers' writing instruction perceptions and practices, the researcher made an effort to determine the participants' approaches to the teaching of second language writing. This section answers the fourth research question of the present study:

RQ4: How EFL writing is taught at Iranian universities?

The examination of the observation data showed that, in contrast to the university lecturers' perceptions of their writing instruction, the preponderance of the participants of the study adopted a product-oriented approach to the instruction of writing in their classrooms. Therefore, it can be argued that, EFL writing is taught based on a product-oriented approach to the teaching of writing at Iranian universities. The implications of the study for the EFL teacher trainers, syllabus designers, and teachers summarized as below:

4. 1. Implications for EFL Teacher Trainers

The findings of the present study highlighted the fact that, contrary to the university lecturers' perceptions of their writing instruction, the majority of the lecturers adopted a product-oriented approach to the teaching of writing. Considering this issue, it is clear that the teacher trainers have to make the teachers aware of the utility of the more communicative approaches to the teaching of writing. More specifically, the trainers have to make the teachers cognizant of the fact that the product-oriented approach is not the orthodox approach to the instruction of writing. That is, they should raise the teachers' awareness of the fact that the process-genre, genre-based and process-oriented approaches can be more practical and effective than the product-oriented approach if the teachers utilize them based on their learners' requirements.

4.2. Implications for EFL Syllabus Designers

Based on the obtained results of the present study, it can be argued that the EFL syllabus designers have to overhaul both the EFL teachers' manuals and the language learners' EFL textbooks. To be more specific, the syllabus designers have to provide the EFL teachers with the manuals that contain adequate information on the theoretical and practical considerations of the various approaches to the instruction of second language writing. These manuals might empower the teachers to adopt the communicative approaches (e.g. process-oriented approach) to the teaching of writing in an effective way. Furthermore, the manuals might assist the teachers to integrate the various approaches to the teaching of writing and provide their learners with efficacious second language writing instruction.

4.3. Impactions for the EFL Teachers

The results of the present study highlighted the fact that, most of the university lecturers adopted the product-oriented approach and disregarded the more communicative approaches to the teaching of the writing skill. Based on these findings, it can be stated that, the EFL teachers have to attend various international teacher training courses, conferences, seminars, and workshops in order to become familiar with the theoretical perspectives on the diverse approaches to the teaching of writing and the practical considerations of the pertinent approaches. Attending these courses, conferences, seminars and workshops might empower the teachers to put their theories into practice, get past their comfort zone, and adopt an eclectic (i.e. process-genre) approach to the teaching of second language writing. Furthermore, it can be argued that, the EFL teachers should develop specific writing tasks and have to adopt a process-genre approach to the instruction of writing in order to empower the language learners to hone their writing skill in an appropriate way.

Conclusion

The present study made an endeavor to determine Iranian EFL university lecturers' perceptions of writing instruction. Moreover, it strived to specify these lecturers' actual writing instructional approaches and practices in their classes. Finally, it tried to examine the differences between the lecturers' writing instruction perceptions and practices in the context of the classroom. The results of the study showed that: a) process-genre approach was the most preferred approach based on the university lecturers' perceptions of writing instruction; b) the product-oriented approach was the least preferred approach on the basis of these lecturers' perceptions; and c) the EFL university lecturers had more favorable perspectives on the genre-based approach in comparison with the process-oriented approach. Furthermore, the analysis of the observation data evinced that product-oriented, process-oriented, genre-based, and process-genre approaches were the first, the second, the third, and the fourth most widely adopted approaches to the instruction of the second language writing in the relevant classes. Finally, the comparison between the results of the survey-based data and the observation data accentuated the fact that there were great differences between the lecturers' perceptions and their practices concerning the teaching of writing.

On the basis of the results of the study, it was noted that the EFL teacher trainers should make the teachers aware of the utility of the more communicative approaches to the teaching of writing. Moreover, it was noted that, the EFL syllabus designers have to overhaul both the EFL teachers' manuals and the language learners' EFL textbooks and should provide the EFL teachers with the manuals that contain adequate information on the theoretical and practical considerations of the various approaches to the instruction of second language writing. Finally, it was pointed out that the EFL teachers have to attend various international teacher training courses, conferences, seminars, and workshops in order to become familiar with the theoretical perspectives on the diverse approaches to the teaching of writing and the practical considerations of the pertinent approaches. It was mentioned that the present study suffered from a number of limitations and delimitations since it: focused only on the university lecturers in Guilan province, did not examine the impact of the participants' age on their instructional perceptions and practices, did not include novice teachers, and did not deal with the other academic settings. Finally, it was concluded that the future studies have to deal with the aforementioned limitations and delimitations of the present study in both the foreign and second language learning contexts.

Suggestions for Further Research

There is a need for more in-depth and comprehensive studies of second language writing instruction in order to provide sufficient information on the EFL instructors' perceptions of their writing instruction and their actual instructional practices in the context of the classroom. The future studies have to deal with the aforementioned limitations and delimitations of the present study. More specifically, these studies have to include larger samples and should select their participants from among both experienced and novice teachers. Moreover, they need to examine the impact of the language teachers' gender on their writing instruction perceptions and practices. Furthermore, the future studies should be conducted in both the foreign and second language learning contexts. Finally, these studies have to examine the language teachers' writing instruction perceptions and practices in diverse academic settings including schools and language institutes.

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