

Recent developments in assessing writing motivation constructs

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The beginning of writing motivation research dates back to the mid-1970s. As a result of the growing research on writing motivation since that time, it has been represented in an increasing number of constructs. This paper reviews and discusses the historical developments in assessing the eight main writing motivation constructs researched so far. In highlighting the relevant assessment issues, the author depends on a framework in which these eight writing motivation constructs are grouped into four types: a) attitudinal/dispositional perceptions (writing apprehension, attitude towards writing, and the perceived value of writing); b) situational feelings and actions (writing anxiety, and the motivational regulation of writing); c) writing ability beliefs (writing self-efficacy and self-concept); and d) writing learning goals (i.e., writing achievement goal orientations). The author discusses the measures used for assessing each main writing motivation construct and the ones similar to it. The paper provides tables summarizing the scales of each construct, and highlights some pertinent issues, including the construct validity of the measures used, the terminological choice given to the construct, and the subtypes of some constructs. The discussion of the writing motivation assessment issues covered in the paper indicates the need for building well-represented operationalizations of some constructs (writing apprehension/attitude, self-concept, and the perceived value of writing) and purer measures for others (writing anxiety and self-efficacy). Other implications for future writing motivation assessment research are also discussed.