

Developments in classroom-based research on L2 writing in pen-and-paper and digital environments

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In this presentation, I examine classroom-based research on L2 writing in the last two decades – i.e., from 2001 to 2020, with specific attention to the publication patterns in the *Journal of Second Language Writing (JSLW)*, the flagship journal of the field.

My review has yielded a total of 75 classroom-based studies, accounting for 21.5% of the 349 published in *JSLW* over the last 20 years. Such research, including both investigations undertaken by the teachers themselves (i.e. teacher-researchers) and those by external researchers, is intended to generate insight into the writing classroom through studying different aspects of teaching, learning and assessment of writing in naturalistic classroom contexts. Analysis of the literature reveals three major research strands: (1) focus on teachers and teaching; (2) focus on classroom assessment; and (3) focus on students and student learning of writing. The large majority of classroom-based studies (75%) address the learner/learning aspect of L2 writing, with 18% focusing on teachers and teaching, and 7% dealing with classroom assessment. Of the research studies that address student learning of writing, about 20% (11 out of 56) have taken place in digital environments with the large majority (9 out of 11) published in the last five years. While classroom-based research on L2 writing in the last 20 years has been conducted in 15 different countries (such as Canada, China, Japan, Korea, Spain, and Thailand), not surprisingly the majority of studies (45.3%) have taken place in the USA. Equally unsurprising is that the bulk of the classroom-based research (78.7%) has been conducted in the college/university context, with only 13.3% in secondary, 6.7% in elementary, and 1.3% in kindergarten contexts.

In the presentation, I provide a critical discussion of the major research focuses and themes, key findings, theories, and research methodologies. I also identify potential research gaps that inform future directions for classroom-based research on L2 writing.