

Book review

Teaching and researching writing

Hyland, K. (2016). *Teaching and researching writing: Third edition*. New York: Routledge | 314 pages – ISBN: 9781138859463

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In his book *Teaching and researching writing*, from 2016, Ken Hyland expands on his previous editions of the book to explore what is known in the field of writing as well as the current dynamic contributions to the field. While he kept much of the dominant paradigms of writing consistent in this third edition, he provides new additions by illustrating the electronic turn and its pedagogical implications with updated publications since the second edition of the book in 2009. The contexts of the book include Asian, Australasian, European and North American contexts.

In the introduction Hyland guides the reader through his purpose, which includes the acknowledgement of the ever-evolving field of writing, importance of identifying, exploring and elaborating applications of prominent frameworks, and advocating for the intimate “cycle of practice-theory-practice” (p. xii). He also explains the structural changes and the retained components of this third edition. While preserving the style of the book to present the topics accessibly, Hyland explains the addition of new chapters and sections, and also describes that the Sections II and III have been swapped, placing *Researching* before *Teaching*, to show how research informs teaching.

Contents and themes

The book is composed of four different sections: *Understanding writing*, *Researching writing*, *Teaching writing*, and *References and resources*. The first section *Understanding writing* has three chapters that provide conceptual survey of writing and the key issues and questions that are influencing writing. Section II *Researching writing* discusses the variety of writing research approaches that include research topics, designs, and methodologies.



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These approaches are all grounded in classical and up-to-date literature and Hyland evaluates these different research practices. Section III *Teaching writing* looks at the connection of theoretical frameworks and classroom practices by providing examples of actual courses and materials from international contexts. The last section *References and resources* gives the reader a chance to explore the different areas, texts and sources on writing.

Hyland discusses *An overview of writing* (Chapter 1), *Key issues in writing* (Chapter 2), and *Quandaries and possibilities* (Chapter 3) in the first section. Here, the section focuses on three broad orientations (text, writer, and reader-oriented understandings) of researching and teaching writing, presenting writing as a social and interactive act, and addressing the current challenges for teachers of writing. Hyland does not limit himself by only surveying the major frameworks, but he additionally challenges these dominant camps of thought. He urges the reader to recognize the act of writing as social practices deeply involved in various contexts, which he seamlessly transitions to the key issues and pedagogical implications that expand from important ideas of the cognitive individual practice. Throughout the section, Hyland engages the reader to raise questions about the topics occupying the current field.

In section II, *Researching writing*, Hyland first encourages the reader to understand the practicality of research. Addressing the tendency of teachers seeing “teaching and researching as entirely separate things,” he addresses research as “central to what we do as teachers” (p. 73). Hyland concretely lays out the steps of research by showing the intersectionality of theory and practice and starting with design, methods, and topics by emphasizing, “the importance of research to both our understanding of writing and to the practices involved teaching it” (p. 119). Hyland starts the section with practitioner research then turns to a different group of research that aims to paint a broader landscape of writing and writing practices. He illustrates a more complex research approach that include genre, corpus, case study, ethnographic, literacy and synthesis research, which both present exemplary research projects and demonstrate the rich variety of writing research topics.

Drawing parallels from Chapter 1, the third section *Teaching writing* starts on the three broad understandings of writing and how these perspectives transfer to the classroom. Hyland continues to address the connection of classroom practice and theories and frameworks, recognizing how it will be a continual challenge to “approach teaching methods with an informed and critical eye” (p. 167). Chapter 8 *Teaching writing: Classes and courses* and Chapter 9 *Teaching writing: Materials and practices* demonstrate how practice draws on writing research through explicit and systematic descriptions of examples by discussing the approach, structure, feedback, assessments and his conclusions. Also, the use of actual writing courses illustrates authenticity, which will serve teachers in practical ways.

Finally Hyland provides an extensive last section of references and resources. This section outlines the topics that are understood and also areas that need further research, which will be incredibly useful for teachers and researchers of writing.

Thoughts

In his book Hyland remains committed to his intention of the third edition of the book. In addition to his new sections, which include discussion of technology, identity, plagiarism, error correction, automated marking and the dominance of English, he extensively updated new findings and thinking on old topics. With some overlap, there are more than a hundred additional citations in the first three sections of the book, demonstrating the up-to-date coverage of the different topics.

Addressing the gap between theory and practice was one of the central purposes of Hyland in this book, and the structure of the book exemplifies this very connection. As a seasoned research and teacher, Hyland addresses his reader like a mentor. Throughout the different sections, Hyland evaluates projects and frameworks and draws out implications and limitations for novice teachers, researchers, and those who are journeying simultaneously. He then points out the needed extension of different areas of writing and facilitates further research directions for the readers. Not only does he connect theoretical concepts and practice, Hyland connects readers to the robust field of writing.