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Attempted Discussions On The Ideals Of Good English Writing Teachers

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims at discussing effective and suitable ideas and attitudes for instructors of English writing, and providing the benefits of increasing the diversities in English writing courses for English and foreign language majoring students. The assignment is developed through the foundations of personal experiences of learning and teaching, the professional theories on textbooks in the course of teaching, and consultations among tutors in the field of writing. Concluding with the expectations to enhance students' interests in writing and widening the possible career paths, the paper receives positive feedbacks from professors, and its targets are considered into the lectures of some courses of the Foreign Language and Literature Department in Feng-Chia University.

Key Words:

English. Writing. Teaching. Teachers Students Relationship.

試論英語寫作教師之理想特質

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摘要

本報告旨在討論英外語本科系教師于寫作教學中可採用的概念、態度、以及多角化教學可能之助益。本文內容發展于自身學習及教學經驗，文獻課本中專業的理論，以及與英文寫作教授的諮詢與建議的統整。總結以上的內容，文章期許能給予教師教學建議，試增進學生於英文寫作學習中的興趣，並開廣其未來可能之專業路線。本文內容應可為逢甲大學外文系考量。

關鍵詞: 英文寫作，教學，師生關係。

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It is crucial for English major students to obtain reasonable standard of reading, speaking and writing skills before graduate; however, students often encounter obstacles during the trainings, and those with lesser confidence may be intimidated in the course of training. Thus, in the process of achieving more professional and efficient writing skills, students need instructors to cultivate and nurture their interests and specialties in the area. Good writing teachers should not only be skillfully in writing, they must also be willing to help students with their problems, and be able to transfer their knowledge to the students. In brief, ideal writing teachers should be professionally equipped in the area of both writing and teaching; second, they should be willing to introduce different styles of writing, and lastly, possess positive attitudes towards their teaching and students.

Mere mastering the skills and degrees in their professional ground may not be sufficient enough for intellectuals to become good writing teachers, there are other requirements. First, teachers need other techniques and knowledge to help enhance students' interest passion in writing, which includes the skill of effective communication and conveyance. In the writing classes, teachers try their best to

translate their knowledge to understandable words to the students, who, however, may not always perceive the ways teachers have planned and expected. Due to the different backgrounds of students', they could expose diverse reactions to similar inputs. Furthermore, the ways students' mistakes are corrected could influence students' attitude in learning. While lecturing and modifying students' errors in writing, instructors should try different methods that are suitable with the entire class, and acceptable to different individuals without causing unnecessary discomfort or embarrassments. While reviewing and amending student's works, instructors should be able to discover the habitual tendencies of students' mistake making, which will help avoid repetitions of errors sooner; henceforth, it will increase students' self esteem with their own writings and create more pleasant and positive atmosphere for learning. With the help of professional writing instructors, we as students can look forward to our future with clearer visions.

Introducing different styles in writing and encouraging creative ideas may as well be a target for good writing teachers. Even though academic writing seems more crucial for students at a pre-intermediate level, the teaching of different genres in writing should also be considered and included into the course of teaching. Apparently, the multiple approaches in writings genres could stimulate students' developing of interest in different grounds of writing, and could also broaden their future career path. As students advance onto intermediate level of writing, lecturers may want to put more emphasis on aspects dissimilar from academic writing in the course. Tutors of writing could introduce the class with the creative components in writing, such as science fiction, romance, documentary, poems, and stories of any kind. Moreover, teachers could discuss the plot, settings, characters, description, word choice, imagery and, etc, of the selected materials with the class. The additional education could enhance students' reading, writing, creative thinking abilities, and it could also

generate new energies and topics for students to regenerate and include in their future productions. One cannot deny the essentialness of academic writing, but it only provides learners with the skill of “academic” writing, which excludes the creative and exciting elements in writing. The extra trainings not only insert students with broader views of the world, and enable them to choose more diversely in the career market. Hence, good writing teachers should cover the range of different styles and techniques, and spur students’ aspirations in different styles of writing.

Furthermore, ideal writing teachers should recognize the importance of student teacher relationship, which grows gradually via the course. Writing mentors must at first be faithful with their own methods of teaching before they could start cultivating their bond with the student. According to the situations encountered in different classrooms, teachers should have the ability to adjust their methods and gradually personalized it with different classroom conditions. After the reestablishment of teacher’s styles and methods in different classrooms, they could spend time in discovering the possible distress of students’ in writing classrooms. For any levels of writing course, teachers may encounter students with less confidence, patience, or skills; they need assistances and guidance, but the continually correction on their writings may produce discouragement against the entire field. If such dilemma in students is found, the teachers should not be discouraged with their teaching strategies, and continue the course by increasing the adaptability of the teaching. Before becoming upset and angry of unsatisfying students’ outputs, teachers should first evaluate students’ performances with flexibility and fairness on their course assignments. When students have done a decent piece of writing, lavish the praises; on another hand, if unpleasant works are handed in, be rational and amiable. Depends on the approximate standard of different individuals, teachers could insert different feedbacks, which could result in more friendly atmospheres in writing classrooms.

Then, teachers could start letting students understand the importance of their responsibilities in class, and the consequences for sloppy performances. Assuming that all teachers are faithful with their teaching methods and their students, successful accomplishments could be predicted. However, teachers who prepare attentively for classes, should avoid over-expectations towards students, and promote those who work hard to keep up with entire class. The performance of the teachers could also affect the students, and it is clear that those who received less lenient classrooms grow up to be more independent, organized and responsible individuals. Whether tense or lax, the jurisdiction is in the hands of the teachers. “Perfecting the tasks, after having sharpened the tools” teachers must master all the knowledge in the field, achieve in communication skills, and obtain flexibility in methods before they reach their targets in the career of teaching.

There’s a Chinese saying “A decade from a sprout to a flourishing tree, a century for the career of education to reach accomplishments”. Teaching is not a simple career, and teachers not only have to be knowledgeable, they also need to have the skills and attitudes suitable for the profession. To become a good writing teacher, there could even be more requirements. Nevertheless, as long as one has the essential knowledge for teaching and writing, is willing to introduce different styles of writing, and possess positive attitudes towards their teaching and students, then it is up to the students whether or not they want to be benefited for a once in a life time opportunity to become a good writer.

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