

## Second Language Writing

Second Edition

Authoritative and accessible, this book introduces the theory and practice of teaching writing to students of EFL/ESL learners. While assuming no specialist knowledge, Ken Hyland systematically sets out the key issues of course design, lesson planning, texts and materials, tasks, feedback and assessment and how current research can inform classroom practice. This second edition is completely revised to include up-to-date work on automated feedback, plagiarism, social media, Virtual Learning Environments and teacher workload issues. It takes the stance that student writers not only need realistic strategies for drafting and revising, but also a clear understanding of genre to structure their writing experiences according to the expectations of particular communities of readers and the constraints of particular contexts. Review exercises, reflection questions, plentiful examples and a new extensive glossary make the book invaluable to both prospective and practising teachers alike.

KEN HYLAND is Professor of Applied Linguistics in Education at the University of East Anglia. His research focuses on writing and academic discourse, having published over 240 articles and 27 books on these topics. He is founding co-editor of the *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*.

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-47071-1 – Second Language Writing  
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**Ken Hyland**

University of East Anglia

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-47071-1 — Second Language Writing  
Ken Hyland  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom  
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India  
79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108470711](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108470711)

DOI: 10.1017/9781108693974

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First published 2003

Second Edition 2019

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ International Ltd, Padstow Cornwall

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

Names: Hyland, Ken, author.

Title: Second language writing / Ken Hyland.

Description: Second edition. | Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2019. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018057386 | ISBN 9781108470711 (Hardback : alk. paper) |

ISBN 9781108456418 (Paperback: alk. paper)

Subjects: LCSH: Language and languages – Study and teaching. | Rhetoric – Study and teaching. | Second language acquisition.

Classification: LCC P53.27 .H95 2019 | DDC 808/.042–dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2018057386>

ISBN 978-1-108-47071-1 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-108-45641-8 Paperback

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## PREFACE

The first edition of this book appeared back in 2003. That seems, and indeed *is*, a long time ago – the same year as the invasion of Iraq and the release of the final film in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. Those events seem historically remote now and second language writing has moved on too. While I was pleased with the original version of this book, I didn't expect it to be still available 15 years later so I welcome this opportunity to update it and the support of Rebecca Taylor at CUP for pushing the project along.

Some things haven't changed, of course. Writing remains among the most important skills that second language students need to develop and the ability to teach it is still central to the expertise of a good language teacher. What we know about writing and how we might best teach it also remains much the same, but the field has certainly changed. Research has extended what we know about how people use new electronic genres and identified the features of specialised discourses, both of which have enriched writing instruction. English has also continued to expand its influence into more corners of the planet and writing to establish itself as a key metric in the life chances of millions of people around the world: a measure of educational success, academic competence, professional advancement and institutional recognition.

Teachers, too, it seems to me, have realised the importance of research and of the need to innovate their practices and embrace new ones, turning to a range of electronic, online and social media resources as well as making greater use of corpora and what the web has to offer. The field is becoming more professionalised with teachers gaining higher degrees and other qualifications and more schools and countries requiring teachers to be qualified, ensuring that standards increase. The days of gap-year travellers earning food money for teaching in Macau or Venezuela are numbered. Teachers are also finding themselves working in new contexts, both at home and in far-flung parts of the world as, for now, the spread of English marches relentlessly on. We find ourselves teaching not only in state schools, private language institutes and universities around the world, but also in migrant reception camps, new arrival centres, corporate training divisions, evening classes for second-generation migrants, TV studios and prisons. All these contexts present us with different challenges and opportunities, but thanks to the web and research, there is a developing sense of community, experience and research to draw on.

So, second language writing has changed considerably over 15 years and this edition attempts to bring things up to date, offering a synthesis of theory, research and practice to help teachers of *language* become teachers of *writing*. This book, like the first edition, is written for practising teachers and teachers in training who have little or no experience of teaching writing to students from non-English-speaking backgrounds. More specifically, it attempts to meet the needs of teachers who are teaching or are about to teach students who speak English as a second or foreign language in the contexts mentioned above. I have tried to pull together the theory and practice of teaching writing to present an accessible and practical introduction to the subject without assuming any prior theoretical knowledge or experience of teaching.

The book is founded on the premise that an effective teacher is one who is able to make informed choices about the methods, materials and procedures to use in the classroom based on a clear understanding of the current attitudes and practices in his or her profession. A strong teacher is a reflective teacher; and reflection requires the knowledge to relate classroom activities to relevant research and theory. The book's practical approach towards second language writing attempts to provide a basis for this kind of reflection and understanding. In the text the reader will find a clear stance towards teaching writing which emphasises the view that writing involves composing skills and knowledge about texts, contexts and readers. It helps to develop the idea that writers not only need realistic strategies for drafting and revising, but also a clear understanding of genre to structure their writing experiences according to the demands and constraints of particular contexts. This emphasis on strategy, language and context is followed throughout the book.

As I mentioned above, I recognise the range of teaching situations in which teachers work and the fact we find students with different motivations, proficiencies, language backgrounds and needs in those classes. But to see the teaching of second language writing as a coherent endeavour, the text also treats these contexts and students as similar in many ways by systematically setting out the key issues and principles of classroom teaching. This means addressing topics such as assessing needs, designing syllabuses, writing materials, developing tasks, using technology, giving feedback and evaluating writing. In this way I hope to provide teachers with the resources to plan, implement and evaluate a programme of writing instruction in any teaching situation in which they may find themselves.

As you read this book you will be asked to engage with the ideas presented in a number of ways. **Reflection tasks** occur regularly through the chapters and provide an opportunity for you to think about your own views on a topic and potential needs as a writing teacher. In addition, each chapter concludes with a series of **Discussion Questions and Activities** which go beyond the immediate situation to encourage you to think about and apply some of the ideas. In this edition I have also included a short list of **further readings** for those interested in going a bit deeper into a topic, and a **glossary** of many of the key terms used in the book to help you avoid getting lost in a lot of new concepts. I hope you enjoy the book and find it useful in your journey to becoming a teacher of second language writing.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Textbooks cannot be written in a vacuum and I am grateful to the students, colleagues and friends who have encouraged me, discussed ideas, offered insights and provided tasks, data and screenshots which have contributed to this book.

I tend to write in a solitary way but feedback is always welcome and I want to thank Heidi Wright of Carnegie Mellon University and Michael Yeldon of Hong Kong University for their comments on the book as users. I also want to thank Lillian Wong, for her constant support and encouragement.

In particular, I want to acknowledge those students who for over 20 years have taken my MA classes at the Institute of Education in London, City University in Hong Kong and at Hong Kong University and helped me build an understanding of the topics covered in this book.

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Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-47071-1 – Second Language Writing  
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Frontmatter  
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