

Teacher Self-Efficacy and Writing Practices for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students?

This study examines writing beliefs and practices of teachers of deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) students.

Study Questions

1. What levels of self-efficacy for teaching writing, attitudes toward writing, and epistemological beliefs about writing are held by elementary grade teachers of DHH students?
2. How frequently do these teachers teach writing and support students as they write?
3. How is teacher self-efficacy related to teaching and supporting students' writing?

Key Terms

Teacher beliefs

- determine determine what decisions teachers make in their classroom instruction

Teacher self-efficacy

- Involves beliefs in one's capabilities to teach effectively.
- Is hypothesized that teachers with higher efficacy are better teachers, more committed to teaching, evidence higher levels of job satisfaction, and positively impact students' achievement.
- Teacher self-efficacy can be enhanced through instruction.

Attitudes and epistemological beliefs

- Attitudes refers to the extent of someone liking or disliking something.
 - Teachers holding positive thoughts about writing are more likely to teach writing.
- Epistemological beliefs range from believing writing development is fixed and innate, where learners cannot change much about it, to believing writing development is determined by personal effort and practice.
- Epistemological beliefs determine how teachers think students learn to write.
 - Another aspect of epistemological beliefs is the extent to which one believes in the authority of writing experts. This aspect ranges from believing good writing is uncertain to believing in experts' judgement about what is good writing.

Findings

Teacher beliefs

- Teachers in the study had relatively high self-efficacy about teaching writing.
- Most teachers had positive attitudes about writing.
- Teachers slightly agreed that learning to write involves effort and process. They moderately disagreed that writing development is innate.
- Teachers were ambivalent about whether writing knowledge comes from authorities and experts.

Writing practices

- Teachers did not frequently teach DHH students writing skills and apply activities to support their writing development.
- Some activities did occur more often:
 - Teachers reported that they provided reinforcement for writing daily, and set goals, provided feedback, asked students to do prewriting activities, and taught planning, grammar, and the differences between American sign language and English grammar at least weekly.

Teacher self-efficacy predicts writing instructional practices, but teacher epistemological beliefs about writing and attitude towards writing do not predict writing instructional practices.

Teaching suggestions

Efforts to enhance teachers' self-efficacy to teach writing and improve writing practices is likely to have a positive impact on the writing of DHH students.