

Reading as a starting point for extended writing opportunities in lower secondary English classrooms

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This paper presents characteristics of four English teachers' approaches to extended writing in lower secondary classrooms in Norway, including characteristics of the opportunities given, the framing of the writing event and type of writing tasks, what aspects of writing the teachers focused on in their instruction, and how the students were scaffolded during the writing process. The paper builds on video data from the Linking Instruction and Student Experiences (LISE) project at the University of Oslo. Out of seven English classrooms recorded over two school years, four classrooms offered opportunities for extended writing, one in 9th grade and three in 10th grade. Only eight out of 60 lessons across included extended writing opportunities, being closely linked to prior reading of narrative and informational texts. The findings showed that when opportunities for extended writing were prioritised, multiple practices identified as effective writing instruction were present. Across the four classrooms, all the students had engaged in various reading and prewriting activities that assisted them in collecting and reflecting on the content. The opportunities were genre-focused, purpose-driven, and process-oriented, and different aspects of writing were emphasized in the same event, for example grammar and genre features. The findings also showed that the four teachers provided their students various scaffolds during the writing process that contributed to assist the students in composing and structuring their texts, including model texts, writing frames, writing strategies, and feedback. The extent to which the teachers highlighted specific features of these scaffolds and modelled the writing skills being targeted in the task, were all closely linked to the initial reading of printed narratives and online information. Hence, this study contributes to research on how reading and writing is linked, and how writing is framed and taught in classroom settings in English lessons in lower secondary schools in Norway.