
Building Effective Writing Skills in English Language Classrooms

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Abstract

In this era of globalisation, communication is an important aspect of all professions. The main tool of communication is language, and the latter cannot occur without meaningful communication. Even though messages may be transmitted by way of signs and gestures, these approaches do not address human needs completely. The language helps people to communicate effectively their ideas, thoughts and feelings to people. This is the reason why individuals acquire linguistic competencies in order to uphold social and interpersonal associations. In order to study any language, people have to obtain the corresponding skills related to it. When English is a foreign or a second language, the learners have to acquire all the necessary language skills in order to be able to communicate. Out of these skills, writing is usually more difficult among English Language Learners compared to listening, speaking and reading. Due to the complexity of phonological, morphological, semantic, and syntactic characteristics of writing, EFL and ESL instructors must embrace more practices and classroom activities in order to enhance the writing skills of students.

Thus, the teachers are expected to use diverse methods, new approaches and effective solutions to enhance the writing skills of English Language Learners. This paper primarily focuses on the nature of effective writing skills in the English language teaching. It emphasizes the significance of language proficiency and specifically the skills that one should have to study English with a specific focus on the writing proficiency, which is usually a challenge when it comes to non-native and second-language learners. The study also provides helpful suggestions to teachers to implement different strategies and techniques in bid to improve the performance of their students in writing. Moreover, it implies that the English learners must rely on the instructions of their teachers and collaborate with their classmates in order to enhance their writing abilities.

Keywords: writing skills, English language learners, proficiency, peer work, phonological, morphological, etc.

Introduction:

Globalisation has brought a lot of transformations in the field of communication in the twenty first century. The language is the most common communication tool and human beings learn it so as to have effective communication with others. That is why, people strive to acquire linguistic proficiency, and the language competencies that are associated with the former to be able to communicate efficiently and ensure good interpersonal relationships within society. To achieve their ambitions, objectives, and goals, people strive to master a language and the related skills. Because communication is a key to success in any sphere, people strive to master a suitable language in a methodical manner (Cumming 2001). Their language acquisition is not just in order to communicate but also to position themselves as successful members of the society. Learners can be successful in learning a new language with a lot of determination and continuous effort. Nevertheless, it takes much practice and commitment to master a new language. The first stage can be associated with some difficulties faced by learners because of their exposure to new words, grammatical patterns, pronunciation patterns, and ways of using the language. Learning a new language can have a different experience to different individuals (Hedge 2005). As such, proficiency in a new language requires regular practice, as well as regular work to make such language proficient so that learners can interact well with the people around the globe.

Language enables human beings to communicate their ideas, opinions, thoughts and feelings. Without language, successful communication will be a challenge. The individual and professional ambitions of the modern world tend to be fulfilled by the means of communication using a common language spoken all over the world. Here, proficiency in language has become very critical to effective communication (Issacson 1996). Good communication can only be realized when there is good language development. Therefore, language skills, particularly writing are one of the aspects of ESL and EFL learners that should be paid specific attention to, since these skills are the means of communication in the modern society. In the twenty first century, individuals communicate with others globally, nationally, states and locations. In order to interact effectively with other people across the world, a common language that is well understood is required. This is the role played by English, and several learners, in a bid to accomplish their personal, academic and professional objectives, seek to learn English.

The proficiency in English involves an equitable practice in the four main pillars of language listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Listening and reading are usually regarded as a receptive mode and speaking and writing a productive mode in language education; the combination of reception and production of language in spoken and written forms constitutes the four conventional skills of language use (Council of Europe, 2020; Nation, 2022). These skills are interdependent and therefore English Language Learners (ELLs) must not overlook any of them. An effective English program must thus integrate an input, output, learning and fluency building in a manner that allows students to comprehend as well as apply language appropriately in real-life situations (Newton and Nation, 2021). In purposeful communication, productive skills, particularly speaking and writing are sometimes more observable demonstrations of competence since they involve a learner managing vocabulary, grammar, discourse, and awareness of the audience (Council of Europe, 2020; Hyland, 2019).

Listening is one of these skills but it forms a core of second-language development since it provides the learners with a chance to access pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and discourse patterns as they are actually used (Vandergrift, 2007; Goh & Vandergrift, 2022). Simultaneously, ELLs tend to have difficulties with listening as verbal information has to be processed instantly and a learner might not be able to cope with the speed, unknown words and connected or correlative speech (Vandergrift, 2007; Richards, 2009). This is the reason why listening instruction should not just be restricted to testing comprehension as it should be taught in a way that learners are instructed on how to listen. Effective pedagogy assists the students to perform both bottom-up processing including detecting sounds, words, and grammar cues and top-up processing including applying prior knowledge, context, and prediction to create meaning (Goh & Vandergrift, 2022; Richards, 2009). Strategy-based teaching is another benefit to learners to train them to find the main ideas, selective listening to find vital information, meanings based on situational cues, and to monitor what they know throughout the listening process (Goh & Vandergrift, 2022; Vandergrift, 2007). These skills could be reinforced by classroom activities like prediction of pre-listening, repeated listening, taking notes, reflecting, and using online resources, and learning outside of the classroom (Newton and Nation, 2021; Goh and Vandergrift, 2022).

The teachers can enhance the listening ability of students by providing them frequent opportunities to listen to English in life situations. The learners should be able to hear conversations, brief talks, stories, instructions and classroom discussion in order to get used to the sounds of English, words and patterns. The Indian curriculum documents also emphasize that language learning requires an input rich communicative setting and that knowledge of spoken language aids the learners in the transition to speaking and writing.

The listening activities must therefore not just test the memory, but also test the students to listen to the main idea, definite information, prediction and inference. Repeated listening, clear tasks, guided questions and short follow-up discussions are some of the ways in which the teachers can facilitate this process. This practice would assist learners to relate sound and meaning and also develop confidence in pronunciation and comprehension, and this progression is gradual (NCERT, 2006; CBSE, n.d.-a; Goh and Vandergrift, 2021; Richards, 2009).

Speaking is also vital, yet it is usually not easy among English Language Learners since spoken communication is a complicated process, and one must be able to think in a short period. That is why, students should be provided with supportive and frequent speaking practice in and out of the classroom. They should be engaged in pair work and group work by the teachers through discussions, interviews, role plays, debates, story telling and brief speeches. With such activities, learners have the chance to apply their vocabulary and grammar in a real communication rather than studying rules only. They also assist the students to be more confident, interactive, and fluent. In Indian school guidance, speaking and listening are considered as two skills, and the assessment is based on the interactive competence, fluency, pronunciation, and the use of language. It demonstrates that the oral practice must become regular, focused, and strongly intertwined with the classroom learning (CBSE, n.d.-a, n.d.-b; Goh & Burns, 2012).

The teachers should also establish an amicable classroom environment, in which errors are accepted as a learning process. Students talk more efficiently when they are not afraid to do so, when they can get constructive feedback and when they are willing to listen. Listening and speaking cannot be taught independently of reading and writing and all the four skills complement one another. A balanced language programme must therefore be able to mix meaningful input, meaningful output, directed language practice and fluency-building activities. Listening and speaking practices in the classroom can also be extended by incorporating audio, video, and internet-based materials, as well as can make the learning process more engaging to the students (NCERT, 2006; CBSE, n.d.-a; Newton and Nation, 2021).

Reading is a receptive skill since the learners will be able to know meaning through reading. Students in English classrooms read numerous texts including textbooks, stories, biographies, advertisements, and newspapers and other non-literary texts. According to CBSE standards in English Learning, reading involves comprehension of text, reading to enjoy, processing ideas and recognizing key features of language. By reading regularly, the learners are introduced to new vocabulary, new sentence structures and words used in the

specific subject. They also get to know how to find out the main point, where to find details, inferences and summarize what they are reading in their own language (Central Board of Secondary Education [CBSE], n.d.-a; National Council of Educational Research and Training [NCERT], 2006).

It is therefore advisable that teachers motivate the English Language Learners to read not only their text books but also newspapers, magazines, short stories, moral stories and other interesting information. Indian curriculum documents suggest an input-filled environment where the learners read to make sense and read both in and out of the classroom. Other important reading techniques that should be taught to students include skimming to get the overview of what was read and scanning to locate particular information fast. Classroom discussion and short summary tasks should be used after reading to enable learners to get a better grasp of the text. The safe and conducive classroom environment, in which all learners engage in the process, also aids them in becoming more confident and self-reliant readers (NCERT, 2006; CBSE, n.d.-a, n.d.-b).

Writing on the other hand is productive skill since the learners have to construct language themselves. It can be quite hard in most cases as the English learners are forced to think of the ideas, arrange them, select appropriate words, and use grammar and punctuation properly as well as revise the work many times. This is why writing should be a process that is taught. According to CBSE materials, process writing involves pre-writing, draft writing, revising, editing and making the final edition. They also highlight the fact that good writing involves the process of gathering ideas, sorting ideas, creating, editing and rewriting. As a teacher, one can assist the learners by providing the model texts, writing tasks, time to draft, and constructive feedback of both ideas and language. It can be achieved through peer discussion, portfolio work and repeated revision to build confidence in the students and enhance the quality of writing (CBSE, n.d.-a; CBSE, 2008; Hyland, 2019).

The writing is a challenging skill among the English Language learners. When they write using English, they need to consider ideas, sentence structure, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and paragraph organisation simultaneously. This is more difficult since the English spelling is only partially regular, whereby the written expression of a word does not necessarily reflect its pronunciation. Consequently, spelling, sentence construction, and the ability to make clear paragraphs are also the problems of a lot of learners (Edwards et al., 2024; Hyland, 2019).

Teachers ought to consider writing as a process, and not just a finished product in order to enhance writing. Students should be instructed in pre-writing, writing, revision,

editing and coming up with a final paper. They ought to also learn how to group ideas in a way that there is a start, middle and conclusion and how to relate sentences in a logical manner to ensure that the paragraph is coherent. Students can be confident in written English with the help of short guided activities, model paragraphs, vocabulary support, and frequent practice in writing paragraphs. The documents of the Indian curriculum also prescribe meaningful writing assignments that are purpose-, audience-, and real-communication linked as opposed to reliance on repetitive, overused themes (Central Board of Secondary Education [CBSE], n.d.; National Council of Educational Research and Training [NCERT], 2006; Hyland, 2019).

Writing skills can also be reinforced in classroom interaction. Group work and pair work provide the learners with an opportunity to share ideas and discuss them prior to writing, identify errors, and learn through each other. The peer-assessed learning and peer-assessment may ensure that students are more active and confident whereas the teacher feedback is also vital since it can enable the students to make the content, structure and the language of their work better in subsequent drafts. Educators ought to select the topics accordingly, which fit the level of proficiency and interests of the learners, assist the students in instances of difficulty and provide a classroom environment where revision is regarded as a natural and essential component of good writing (CBSE, n.d.; Hyland and Hyland, 2006).

Focus on Writing

The art of writing is usually regarded as one of the hardest skills among the English language learners. In comparison with listening and reading, writing demands learners to create language by themselves and deal with various issues simultaneously, including ideas, structuring, vocabulary, grammar and precision. This is why it is mentioned that writing is a complicated and challenging task in the field of second-language and foreign-language learning (Varvogli 50). According to Negari (2011), it is particularly hard to write in a second or in a foreign language in the academic environment and according to Hyland (2019) it is all about mastery over language, structure, purpose, and revision. The study of writing in a second language also revealed that the process of writing is the coordination of a range of other related skills and not grammar drills.

Due to the complexity of writing, a teacher must pay more attention to it in the classroom. The students need to be advised on how to plan, write, revise, edit and finalise their works step by step. This approach is also supported by Indian curriculum documents. NCERT points out that the process of writing conceptually should be the result of a long term language learning, and CBSE prescribes process writing as a better method of enhancing written expression in students. Thus, the EFL and ESL teachers are expected to offer sufficient classroom time, purposeful writing activities, and encouraging feedback to

ensure that learners will develop their writing skills over time and be able to perform better in academic assignments (National Council of Educational Research and Training [NCERT], 2006; Central Board of Secondary Education [CBSE], n.d.; Hyland, 2019).

Characteristics of Effective Writing Skills in English

The English language learners require a lot of support in writing as writing is a complex skill. Good writing is not dependent on grammar or vocabulary alone. Students should also know how to generate ideas, how to arrange them clearly and write towards a given purpose and audience. The writing teachers should therefore demonstrate the key elements of writing and show the students how to proceed with writing by step. It also has been found in the research on second-language writing that writing is associated with numerous types of knowledge and skills, but not only sentence-level accuracy (Hyland, 2019; CBSE, n.d.).

In the initial level, educators are advised to make learners develop confidence through providing them with simple and meaningful writing assignments. This is beneficial to students when they have model paragraphs, the teacher explains effective patterns of sentences, and also teaches the vocabulary required in the topic. They should also be guided on how to structure a paragraph by having a beginning, middle, and conclusion of that paragraph. Process writing that is recommended by the CBSE English Learning Standards specifically includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and finally preparing the final draft, grammar, spelling, punctuation and awareness of the audience (CBSE, n.d.).

The selection of the topic is also a significant issue. The writing topics that a teacher selects should be based on the needs, interests and familiarity of learners. They ought to discuss with the students before allocating a topic, engage the prior knowledge and relate classroom writing to real life and topical issues. The Indian curriculum documents underscore the fact that language learning becomes more robust when it is developed out of contextualised contexts, experiences of learners, and real materials as opposed to decontextualised exercises on their own. They also advocate input-rich settings which incorporate textbooks, learner selected texts, classroom libraries, and media among other natural resources (NCERT, 2005/2006).

Discussion before writing should also be encouraged by the teachers. Learners can be encouraged to gather ideas, identify some useful vocabulary, and feel more at ease before they start drafting, as pair work and group work can facilitate it. In the writing task, the teachers should provide instructions to the students whenever necessary, yet also leave them to think, discuss, revise, and improve their work on their own. Self-assessment and peer feedback are effective since they enable the learners to consider their writing and make an

effective change to it in subsequent drafts. Peer review and revision are clearly stated in the CBSE materials to be used in the classroom writing practice (CBSE, n.d.).

The teaching of writing ought to assist students in learning how words choice, grammar, punctuation and paragraph structure interrelate to produce meaning. Students should be taught how to select words that suit the purpose, topic and audience of the text. They must not also engage in repetition which is not necessary and should also acquire sufficient lexical range to convey ideas in a clear and natural manner. Grammar is also a necessary aspect, and it is not only the task to correct the mistakes; students should practice various sentence structures in order that their texts become more understandable, more versatile, and more efficient. Good writing is based on the unity and coherence at the paragraph level, and it implies that ideas must remain interrelated and flow around a central point. Vocabulary, style, grammar, as well as the organisation of written discourse, are regarded as the main elements of successful writing in writing on L2 composition and writing assessment, whereas cohesion has been long considered the network of semantic relations that hold parts of a text together into a meaningful whole (Ferris and Hedgcock, 2023; Halliday and Hasan, 1976)

The development of these abilities can be achieved by use of model texts, guided practice, editing tasks, peer discussion, and short paragraph-writing tasks. The use of careful choice of vocabulary, correct spelling and punctuations, proper grammar, work in groups, feedback, and intentional short writing are also emphasized in Indian curricular and teacher-support documents. New CBSE curriculum reports also still provide assessment of writing along with grammatical correctness, punctuations, and vocabulary in context. These classroom activities can be applied to English language learners in particular due to their usefulness in making the process of writing more manageable and allowing the students to gain control over the written expression progressively (National Council of Educational Research and Training [NCERT], 2005, 2015, n.d.; Central Board of Secondary Education [CBSE], 2025).

Writing with Coherence and Smooth Flow of Ideas

During writing, the flow of ideas must be coherent and smooth and the reader must be able to follow the meaning of the writer without any form of confusion. This is why the educators should demonstrate the learners how to structure their ideas logically, how to make every paragraph focused and how to make each sentence related to the corresponding cohesive devices. Cohesion is used in the analysis of discourse to denote the linguistic ties that unite a text whereas coherence is used to denote the sense and continuity of meaning throughout the text. When the learners know how such connections operate, writing becomes

more comprehensible and more useful in communication (Halliday and Hasan, 1976; Celce-Murcia and Olshtain, 2000).

Reading and writing do complement one another as well. The broad reader is introduced to vocabulary, sentence patterns, text structure, and idea development patterns. The studies on the relationship between reading and writing in the process of learning a second language indicate that reading can be a source of valuable linguistic and rhetorical support to writing development. Due to this reason, ELT learners are expected to be urged to read various types of texts and devote a habitual time to practising writing on the basis of what they read (Grabe and Zhang, 2016; Nation and Macalister, 2024).

The educators are thus advised to practice on learners to organize their thoughts, structure their sentences, and place linking words and other tools of cohesion in the right context. They must also instruct the students on how to rewrite the work to make the writing concise, grammatically correct and understandable. Existing CBSE curriculum instructions of English will also imply that the students should be able to communicate in clear, correct grammars of English, with right use of punctuations, style, tone, fluency and coherent devices. This causes coherence and cohesion to be critical components of a successful writing education among English language learners (Central Board of Secondary Education [CBSE], 2025a, 2025b; Hedge, 2005).

Conclusion

Since the writing is usually one of the most challenging language skills, it should be given enough time in the classroom and instructed using directed and meaningful practice instead of teaching it by using a single final product. Writing activities are more efficient in ELL classroom when the subject matter is recognizable, relevant, and relates to the personal experience, knowledge and imagination of the learners. Recent CBSE instructions also focus on the close-graded, contextualised activities and pair/small-group tasks in order to learn through applying the language, rather than memorising the rules.

In the cases when writing task seems to be too long or complicated, it is important that the teachers break it into smaller parts and guide the learners through each of them. Studies on scaffolding observe that when an activity is split into smaller segments or learners being shown how to perform it and the teachers slowly step down as the students feel confident and in control, they can manage to perform more difficult tasks. Practical writing instruction has also traditionally suggested the use of discussions, readings, pictures, and other encouragements as a means of assisting learners in coming up with ideas and starting writing with less difficulty. NCERT instructions also promote use of classroom discussion, peer response and constructive feedback as one of the learning activities. Such a guided

assistance can make the process of writing easier and can assist learners to remain attentive to the task.

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