

THE PRACTICAL CHALLENGES IN LEARNING/TEACHING WRITING OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Yusupova Mavluda Anvarbek kizi

PhD student of Urgench State University

E-mail address: yusupovamavluda80@gmail.com

Abstract. This thesis describes the difficulties faced by students and teachers in the process of mastering the written and spoken activity, which is a productive skill in English language teaching/learning. Its main purpose is to characterize the problems observed by teachers as difficulties in effective language acquisition by learners.

Key words: practical challenges in teaching writing, teaching methods, academic writing, productive skills, cognitive ability.

There are many consequences that could lead to major drawbacks in students’ academic performance if they have a weak foundation in writing. Writing is not only vital in order to develop their academic performance, but also contributes to their social and emotional development. Moreover, in this competitive world, writing is also one of the skills that is necessary to be acquired. Their inability to write well, may affect their chances to secure a job in the future. Therefore, this issue needs to be tackled effectively.

However, teaching writing has become difficult because of the challenges faced by the students in learning writing skills. Some of the practical challenges that are faced by the EFL (English as a foreign language) students are lack of vocabulary, poor grammar, poor spelling, students’ readiness and lack of exposure to books and reading materials.

The challenges faced by the students’ have made it challenging for teachers to teach writing skills. The challenges that are faced by the teachers to teach writing skills are difficult to motivate their students, students of diverse levels, difficult materials and time constraints to teach students. In order to improve a student’s writing ability, more attention must be given by a teacher to teach writing such as giving guidance and feedback.

Therefore, a teacher needs to be aware of the challenges faced by other English teachers in teaching writing, as well as EFL students’ problems when expressing speech and ideas in a written form. Writing assists students with their

social development and connects them to be alert with what is happening in the globe. Students have to consider the reader (teacher) and writing assignments by their subject. This task helps the students to develop their verbal communication at the same time. Despite submitted and checked home assignments, writing with friends’ feedback, make students to learn effectively together with peers and in groups.

In order to gain progress during academic years, students need to enhance their computer skills also to succeed. Error/Word correction in typing with computers such as spelling and grammar checks, can prevent writers from developing their writing skills. In fact, sometimes students are not able to practice their handwriting because of using a keyboard. It is significant for the students to use their own intelligence consciously, not depending to computers, social media, websites and applications.

Today, due to the evolution of information technology, writers are in demand to create digital media content. A content writer is needed for digital marketing corporations. News websites, social media marketing corporations and other related and non-related IT corporations need writers to help them through writing for digital marketing channels such as brand quotes, advertisement, social media posts, blogs etc.

Each student may face different challenges in learning writing. All the students are special and unique in their own ways. These challenges will somehow pull back the students from moving forward to produce a good piece of writing. The following paragraphs are about challenges faced by students in writing.

Lack of vocabulary has caused the students to face challenges in acquiring writing skills. Vocabulary is the fundamental element in constructing sentences which is the core of effective writing skills. Students almost use spoken and written words every single day to communicate their ideas, beliefs and feelings with people around them. Good vocabulary repertoire can help students to speak or write to deliver their thoughts. Usage of electronic dictionary and more reading activities can help students with limited vocabulary.

Grammar plays an important role in writing. Grammar provides information that helps the readers to understand its content. It is a structure that conveys the detailed meaning of the writer to the reader. Grammar also explains the forms and structure of words, called morphology and how they are arranged

in sentences, called syntax. By having very limited knowledge in grammar, students will face anxiety to write sentences with correct grammar. According to Muhammad Fareed et al. students make mistakes in subject-verb agreement, pronouns, tenses, articles, prepositions and basic sentence structures [5]. Grammar ability can be improved through reading activity and grammar related activities.

Poor spelling is another cause of anxiety for students in learning writing skill. Having good ability in spelling will lead to positive learning of writing skill. If the students are struggling with spellings, it will hold them back to move forward. The students have the habit to spell according to their pronunciation and this will lead to wrong spelling as mentioned by Afrin [2]. The students will either add or leave letters of the words. For an example ballon instead of balloon. The memorization of the spelling will help the students to have good spelling.

Students’ readiness is another challenge in learning writing and this was supported by Foster. In order to complete a task successfully, readiness is very important. The readiness can either be physical readiness and mental preparedness. If this is not occurring, students will be having challenges in writing. Students will not be mentally prepared to learn in the classroom if they are not ready. It is very important for the students to be ready before they enter the classroom. According to Foster motivating and attracting the students’ attention can help students’ readiness in learning writing.

Lack of exposure to books and reading materials are other challenges for elementary school students in learning writing and this is supported by Foster (2015). According to Muhammad Fareed et al. many students find it very challenging to get enough and significant source of information [5]. Lack of extensive reading will not help the students to write good sentences or paragraphs. This is because reading and writing are interrelated. If the students are not reading books or other reading materials, they are going to have lack of ideas and vocabulary to write. Their brain neurons will be connected to each other to come out with a good writing if they read more and connecting the ideas with their prior knowledge. Foster explained that exposure to different reading materials can help the students to be aware with language awareness explained.

Last but not the least, lack of motivation is another challenge faced by the students. If the students are not motivated, they might not be interested to

proceed with their learning process. Motivation is important in improving students’ learning results. Teachers could motivate the students by rewarding them with simple motivational phrases by saying “Good job!”, “Good try!”, “Keep it up” etc. Positive reward will make the students go further in their learning process.

Challenges faced by the teachers in teaching writing skills.

Teaching writing has always been the challenging part for teachers in beginner, elementary and some pre-intermediate levels. Teaching English in this level is completely different and vital from teaching in intermediate and upper-intermediate levels of students such as secondary and tertiary levels. The challenge will somehow make the teachers’ teaching ineffective. There are the issues by teachers are summarized to the following:

It is enough tough for teachers to motivate students for improving writing. Not because of the students’ naughtiness, but the students are losing their interest for master writing and this claim is supported by Asep [4]. The younger generation has the perception that they can do whatever they please since much freedom has been given to them by their parents. When students choose to feel reluctant in learning, it is a sign of lack of motivation [1].

Having different levels of students in the classroom is another challenge faced by teachers to teach writing. In many elementary classrooms, students from different levels are placed in the same classroom. Different levels of students will result to difficulty to teachers in order to cater all of their levels simultaneously [1]. Different levels of writing ability will require the teachers to use different approaches. As a result, the teachers feel difficult to plan their lessons and prepare appropriate activities for the students.

It can be concluded that students are facing many challenges to learn writing skills and it is not easy for English teachers to teach them writing. The existing literature has identified demands on writing skills in English, purpose of students’ writing by using various writing strategies, practical challenges faced by both the students and teachers in learning and teaching writing skills and discussed studies in this research on the difficulties faced by those to learn and teach writing skills among EFL students.

References.

1. Abrar, M. (2016). Teaching English Problems: An Analysis of EFL Primary School Teachers in Kuala Tungkal. Birmingham, UK: The 16th Indonesian Scholars International Convention.
2. Afrin, S. (2016). Writing Problems of Non-English Major Undergraduate Students in Bangladesh: An Observation. Open Journal of Social Sciences, 4, 104-115. <https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2016.43016>
3. Asep, S. (2014). The Challenges in Teaching Writing Skill at Junior High School: Problems and Solutions.
4. Fareed, M., Ashraf, A., & Bilal, M. (2016). ESL Learners’ Writing Skills: Problems, Factors and Suggestions. Journal of Education and Social Sciences, 4, 81-92. <https://doi.org/10.20547/jess0421604201>
5. Foster, B. (2015). Teaching Children with Reading and Writing Difficulties in Regular Schools.