



EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING WRITING

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Abstract

Being one of the basic skills of any language, writing skill is considered to be an essential skill to be acquired. But some educators claim that, in spite of being an important skill, writing is supposed to be rather difficult and boring subject among language learners who are learning foreign languages as their target language. The purpose of this article is to outline some drawbacks that causes some difficulties in teaching writing skills to the students. The paper further investigates the effectiveness of using a number of strategies and techniques in this process.

Moreover, the article is aimed at whether students who are informed all the stages of writing techniques can produce better written texts in terms of organization, development, accuracy, coherence, structure, as well as an adequate vocabulary. And the subjects of the article are some noticeable problems of students with writing skills, attitudes and perceptions of students towards it and a suitable content of successful writing and its elements.

Keywords: writing process, existing problems in teaching writing and their feasible solutions, writing techniques, strategies.

Being one of the most crucial inventions in human history, writing provides a relatively stable record of information, assumptions, beliefs, explanations, arguments, theories and etc. It also allows people to share communication not only with their contemporaries, but also upcoming future generations. In other words, writing is the vehicle for communication that is necessary in all aspects of life. Furthermore, it is a vital skill that opens up a world of possibilities for any student, since writing communication in whatever language, even with the advent of the internet, is still necessity. Therefore it is taught at all educational grades as one of the four basic skills to be acquired in learning any foreign languages.

Being such an important skill and possessing a number of benefits for students, writing skill is still believed to be rather difficult and boring skill. Especially, it is extremely challenging for students who are learning other languages as a second language to write some texts or essays in their target language. Therefore, it mostly causes for students giving up learning writing easily after some failing attempts.

It is worrying that there is a wide spread but rather wrong assumption among students that writing is not as necessary as other skills. Thus, it is extremely essential for teachers to deliver students the importance of writing skills and make them feel satisfied with their written works after getting swept away their confusion and despair. The most essential thing here is organizing writing lessons appropriately based on good writing techniques and strategies.

Research on writing has shown that, today writing skill is being taught inadequately in most schools and colleges. Based on traditional teaching methods teachers require from student only memorizing a



great deal of vocabulary items like useful phrases or word patterns. However, learning and knowing all of these vocabulary items cannot give the chance for students to utter the ideas or opinions they want to express in target languages, as the number of items a person can remember and retrieve is limited. Without doubt, for students to be competent in composing in grammar structures with different purposes they have to possess not only a particular vocabulary items, but also they should be aware of syntactical structure of words in sentences. Moreover, when composing an essay or some kind of text, students must know how to make use of effective strategies planning, composing, reviewing, and revising his draft.

As it is stated by well-known educators Grabe William and Robert Kaplan “Writing is a technology, a set of skills which must be practiced and learned through experience” And the role of teachers is enormous in this process. However, the effectiveness of written work mostly depends on student’s intelligence and proficiency, too. Students should be able to create a logical relationship between the words that develops the idea written work that someone else may receive and find sensible. For achieving better results, they should be aware of the most essential writing techniques and stages.

And there are some valuable strategies for teachers that can be directly applied while teaching writing, providing them with efficient results. With the help of them they can turn writing process into fun, rewarding, enlightening, thought provoking and reflective process. Moreover, by achieving a strong connection between teachers and students, students also welcome the opportunity to express their thoughts, feelings, and reasoning in writing. But before discussing these strategies some basic stages of writing should be mentioned.

Writing is a developmental process that each student can successfully experience at different levels when it is approached systematically. Therefore, some educators based on this premise, offer five stages of writing: pre-writing, writing, revising and editing in a manner that allows writing to be taught as a process.

In pre-writing stage the topic for writing is chosen, and it is essential for teachers to choose a specific topic to ensure that students will participate with enthusiasm. In other words, teachers should inspire students to write, as it is said that: “Composition is ten percent inspiration and ninety percent perspiration”. And during this stage students can use a number of methods like brainstorming, word clustering and free writing to collect and gather ideas effectively.

Then comes the most difficult stage -writing, as it requires an undividable attention and a great deal of focus on writing. During writing students mostly write their essays from the beginning to the end without stopping.

In revising stage students should look through their written product and carry out various activities such as removing unnecessary sentences, changing the words and adding more appropriate vocabulary. And in the last-editing stage other linguistic accuracy is concentrated including grammar, spelling and punctuation.

Moreover, while writing an essay students need to develop personal representation of the given topics, establishing goals for writing and choosing the ways of achieving the goals. Therefore, teachers should monitor the starting and ending of each stage, and if necessary they should give directions that are



helpful in writing process. While checking a piece of writing, instead of marking the students' mistakes in red pen, it is advised to respond to the content and style with questions and make the student think about their mistakes. And if necessary, they should give them a chance to write again responding to their questions.

All in all, while teaching writing of any target language teachers should use variety of techniques and strategies that are helpful for both teachers and students to achieve higher effectiveness of written production. And the most significant thing while working with students to encourage or help them write better, teachers should pay attention to the meaning first, because in writing process students' ideas are important, not just their lexical and grammatical choices. As most stimulating tasks require students express themselves, teachers should not discourage them with too many expectations on grammar points. When they can achieve writing accuracy with the help of interactive tasks they can further improve the other points of writing gradually.

References

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