



CURRENT PROBLEMS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING HOW TO WRITE ESSAYS ON DIFFERENT REAL- LIFE TOPICS

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Abstract: The study focuses on investigating the perspectives of tertiary students regarding their difficulties in essay writing. The research utilized a mixed-method approach, gathering both quantitative and qualitative data through a web-based questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Twenty-one undergraduate students participated in the survey, and six of them were selected for the interview section. The study identified three main categories of problems faced by tertiary students in essay writing: affective problems, cognitive problems, and linguistic problems. Affective problems stem from the attitudes of both students and lecturers during the teaching and learning process of the Essay Writing Course. Cognitive problems include difficulties in developing a writing viewpoint, transferring language skills, and the overall writing process. Linguistic problems involve challenges in lexico-grammar, vocabulary usage, and essay structure. Based on these findings, it is recommended that both EFL students and teachers pay serious attention to these aspects of academic writing to address the identified problems. The implications of this study extend to EFL writing course designers, who can use the findings as foundational data for material improvement. Additionally, researchers in the fields of language and education can benefit from the study's findings. This research provides valuable insights into the difficulties faced by tertiary students in essay writing. By addressing these challenges, educators can enhance the effectiveness of their instruction and support students in developing their writing skills.

Keywords: academic writing, challenge writing, English teachers, L2, writer, teachers problems

As one of the productive skills (Jabali, 2018; Toba et al., 2019), writing is crucially essential for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners, particularly for the students at the tertiary level. In an academic setting, enhancing writing skills for the students is the primary objective in education (Al Khazraji, 2019). For students to develop their writing competence, they are expected to produce a well-structured piece of writing (Ceylan, 2019). Moreover, mastering how to organize, regulate writing behavior, review the composition, and provide readers awareness (Bakry & Alsamadani, 2015) have also become the crucial aspect for creating a well-produced piece of writing.

These challenges can significantly impact students' ability to effectively communicate their ideas and thoughts in writing. Without a strong foundation in writing skills, students may struggle to convey their knowledge and understanding in academic assignments, leading to lower grades and limited academic success.

Lack of vocabulary is a common challenge faced by ESL students in their writing. Limited vocabulary can restrict students' ability to express themselves clearly and accurately. This can result in their essays lacking depth and complexity, which can negatively impact their overall

academic performance. Poor grammar and spelling are also significant challenges for ESL students. Incorrect grammar and spelling errors can make their writing difficult to understand and may undermine the credibility of their arguments. These mistakes can also distract readers from the content of the essay, leading to a lower evaluation of the student's work. Students' readiness and lack of exposure to books and reading materials can also hinder their writing skills development. Reading extensively is crucial for expanding vocabulary, improving grammar, and enhancing overall writing abilities.

Without regular reading habits, students may struggle to develop a strong foundation in writing. To address these challenges, educators can implement various strategies. Providing targeted vocabulary instruction, grammar exercises, and spelling practice can help improve students' language proficiency. Encouraging extensive reading and providing access to a wide range of reading materials can also enhance students' exposure to different writing styles and improve their overall writing skills. Additionally, incorporating writing activities and assignments across different subjects can help students practice their writing skills in various contexts. This interdisciplinary approach can reinforce the importance of writing and provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge in different subject areas. Overall, addressing the challenges faced by ESL students in learning writing skills is crucial for their academic success and future career prospects. By providing targeted support and implementing effective teaching strategies, educators can help students overcome these challenges and develop strong foundational writing skills.

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 the 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 skills and ESL students' challenges in learning to write. This paper provides a literature review on the challenges faced by both teachers as well as students in teaching and learning writing skills.

Writing is a crucial skill that will benefit the rest of the students' lives. Introducing and practicing writing with attractive activities in schools, could increase students' confidence and they will fall in love with writing in a long run. Immediately, writing skills are vital for lower primary students to continue learning in all academic areas, communication and self-expression.

Writing exercises in schools promote the improvement of penmanship as well as overall academic development through troubleshooting and critical thinking. The writing process also is applicable to other areas such as Mathematics and Sciences, where the learned traits of planning, research and review is applied as well. General knowledge and vocabulary are also improved as a subsequent effect. Through journals and personal story writing, students can discover themselves and work through their real-life problems. Writing assists students with their social development. Writing connects the students to be in tune with what happens in the world around them. Students need to consider the audience and purpose in writing. This will help the students with their verbal communication at the same time. Writing with friends' feedback, makes students to learn among themselves.



Writing is a challenging skill to master. It requires a combination of creativity, critical thinking, and technical proficiency. However, for ESL students, the challenges can be even greater. These students face unique obstacles that can hinder their ability to effectively communicate their ideas and thoughts in writing.

One of the main challenges faced by ESL students is a lack of vocabulary. Limited vocabulary can restrict their ability to express themselves clearly and accurately. This can result in their essays lacking depth and complexity, which can negatively impact their overall academic performance. To overcome this challenge, educators can provide targeted vocabulary instruction, encouraging students to actively expand their word bank through activities such as word games, vocabulary lists, and reading assignments. Another challenge is poor grammar and spelling. Incorrect grammar and spelling errors can make their writing difficult to understand and may undermine the credibility of their arguments. These mistakes can also distract readers from the content of the essay, leading to a lower evaluation of the student's work. To address this challenge, educators can incorporate grammar exercises and spelling practice into their lessons. They can also provide feedback and guidance on common grammar and spelling mistakes to help students improve their writing skills.

Additionally, students' readiness and lack of exposure to books and reading materials can hinder their writing skills development. Reading extensively is crucial for expanding vocabulary, improving grammar, and enhancing overall writing abilities. Without regular reading habits, students may struggle to develop a strong foundation in writing. Educators can encourage extensive reading by providing access to a wide range of reading materials and incorporating reading assignments into their curriculum. To further support ESL students in developing their writing skills, educators can also incorporate writing activities and assignments across different subjects. This interdisciplinary approach allows students to practice their writing skills in various contexts and reinforces the importance of writing in different subject areas. It also provides opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills in real-world scenarios. Heaton & Mickelson (2002), say teaching writing is hard. Writing proficiency includes grammatical, rhetorical, intellectual, and judgemental components. They lack fundamental grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling abilities. Mistakes in grammar, sentence structure, tenses, and spelling is a student's lack writing skills owing to a lack of language. Vocabulary is the basis of excellent writing, Students communicate orally and in writing. Writing requires good grammar, it offers information to help readers understand it. Grammar-challenged students will struggle to construct appropriate phrases.

In conclusion, addressing the challenges faced by ESL students in learning writing skills is crucial for their academic success and future career prospects. By providing targeted support, implementing effective teaching strategies, and encouraging extensive reading and writing practice, educators can help ESL students overcome these challenges and develop strong foundational writing skills. With these skills, ESL students can effectively communicate their ideas and thoughts, leading to improved academic performance and increased opportunities for success.

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