IMPORTANCE OF DIFFERENT METHODS TO TEACH WRITING SKILLS TO EFL LEARNERS

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Abstract

The ability to write is crucial in our everyday lives as it facilitates communication within our communities. Additionally, it plays a crucial role in the development and teaching of language. As a result, teaching writing is vital, especially for those learning English as a second language in Uzbekistan. This article is devoted to clarify effective methods to teach writing skills.

Keywords: challenges, writing, competence, method, genre, approach, cognitive writing.

Introduction

As English has become more popular, there is a greater need for qualified teachers to instruct students in the language. In the current age of technological advancement, English has become an essential requirement in various fields, especially in education. People from different areas of expertise need to have a fundamental understanding of English as they believe it is relevant to their daily lives. In the context of education, having a basic grasp of English is considered vital and should be given significant attention. This means that students must understand the significance of English in their academic pursuits.

The significance of writing requires a concentrated approach to teaching and learning this skill in various pedagogical practices. In an EFL setting, it is particularly important to handle these practices with care and attention due to the higher level of complexity involved in writing compared to a first language context. Writing is considered a challenging skill to both learn and teach in Uzbekistan as an EFL context. Consequently, the complexities associated with writing make it difficult for learners to acquire this skill, which presents challenges for teachers attempting to teach it.

Methods

Writing is a challenging task that requires students to think critically, focus on their ideas, and develop skills in summarizing, analyzing, and evaluating information. However, for ESL students, the biggest obstacle to completing writing assignments is their limited proficiency in the English language. In order to compose effective pieces

of writing, students must possess a strong vocabulary, grammar knowledge, and an ability to structure sentences properly.

Unfortunately, many ESL students struggle with these aspects of writing due to their lack of familiarity with cognitive and linguistic approaches required for writing in English. Additionally, generating and organizing ideas can be a major problem for students with some level of English proficiency as they often struggle to present their thoughts in a coherent manner. Another common issue among ESL writers is the lack of certain skills such as proper use of grammar rules, conventions of punctuation, capitalization rules and spelling.

ESL students encounter complex difficulties that can be attributed to their culture or language. As a result, their enthusiasm for writing wanes and they become less motivated to write. Conversely, other research suggests that inadequate pedagogical expertise in writing among teachers and ineffective teaching strategies also play a role in producing subpar writers among ESL students.

Teaching writing requires a range of methods and techniques combined with different strategies. According to Lavelle and Bushrow, the approach to writing involves examining the relationship between an author's beliefs about writing and the specific patterns of writing strategies they use.

If an unsuitable approach is chosen, it will make the lessons overwhelming for ESL learners and lead to disappointment for teachers who have invested a lot of effort in planning and teaching. This will not only demotivate students but also discourage teachers. Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to select an appropriate approach that aligns with their objectives.

For instance, novice writers with limited proficiency should be introduced to a product-based approach as they require models or examples to initiate their writing journey. Without a specific approach, the writing class may lose direction, and achieving the desired outcome would be unfeasible. Therefore, writing approaches play a significant role in achieving writing goals (Scott 1996).

Essentially, this means that an author's approach encompasses their attitudes, principles, and guidelines related to the writing process, which can impact their overall writing performance. Therefore, teaching approaches to writing refer to the principles, strategies, and values applied in classrooms specifically for teaching writing.

Research and Discussion

The act of writing involves various cognitive processes such as brainstorming, planning, organizing, and creativity. The cognitive writing process aims to educate

students on how to effectively use these mental processes in their writing. This theory is more favored than other writing theories due to its numerous advantages. Flower and Hayes introduced this theory by observing students' writing and developing a framework to study the thinking processes involved in composing written works.

The product-based approach to writing involves focusing on the desired outcome of the writing process. Typically, students will replicate a pre-existing text to create their own. This means that they will emulate a composition that has been given to them by their teacher as an example. In writing classes, teachers may provide students with model compositions to use as a basis for their own work.

The process approach to language teaching emphasizes the importance of prioritizing the learner's intentions and interactions when learning a language. This approach recognizes the learner as an initiator rather than simply mimicking others. The process writing approach, in particular, helps teachers understand the writer's thought process during writing, enabling them to assist in bringing those thoughts onto paper.

Banat (2007) emphasized the significance of writing skills in enabling students to effectively communicate and understand the intricacies of language. He identified writing as one of the four major language skills that must be mastered by language learners. Consequently, considerable research and educational efforts have been devoted to studying the nature of this skill and identifying effective teaching methods. Writing is no longer viewed as a straightforward, step-by-step process; rather, it is recognized as a complex and interactive set of processes that involve generating ideas and expressing them coherently and logically. Al Souqi (2001) also highlighted the importance of these aspects in writing.

Zamel (1983) states that writing is a process that allows students to explore their thoughts, create meaning, and evaluate it. Initially, the content and meaning are given more attention than the form. Therefore, teaching effective writing skills is a primary goal of TEFL, as communication is a top priority in this field. Lindsay (2000) notes that producing a coherent and fluent written piece is challenging regardless of whether the language is first or second. Innovative techniques and strategies have been suggested to teach English in general and writing specifically because traditional programs view writing as a means of studying language rather than communicating ideas.

Conclusion

In conclusion, writing is an essential skill and it is the representation of productive skill. There are various effective approaches to enhance writing skills. Those are of utmost importance and assistance to teachers.

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