

THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPING ENGLISH WRITING SKILLS

"If you want to be a writer, you must do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot." – Stephen King

Student: Rayimova Feruza Bakhtiyorovna

Scientific adviser: Yokutkhon Rayimaliyeva Zohidjon qizi

Uzbekistan State World Language University, Tashkent

rayimovaferuza08@gmail.com

914050208

Abstract

In today's world, technology is crucial for education, particularly when it comes to honing writing abilities. Lack of reading knowledge, grammar errors, and little vocabulary make writing difficult for many students. Digital solutions that offer immediate feedback and ideas include Grammarly, QuillBot, and ChatGPT. Platforms like Padlet and Google Docs promote peer review and teamwork. Student engagement is increased through blended learning, which blends traditional and online teaching approaches. Students gain clarity and structure via the prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing stages of the writing process. Teachers can improve the effectiveness and accessibility of writing instruction for students by combining technology with conventional teaching methods.

Key words: writing, technology, methods, writing process, digital tools

Introduction

In contemporary society, technology plays a significant role. Every day, a new piece of technology or software is introduced to the market that somehow makes our lives better. Every area is heavily reliant on technology, but the education sector is one where it is most prevalent. As technology has improved, more people are becoming educated, and ongoing research and development are being done to provide cutting-edge solutions that will make learning simple, pleasurable, and convenient. Education is no longer dull and exhausting for kids, students, and everyone else thanks to educational innovations that have made it more engaging and user-friendly. Students who struggle with writing may face numerous repercussions that could significantly impair their academic achievement. Writing helps them grow socially and emotionally in addition to being essential for improving their academic success. Furthermore, one of the abilities required to succeed in this cutthroat environment is writing. Their future employment prospects may be impacted by their poor writing skills. As a result, this problem must be solved successfully. However, because pupils struggle to acquire

writing abilities, teaching writing has become challenging. Lack of vocabulary, bad grammar, poor spelling, students' preparedness, and limited exposure to books and reading materials are some of the difficulties that ESL students encounter. According to Misbah et al. (2017), kids have difficulty learning how to write because of a lack of vocabulary. According to Asep (2014), the foundation of successful writing skills is vocabulary, which is essential for building sentences. Students practically always utilize written and spoken language to express their thoughts, opinions, and feelings to others. Students who have a strong vocabulary can express themselves more clearly whether they write or speak. Students with little vocabulary can benefit from extra reading activities and the use of electronic dictionaries. Muhammad Fareed et al. (2016) claim that students make errors with pronouns, tenses, articles, prepositions, subject-verb agreement, and fundamental sentence structures. Reading exercises and grammar-related activities can help you get better at grammar. Pourhosein Gilakjani (2013) asserts that technology has the ability to significantly alter current approaches to teaching languages. Students gain from the use of technology in English instruction because it provides a thorough understanding of contemporary systems and their links with other elements.

The Importance of Writing Skills in English Language Learning

Writing is vital. Numerous benefits result from it (see Chapell, 2011; or What is the importance of writing?) because it facilitates personality expression, communication, thinking skills development, the ability to create logical and convincing arguments, the opportunity to later reflect on and reevaluate one's views, the exchange of feedback, and preparation for education and the workforce. Writing is significant since it is widely employed in both the workplace and higher education, according to Walsh (2010). Students who lack the ability to articulate themselves in writing will find it difficult to interact with peers, instructors, employers, and pretty much everyone else. Proposals, memos, reports, applications, initial interviews, emails, and more are all part of a successful graduate's or college student's everyday professional communication. Since writing requires the practice and understanding of the other three language skills—speaking, reading, and listening—it holds a special place in language instruction. It also necessitates the mastery of other abilities, such as metacognitive abilities. Students must have a goal for their writing, carefully prepare it, consider its organization and logical flow, and then edit it. They must employ cognitive abilities when writing; they must evaluate their sources and then combine them into a brief composition. Allowing students to write as freely as possible from the start of the learning process and inspiring a sense of creativity in them is one of the finest strategies to get them interested in writing. It goes without saying that creative writing can be extremely important for the growth of writing abilities. Writing is an individual endeavor. It stands in for us when we are not there in time or place. Even

after our lives are over, writing allows us to convey who we are. It allows others to see our expertise, our individual goals, and our future-focused efforts. Writing allows us to preserve our memories and personal experiences while communicating our thoughts to others and to ourselves. You can't get it done by anyone else. Writing helps you connect with yourself in this way. Writing is enduring, not ephemeral. It serves as a record of your desired message at a given moment.

Technological Tools and Their Role in Teaching Writing

Grammarly is a useful writing tool, especially for writers who are not native English speakers. Depending on your goal, it fixes nearly all writing errors and offers suggestions about how to make your work better. Grammarly is quite useful for academic objectives. One such tool is QuillBot, a sophisticated writing helper driven by artificial intelligence (AI) that helps users produce accurate, well-structured, and coherent material (Rahmani, 2023). Rapid advances in machine learning and natural language processing techniques have paved the way for the creation of AI writing aides like QuillBot. This technology reads and analyzes text using sophisticated algorithms, offering recommendations, paraphrasing, and generating alternative phrases to enhance the readability, coherence, and fluency of written material. Rephrasing sentences, summarizing documents, offering contextual synonyms, and streamlining the review process are all other features of QuillBot. As a result, it has received a lot of attention in academic settings, where many authors and instructors are looking into its potential benefits for raising the caliber and productivity of writing. Due to its remarkable qualities for academic writing, including lengthy essays, short stories, poems, and even letters, the introduction of ChatGPT in academia is currently the most contentious topic (Dergaa et al., 2023). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to talk about the future of teaching writing skills in classrooms as well as the potential application of ChatGPT in writing programs at higher education levels. One of Google's educational resources is Google Docs, a free platform for teachers and students. Despite having few editing capabilities, this software excels at collaborative production right away. Through a link, this program enables numerous small teams or pairs to view and edit each document instantly. By offering remarks and making necessary revisions, the instructors can offer prompt feedback. Students can review the professors' comments once they have been posted. Students can also review other groups' work and the feedback they got, which could help them get better at what they're doing. Using technology (Padlet), formerly known as the wall-wisher, is one of the advances in teaching and developing writing skills. The use of Padlet in the teaching and learning process of producing recount texts is examined in this study, along with the learning outcomes of the students and an overview of their attitudes and responses to the practice. One online resource that can be utilized as an alternative to traditional writing instruction is Padlet. Therefore, the solution to the problem was to combine

teacher feedback with an automatic writing assessment tool such as Write&Improve. This research program, developed in partnership with Cambridge English Examinations and iLexIR, helps students promptly fix mistakes in grammar, spelling, vocabulary, coherence, and word usage. Teachers and organizations can use this software to assign homework, gather student work that has been evaluated by the program, mark and remark on student work, and track students' progress in learning. The precise feedback provided by Write & Improve can significantly improve one's English writing skill. (K. Karpova 2020) The Hemingway app is a writing tool that helps authors produce more succinct and understandable text by emphasizing adverbs, passive voice, and complex phrases. It provides advice on how to make sentences easier to read and write better overall.

Methodology

Process writing is a kind of writing in which language learners concentrate more on the method they use to create their writing than the final output. Students gain a deeper understanding of themselves and learn how to solve the writing by concentrating on the writing process. They could investigate which techniques fit their preferred method of learning. Writing is a thinking process, according to Brown (2001); once the writer has completed the thinking process, the writer creates a finished written output based on their thoughts. Brown cites Elbow (1973) in *A Study of the Process Writing Approach* 155 addition, which states that writing should be viewed as an organic, evolving process rather than a means of conveying a message. The process method "provided a way to think about writing in terms of what the writer does (planning, revising, and the like) instead of in terms of what the final product looks like (patterns of organization, spelling, and grammar)," according to Applebee (1986), who is also cited by Kroll (1990). There are typically multiple processes involved in the writing process. Three steps make up a normal sequence: prewriting, drafting, and revision. Prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and evaluating are the five phases used in certain sequences, whereas thinking, planning, writing, and editing are the four steps used in others. In other words, depending on the learners' level and the goal of the writing, each writer has a preferred method of addressing the writing process, which can range from simpler to more complex. Writing is a means of communication. Since many students have trouble communicating clearly, any writing lesson that intends to improve writing must provide high-quality feedback in order to improve student learning and skill development. Writing training is a perfect fit for peer review exercises (Dickson, Harvey, & Blackwood, 2019). One kind of peer evaluation activity that incorporates peer input is peer review (Panadero, Jonsson, & Alqassab, 2018). It should be mentioned that although the definition appears straightforward, both structures are actually somewhat intricate. A peer can be deemed equivalent based on a number of factors, such as age, educational background, or overall proficiency in the

subject matter. The communicative interchange of performance information given, in this case by and to students, during a learning activity is referred to as feedback in the context of peer evaluation. Any peer assessment activity carried out especially to gather data regarding students' writing performance is referred to as a peer review in this chapter. The purpose of the in-class peer review exercise is to simulate the formal procedure that takes place when authors submit well-reviewed articles with the goal of publication. According to pedagogical principles, blended learning combines in-person and online instruction (Bryan & Volchenkova, 2016; Ellis et al., 2008; Kara, 2016). It is a continuation of e-learning approaches in which knowledge is imparted using a student-centered approach. Students can continue their education through a virtual class by combining in-person and online instruction. Additionally, it provides students with freedom about the time and location of their interactions, communication, group work, discussions, and resource sharing (Fischer & Hanze, 2019; Glowa & Goodell, 2016). In addition to giving students more choices, blended learning also improves access to learning resources and raises the standard of instruction. A mix of in-person and virtual learning can incorporate a number of academic activities, including lectures, group and individual projects, presentations, resource sharing, and open discussions (Khan et al., 2012). Activities for blended learning give students a clear focus on the course material, which enhances their academic performance and promotes the development of both hard and soft skills necessary for the twenty-first century. Both of these are enhanced when students engage in a variety of activities both within and outside of the classroom through online learning (Singh & Singh, 2017; Witherspoon, 2011). According to Delialioğlu (2012) and Schober et al. (2008), blended learning provides an atmosphere that encourages students to actively communicate with one another, which in turn fosters communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and the acquisition of hard skills.

Findings and discussion

The primary concepts based on Seow (2002) and Hyland & Hyland (2006) are presented in this section. According to Seow (2002), students find writing easier when they adhere to defined procedures such as prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Students feel less agitated and are able to better organize their ideas when they concentrate on one step at a time. Additionally, Seow notes that because students continue to refine their work before turning it in, this approach aids in vocabulary and grammar improvement. In their 2006 article, Hyland and Hyland discuss the advantages of peer review for authors. Students are said to begin thinking more critically about writing when they exchange drafts and provide criticism to one another. Peer review assists them in identifying errors in structure, grammar, and content. The authors also point out that when students leave comments on other people's work, they feel more engaged and accountable. However, teachers must demonstrate to pupils how

to provide constructive criticism if peer review is to be successful. Students appear to write better and feel more confident when these two strategies are combined: writing step-by-step and using peer feedback. When combined, these techniques foster a supportive learning atmosphere where students not only learn how to write but also help one another. Both strategies, in my opinion, can help students write better and inspire them to reflect more thoroughly on their own work when used in writing classrooms.

Conclusion

Writing is a crucial ability that affects students' performance in both their academic and professional lives. However, a lot of students struggle with things like bad grammar, little vocabulary, and insufficient writing confidence. With the help of programs like Grammarly, QuillBot, and ChatGPT, which help students polish their writing, the use of technology in the classroom has greatly enhanced the writing process. Furthermore, peer review and collaboration are made possible via platforms like Padlet and Google Docs, which promote a more dynamic learning environment. Writing instruction is further improved by blended learning strategies, which integrate conventional and digital teaching techniques. Teachers can assist students improve their writing abilities and make learning more approachable and interesting by utilizing technology in conjunction with structured writing procedures.

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