

CHALLENGES IN TEACHING WRITING SKILLS TO SECONDARY SCHOOL ENGLISH LEARNERS

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Abstract: The acquisition of proficient writing skills is paramount for academic success and future opportunities, enabling students to communicate effectively, think critically, and engage meaningfully with their educational journey. However, for secondary school English Language Learners (ELLs), this path presents unique and significant hurdles. While all students encounter challenges in writing, ELLs face the added complexity of navigating a new linguistic system, adapting to unfamiliar rhetorical conventions, and overcoming potential cultural and cognitive barriers. This research addresses the topical issue of effective writing instruction for secondary ELLs, a demographic whose needs are often underserved in traditional educational settings.

Keywords: ELL, pedagogical approaches, rhetorical conventions, linguistic system, crucial skill, writing methods, pre-writing, writing warm-ups, cooperative writing.

The increasing global interconnectedness and rising ELL populations in many countries highlight the urgent need for research that informs best practices in this area. This study aims to investigate the specific challenges encountered in teaching writing to secondary ELLs and to propose evidence-based pedagogical approaches to address these challenges effectively. The research task involves analyzing the linguistic, cognitive, and socio-cultural factors that influence ELL writing development and identifying effective teaching strategies that promote writing proficiency.

Writing is an essential skill that helps students throughout their lives. Students' confidence may rise if it is introduced and practised in schools with fun activities, and

long-term, they may develop a passion for writing. For secondary-level learners, writing skills are essential right away to carry on learning in all academic disciplines, including communication and expressiveness. Writing assignments encourage the enhancement of general academic growth through critical thinking. Students may learn about themselves and solve their real-life issues via diaries and personal narrative writing. Writing helps learners develop socially and links them to the world around them so that they are aware of many things. Learning to write in a second language takes time, and both the instructor and the pupils seemed to value the students' achievements and development [1]. Students must consider the readers and the purpose while writing. Students learn from one another by comparing their writing to that of their friends. The most crucial skill that students must learn in an academic setting is writing.

As students go through their academic careers, they must be literate in computers along with their academic literacy. Although the two skills are complementary, some computer programmes, such as spelling and grammar checkers, may prevent users from refining their writing skills. Students must learn that they must apply their knowledge rather than rely on computers, which can make mistakes as well [2]. As information technology advances, authors are in high demand to provide content for digital media.

Teaching writing is to help students learn and communicate regularly. Many researches have been carried out to gain a better knowledge of how to teach writing to language learners. Students may utilize many writing approaches at the same time. Some instructional writing methods include pre-writing, writing warm-ups, cooperative writing, using sentence starters, and guided writing. All writing approaches cannot be taught at the same time since they may have different informative goals. Using a range of instructional methods can help students improve their English writing abilities. When the students exhibit interest and become active participants in their learning, the learning procedure will be on track. Adopting diverse writing styles will also inspire them to think imaginatively. Writing is the most difficult and complex language skill, requiring writers to possess a thorough command of capitalization, conventions, syntax, vocabulary, and punctuation, as well as their cohesive and coherent linkage in making sentences, texts, and discourses. It is the graphic representation of human wishes, feelings, emotions, ideas, and intents. Many

individuals can talk easily but struggle to write well since learning to write in a second or foreign language is difficult. Writing, according to Sokolik [3], is both a process and a result. The act of gathering ideas is referred to as the process and the procedures we follow while producing a piece of writing are referred to as the result. Students are often afraid of writing tasks as writing is a productive skill; it requires high demands to do it. English is utilized as a lingua franca across the world by individuals of many cultures, ethnicities, and social backgrounds [4].

Many implications might have a significant impact on pupils' academic achievement if they have a weak writing foundation. Writing is essential for improving academic achievement as well as social and emotional growth. Furthermore, in today's competitive environment, it is one of the abilities required to blossom. Students' incapacity to write properly may risk their future work prospects. As a result, this issue must be addressed efficiently. However, due to the difficulties encountered by the learners, teaching writing has become tough due to their lack of vocabulary, poor grammar and spelling, a lack of preparation and exposure to writing-related books and reading resources.

Learners find it challenging to participate in writing projects due to a lack of acceptable teaching techniques, accessing tools, and inappropriate themes. Pablo and Lasaten [5] discovered that 227 students struggle with a lack of variety in materials and ideas, a lack of connectives in the organization, inappropriate terminology, word choice, bad sentence patterns in language usage, and pronouns. Because of the difficulties that students face when writing, the quality of their essays ranges from poor to fair. Students' issues have made it problematic for instructors to teach writing skills. Teachers confront challenges while teaching writing skills, including the inability to excite their learners, their varying abilities, challenging materials, and time limits. A teacher must require more time to write instructions to help students improve their writing skills.

To my knowledge, the previous researchers examined either teachers' or students' challenges while teaching and learning writing skills. This type of study has not been carried out yet in Rupandehi district, Nepal. Therefore, I examine the challenges that both teachers and students face while teaching and learning writing skills. This study is different from the previously reviewed ones as the context, and challenges to be examined are

different. This study will be valuable in understanding the school-level challenges of teaching and learning writing skill and determining whether or not the same challenges persist in this context. The objective of this research study was to examine teachers' and students' challenges in teaching and learning writing skills.

The majority of the teacher respondents strongly agreed that they had a hard time motivating the students, they got little guidance and support from their parents at home. Being novice teachers, they had lack of professional experience, and they had challenges preparing appropriate activities for different writing tasks for the mixed-ability learners in the class. Besides, they did not get the opportunity to participate in training sessions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is difficult for English teachers to teach them writing skills. Similarly, the majority of the teachers faced challenges in teaching writing skills as they had a hard time motivating the students. Likewise, less support to the students from their parents at home, lack of professional experience, and inability to prepare appropriate activities for different writing tasks for the mixed-ability students in the class were other problems. Besides, they got fewer opportunities to participate in training sessions to boost their teaching skills. Due to students' disinterest, they could not make them work in pairs/groups on the assigned writing tasks so, they were compelled to provide them with ready-made writing tasks.

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