

Some problems in writing English and some suggestions to overcome

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Abstract: *Of the four linguistic skills, writing is a productive skill which requires not only ideas but also good command of linguistic knowledge. This skill shows a language learner's knowledge, his mind set, his thinking path as well as his English competence. A good writer can express his ideas in a beautiful and logical English, which can only be obtained over a long period of time and great effort. This paper looks into challenges faced by English learning writers such as plagiarism, grammar, lexical, vocabulary, idea planning and then give some suggestions to help learners better their writing.*

Keyword: *Writing, lexical, vocabulary, grammar, idea planning*

1. Introduction

Writing is only considered a part of learning and teaching syntactic and grammatical components, poor command over this skill underestimates the worth and importance of students' creativity. Writing gives proper shape and structure to the ideas and thinking of men. Not only is it valuable for the people to write down their thoughts, facts, creative ideas and experiences on the paper, but it also assists to maintain the past of every country in written form. Writing is perceived as a blend of the process and product, and this writing process produces a collection of different thoughts and ideas in learners' minds. Successful writing demands the writers to explore and classify previous knowledge. Writing brings the individual from ignorance to the luminosity of knowledge. It explains the essence of writing as a man who doesn't know how to read and write is called illiterate and ignorant (Khan & Khan, 2020).

2. Research content

2.1. Definition of Writing

Writing is a system of producing graphic symbols to convey thoughts, ideas and opinions. There are some definitions of writing.

Nunan in Yuniati (2015) believes that writing is the act of expressing thoughts, and managing the concept into sentences or paragraphs to make them clear to a reader. Gaith, also in Yuniati (2015), says that writing is the process in which a writer scours his ideas and thought and make their ideas concrete.

Byrne in Junaid (2012) states that writing is more than the prediction of the sounds. The

symbols are arranged according to specifications in the convention. Setiawan, Rohayati, Sari, and KUSUMA (2014), argue that writing is a perception of the abilities that involve the rules of grammar, vocabulary and different concepts of sentence formation.

From all the descriptions above, it can be concluded that writing is the arrangement of words, symbols to represent the speech sounds or language in text form and to express thoughts and ideas to be read by other people.

2.2. Problems in learning writing English

Language learners of whatever their linguistic competence, often claim that writing is of the utmost difficult. There are typical errors of coherence, cohesion, conjunction, tenses, collocation ... in their compositions.

2.2.1. Plagiarism

This type of error exists in compositions of those who cite other writers' ideas without paraphrasing or summarizing with full source of the citations and reference. This illegal action can be because of the citer' unawareness of this, or his insufficient linguistic competence to the extent of reading comprehension or presenting his ideas.

2.2.2. Grammatical Errors

Grammar plays an important role in writing. Grammar provides information that helps the readers to understand its meaning. It is a structure that conveys the detailed meaning of the writer to the reader. Grammar also explains the forms and structure of words, called morphology and how they are arranged in sentences, called syntax. By having

very limited knowledge in grammar, students will face anxiety to write sentences with correct grammar.

Grammatical error is a problem in writing of whatever level of language. It can be tenses, gerunds or infinitive, collocations... This type of errors may mislead readers to the extent of comprehension.

2.2.3. *Lexical Difficulties*

This type of error is considered as the most frequent mistakes in writing as English learners have difficulty in apply the right words, phrases, idioms or terminologies in their writing. This results in the failure of conveying their opinions and ideas.

2.2.4. *Lack of Planning*

Language learners sometimes ignore the stage of planning their ideas, facts and information when writing as it is claimed to be a waste of time. As a result, there is little coherence and cohesion in their composition which lead to an ineffective presentation of their ideas or even some information neglect.

2.2.5. *Lack of Vocabulary*

Vocabulary is the fundamental element in constructing sentences which is the core of effective writing skills Asep (2014). Good vocabulary repertoire can help students write to deliver their thoughts. Lack of vocabulary has caused the students to face challenges in acquiring writing skills claimed Misbah et al. (2017).

2.3. *Some suggestions to improve writing skills for English learners*

2.3.1. *Raise the learners' awareness of plagiarism*

In his writing, a person can not copy other people's ideas and opinion without an appropriate citation or reference so that students must be cautious as he may get a heavy penalization. To avoid this, students should improve their command of English to the extent of reading comprehension and paraphrasing others' compositions.

2.3.2. *Get learners' readiness to write*

Students' readiness is another challenge in learning writing and this was supported by Foster (2015). This can either be physical readiness and mental preparedness. Without this, students' effort in learning a language brings very little efficiency

2.3.3. *Encourage learners to read as much as possible*

Reading improves learner's vocabulary as it provides relevant contexts where the words are used. In other words, reading is great way to help learners understand what the word is and how to use it.

Besides, reading can improve learners' grammar

as it get them a feel for grammar. Seeing how English is used helps develop an intuitive understanding of how it works. Indeed, research suggests that reading widely helps improve both grammar knowledge and the correct use of grammar.

Furthermore, reading gives learners tones of input. Large amounts of "comprehensible input" is essential to learning a language. Just as podcasts provide a tone of language input, so does reading. If students want lots of exposure to English in a relatively quick time, reading is ideal.

Therefore, reading provides a variety source of linguistic components for writing. A regular exposure to reading materials not only enriches students' vocabulary repertoire but also gives them proper knowledge of grammar, sentence structures and culture where the words, phrases, idioms, terminologies are used.

2.3.4. *Expand vocabulary*

Laufer and Nation (1999), Maximo (2000), and Nation (2011) and other linguistics have realized the need of acquiring vocabulary in the success of learning a foreign language in terms of understanding written and spoken texts and producing communicative ones. Nation (2011) believes that in English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) learning vocabulary items plays a vital role in all language skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing). He also argued that an adequate vocabulary is essential for successful second language use as without an extensive vocabulary, it is impossible to use the structures and functions we may have learned for comprehensible communication.

For English learners, the lack of vocabulary knowledge leads to a deficiency of improving their skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. McCarthy (1990) points out that "no matter how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of foreign language are mastered, without words to express a wider range of meanings, communication in the second language just cannot happen in any meaningful way" (p. viii).

Therefore, it is very essential that students keep expanding their vocabulary repertoire by reading more and exposing themselves to a variety of text styles. So that they can absorb the proper use of the words, phrases and the context in which the words are used.

2.3.5. *Better students' grammar*

Grammar is considered as the core component of English language. It is a system composed of many interconnected components that ensure accuracy and meaning. It is the art of writing and speaking a language correctly. Grammar plays a substantial role in governing the use and application of language. It gives the user the structure to build complete and meaningful sentences.

Grammar especially plays an important role in the writing processes. One cannot write efficiently and professionally without this instruction. It would be nearly impossible for the writer to articulate his thoughts and make them intelligible for the reader. How would he be able to express the future perfect or doubt without knowing grammatically how? One way in which grammar brings about meaning is the way it brings the words together. Words grouped together randomly have little meaning on their own. There are many ways in which grammar determines the meaning of the sentence. Each grammatical rule serves a particular purpose. Grammatical mistakes may lead to a failure in delivery of ideas and opinion. To avoid this, students should do grammar exercises, which is of a big availability on the internet and publications nowadays.

2.3.6. Encourage learners to make a plan before writing

Even a simple piece of English writing requires the ideals to be clearly and logically organized. Students should get used to planning their ideas in outlines before they start writing. For this, students should use a mind – map to write down his knowledge, his ideas and lists of English vocabulary he expects to input in his writing. Students should be sure what they are expected to write, then make a coherent list of what to be presented which may consist of their ideas, the vocabulary to use and the sequence to deliver their opinions.

2.3.7. Get students to do regular practice

Writing is a skill not knowledge, that can be improved by regular revision and practice. A frequency of this involves a proper use of vocabulary and grammar. Students can make the best use of his linguistic knowledge as well as improve his coherence and cohesion in the organization of a written text.

For this, teachers should regularly assign brief writing exercises in classes. They may vary the pace of a lecture course, ask students to write a few minutes during class. Some mixture of in-class

writing, outside writing assignments, and exams with open-ended questions will give students the practice they need to improve their skills.

3. Conclusion

Writing is an important skill for language production. However, it is considered a difficult skill, particularly in English as a second language (ESL) contexts where students face many challenges in writing. These challenges are influenced by various factors including grammar, lexical, vocabulary, idea planning, lack of writing practice, low motivation. This paper sheds light on the remedial measures such as encouraging reading, conscious and incidental vocabulary teaching and writing practice,

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