
ANALYSE THE ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN TEACHING WRITING AMONG ENGLISH TEACHERS

Md. Harun Rashid, Faculty of Modern language and communication, University Putra Malaysia, Malaysia,
Email: harun.sh96@gmail.com

Wang Hui, Faculty of Modern languages and communication, University Putra Malaysia, Malaysia,
Email: vicky0176742521@gmail.com

Abstract. Teaching one of the productive skills of the English language, writing, involves developing students' linguistic competence, which many E.S.L. teachers find difficult. The study's main goal is to examine the challenges faced by E.S.L. teachers in teaching writing skills to students in university classrooms. This study aims to identify problems faced by teachers of Arts Colleges in Universities. The researcher used questionnaires to survey teachers' concerns about teaching writing skills. The researcher used a descriptive method to report the problems encountered by the sampled teachers in teaching writing skills. The survey had 12 questions. This study's findings not only revealed the problematic factors but also suggested some practical solutions. This study's findings and recommendations may help teachers reflect on their teaching practices and assist authorities in supporting teachers' efforts to improve student writing skills.

Keywords: *Challenge of Writing, teachers' problems, Academic writing, L2 writer.*

1. Introduction

English is an essential worldwide language for communication, education, and business. English has become a crucial language in our nation. Our country's second language is English. Reading, writing, listening, and speaking are the four essential skills taught in English classes. Writing is an integral part of learning English. Writing abilities should be trained formally, according to Giridharan and Robson (2011). Writing, on the other hand, is a multiplex activity. To be creative and write well in the future, kids need to learn this ability in elementary school. So E.S.L. students should improve their writing abilities. They will have greater job possibilities after they finish their higher education. The business sector wants future employees who can write effectively. Strong writing abilities let students interact with the world around them and gain information from all angles. Writing is an essential talent in many areas of professional life. The primary issue is that even though the writing is an important academic talent, several previous

studies have found that it is not promoted or successful among students. Although English teaching is mandatory in Malaysian schools, the execution is inadequate, focusing only on the pupils' linguistic structure.

The pupils' deep writing abilities have not been adequately developed. In other words, the curriculum and instructional techniques do not adequately prepare pupils for writing. This indicates that Malaysian pupils are unable to express themselves effectively and creatively during class. Students will encounter difficulties if they do not practice their writing skills. E.S.L. students need to have this language ability since it is utilized widely for global knowledge mediation. In other words, students will acquire independence by becoming proficient writers and gaining knowledge in many areas. Nunan (1999) claims that writing a clear, fluent, and prolonged article is the most challenging job in language acquisition. According to Hyland, writing is a complicated cognitive activity involving many processes and techniques? As can be seen, writing is not an easy skill for E.S.L. students to learn. It is vital for communication between the writer and the reader. Writing is the master of all language abilities since one is deemed stupid and ignorant without it. Thus, studies on writing difficulties among EFL students in countries like Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam have been conducted. The findings show that pupils seldom write, and the best options are intervention techniques to address this problem. Nonetheless, little research on Malaysian students has focused on developing

Corresponding Author

Md. Harun Rashid, Faculty of Modern language and communication, University Putra Malaysia, Malaysia,
Email: harun.sh96@gmail.com



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY). The article is published with Open Access at www.alscjournal.com

writing skills, attitudes, and motivation to acquire writing skills and learn writing skills.

Thus, this study will focus on upper secondary pupils to learn about their writing difficulties and obstacles. According to Mohtar et al. (2017), students' written work frequently displays flaws, particularly in the structures and concepts they convey. Because instructors don't grasp their students' issues, they offer little writing advice. To help children with their writing, instructors must first identify their issues. It is critical to observe how instructors teach writing to improve this talent.

2. Definition of Writing

Writing is a method of putting thoughts, feelings, and experiences into words. According to Nunan (1989), writing is not a natural activity. Ordinary people learn to communicate in the language. Meanwhile, E.S.L. students should be encouraged to express their ideas, experiences, emotions, and feelings. Asmuti (2002) argues that acquiring writing talent allows authors to organize their thoughts and elaborate them in an organized way. A student must expand their vocabulary, idioms, and grammatical structure while learning a language.

3. Approaches to Writing

To teach writing, various methods and strategies must be used (Selvaraj & Aziz, 2019). The writing approach is defined by the relationship between the authors' perspectives on writing and the patterns of writing methods they use. To summarise, writing approaches are concepts, norms, and ethics connected with the writing process used in schools during writing courses.

4. Product Approach

The product approach to writing focuses on the result rather than the process. For example, the product approach to writing concentrates on the text, essay storyline, etc., according to Nunan (1989). The instructor is concerned about the final output being legible, grammatically accurate, and using discourse norms like significant ideas and supporting information. Grammar, spelling, and vocabulary are given top priority; Getnet (1994) defines the product approach as an orientation that emphasizes the final product

of pupils. This method is also described as "a conventional technique in which pupils are urged to imitate a model text" (Gabrielatos, 2002) states that in E.S.L. writing classes, pupils must follow four stages. First, students must read example essays and note the essay's distinctive features, such as how ideas are organized, the language used, and writing mechanics.

In the second phase, students isolate the model essays' characteristics. 3. Students attempt to replicate the sample essays by arranging thoughts according to the model. During this stage, the organization of ideas takes precedence over ideas themselves. The last step is for pupils to write their essays utilizing skills, sentence structures, and terminology. For example, Raimes explains that pupils are given phrases to copy and modify with minimal possibility of making mistakes. This technique helps students utilize particular pattern-product approaches in writing narrative, descriptive, and persuasive essays. According to Tangpermpoon (2008), pupils will also increase their grammatical awareness and learn to rectify vocabulary and sentence structures. This method is unpopular since it concentrates on grammar and syntax rather than the writing process.

5. Process Approach

The phrase process writing is used by Kroll (2001). He claims writing is a cyclical process. Before completing a writing assignment, students will go through a few phases. They can always go back and edit their work. This method has four stages: planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Various classroom activities like brainstorming, rewriting, and group discussions are given greater emphasis in this method.

6. Eclectic Approach

The eclectic approach combines genre and method. This method is gaining popularity for teaching writing skills. This method is also thought to help instructors and students improve their writing abilities by expressing their originality. This method helps students grasp the target genre's characteristics, enhancing their competence since they simultaneously study form, language, and function. In conclusion, no one way can enhance students' writing competence in E.S.L. classes.

7. Challenges in Writing

Writing is a challenging skill to master. Heaton (1975) says teaching writing is hard. Writing proficiency includes grammatical, rhetorical, intellectual, and judgemental components. They lack fundamental grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling abilities. E.S.L. students' vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure. Mistakes in grammar, sentence structure, tenses, and spelling. Students 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.

Nyangau Benard (2014), a preposition is a typical student mistake; poor spelling is another hurdle for young writers. Spelling is an essential part of writing, he says. E.S.L. students often delete or add letters to their spellings. Students misspell words depending on the sound. Inconsistencies in English spelling create spelling errors. L1 interference, especially Bahasa Melayu, is harming Malaysian E.S.L. secondary students' English literacy. Grammar was shown to be a problem for 120 Malaysian students learning to write. The L1 impact produces grammatical errors. A lack of grammatically correct phrases causes anxiety among E.S.L. pupils. According to Myles (2002), students frequently interpret while writing. Myles (2002) quotes Friedlander (1990), saying that kids use the first language to think and pay attention. According to Sipahi (2020), English language teachers and assessors should change the language test format and vocabulary should usually be considered multiple choice.

Choosing the right word is an important point. Student needs more attention.

8. Problem of the study

Fareed et al. (2016) found that 30 E.S.L. undergraduates had language competence (grammar, syntax, and vocabulary), writing anxiety, vague ideas, relying on L1, and poor structural organization. They also ruled out several causes for the issues. They lacked training, thoughts, writing practice, and reading habits. Singh et al. (2017) examined 144 students' writings using content analysis. The results revealed two common writing errors: subject-verb agreement and tenses. The

pupils overgeneralized, causing them to mix up the tenses. Students also struggled with complicated building construction. Students' failure to utilize subject-verb agreement correctly created this issue. Similar studies also noted that even university students made these mistakes due to a lack of mastery of English. Ibnian (2017) found that pupils had different writing issues – morphology, syntax, use errors, mechanical faults – spelling, punctuation, capitalization (spelling, tenses), prepositions, and connectors. The absence of defined evaluation methods and mark systems and time constraints contributed to EFL students' writing problems.

The lack of acceptable teaching methods, resources for consultation, and unsuitable subjects made it difficult for pupils to participate in writing tasks. A questionnaire was used by Habibi et al. (2017) for 70 students. The findings indicated that students face seven writing issues: inadequate organization/illogical sequence, word choice, grammatical mistake, spelling, concept confusion, punctuation, and capitalization. The study found that female students struggle with word choice, whereas male students struggle with grammatical errors. Pablo and Lasaten (2018) encountered that 227 students work with a lack of diversity in content and ideas, lack of connectives in the organization, improper vocabulary, word choice, lousy sentence structures in language usage, and pronouns. Due to the challenges students experience in writing, the quality of their essays varies from bad to fair.

9. Finding of the study

The findings also provided solutions for instructors and students. In addition to giving examples, teachers can assist students with their needs. Students should read more to improve vocabulary and grammar. Knowing their students' needs and abilities helps E.S.L. teachers design writing lessons. Teachers should use appropriate methods to teach. Teachers should also provide students with resources. Encouragement requires scaffolding. Giving kids feedback while they're writing can help. In addition, the study suggests combining appropriate writing methods for framing. An early survey of broader options, especially elementary school children, is recommended to improve writing skills. This study looked at 14 papers from 2012 to 2020 for writing issues—

mostly tertiary studies. Only one study from a secondary school was included. Most studies highlighted E.S.L. students' writing issues. Different designs and equipment were used, but the results were nearly identical. Most students struggled with vocabulary, grammar, and concept organization. Many studies examined in this systematic review addressed these questions. These ideas are for future instructors to make E.S.L. students' writing lessons more fun and engaging. Instructors can help students with their writing assignments by providing feedback, example essays, and scaffolding. Adopt student-centered teaching strategies.

Meanwhile, students should improve their writing skills. Reading improves writing. This helps students learn information and concepts. Grammar and vocabulary should be improved.

10. Theory

The inability of students to set goals for themselves, both macro and micro, is a common problem. The issues stem from internal factors such as educators' inability to use evidence-based examples in everyday teaching and students' failure to identify their cognitive levels. All of these issues are modifiable and require extensive support from English educators. To improve student learning outcomes, teachers must identify these issues (Moses et al., 2019). Observing children's writing helps introduce a theory of cognitive processes. It aids in writing skills and lays the groundwork for a more in-depth study of writing thought. The approach emphasizes goal setting through four steps: thinking, prewriting, drafting, rewriting, and proofreading. It will help generate new ideas and opinions (Di Zhang, 2019). The theory also supports teachers as leaders in the process of writing skills. Using critical thinking and problem-solving skills can help improve writing skills and reduce the learning burden.

11. Discussion

The inability of teachers to apply classroom-based examples to increase students' cognitive capacity will contribute to poor writing skills (Moses et al., 2019). Teachers who use a mental process lens allow students to write without restriction. Setting a time limit will enable students to brainstorm and write down their ideas. However, some

students can still correct errors in their writing and use visual planners to help organize their ideas (El Soufi & See 2019). The stimuli to generate thoughts are an advantage, but some students may struggle to recall their thoughts promptly. Environmental distractions can cause a lack of focus. Writing is an important study skill for all students. A fast Write is a method in which students are given a topic, issue, or idea to write about and a time limit. Students should register for the entire period, regardless of errors. Students could use this method. Preparing a topic helps students think in a specific direction and supports their writing. This quick method may confuse some students (Hodges & Tracey, 2017). Graphic organizers can also be used to improve writing patterns. It can use writing instructional strategies (Inaltekin & Goksu, 2019). Students could have used a mind map or timeline to generate ideas. This will help students create more ideas for writing if a student lacks visual sense and knowledge to extract pictures from mind maps.

12. Recommendations

The audience, assistant, evaluator, and examiner are primary roles for teachers in the process approach to teaching writing. Innovici (2015). As an audience, the teacher must respond appropriately to the points made by students in their writing. A teacher's assistant must help students write constructively in terms of purpose and language. The writing process requires the same amount of time and effort as vocabulary and grammar. Writing helps students improve their grammatical and vocabulary skills while also developing other linguistic skills. As evaluators, teachers provide feedback on the writing piece's strengths and weaknesses and its overall outcome. A teacher examines students' proficiency. As an alternative idea, teachers should use as many different techniques as possible, with the cognitive approach helping students the most. Teachers can use mind maps before writing. So that students can appreciate visual aids in writing, teachers should encourage students to create their own mind maps. Gardner (1999) claims that mind maps can capture students' spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic, and visual intelligence. Some teaching writing techniques include brainstorming, concept maps, list-making, and note-taking Bukhari (, 2016). These are common prewriting techniques to help students generate writing ideas.

Then comes drafting. For Brown (2001), “drafting is viewed as an important and complex set of strategies that requires time, patience and training.” They should now explain the language’s vocabulary, syntax, and lexis. Teachers should provide models, samples, and guidelines during the drafting and encourage students to revise and edit their work. With vocabulary and guide words related to the theme or genre, students are more focused and guided. The language input for the task begins here and continues in subsequent writing stages. Teachers can now assign students to work in groups or individually. Then comes proofreading, peer editing, and writing. Teachers should encourage students to exchange and evaluate their peers’ texts during the proofreading and peer editing stage. So that they can improve their editing skills and focus on important information, students must first edit their own or peers’ work. Thus, students improve their writing. Finally, students will produce personal papers, either collaboratively or individually. Students work hard to write a piece of writing. So the teacher must respond correctly.

Positive teacher feedback can help students gain confidence and inspiration to write better in the future. The final step is publication. Students could read their work in front of their peers or read their peers’ final work Bukhari (, 2016). Publishing is important for students because it allows them to share their work with a real audience of peers and other students. It also instills ownership in the kids. This is significant because students will strive to improve their performance to be recognized as writers. The cognitive-process approach ensures that students master the process writing approach, including prewriting, drafting, feedback, and rewriting. These two main approaches complement each other throughout the writing process. Nonetheless, more research is required to assess the effects of the cognitive-process-based approach in writing classes.

13. Implementation

This study suggests that teachers teach writing using a cognitive-process approach. This approach can help students improve their writing skills and overcome problems with expressing themselves in writing. Smalley et al. (2001) claim that a process approach can help students learn English and improve their writing skills. Students can work through the

steps at their own pace, gradually building confidence, interest, and self-esteem. Students can switch between levels to develop enviable compositions. This study focused on teaching three components of writing: content, organization, and grammar. These three elements are important to evaluate because they affect writing quality. Writing is about content. It is the essence of all great writing.

Organize facts and ideas first, then use grammar to construct sentences. Wugha (2007). Teachers should use the process approach to help students organize their thoughts while writing, making them more motivated to finish their assignments. Students will become better writers and learn the art of writing by implementing the writing process, including prewriting, drafting, revising editing, and publishing.

14. Conclusion

Written output and cognitive processes are intricately intertwined, and scholars are still learning about them. Writing theory is increasingly focusing on creativity and sociability. The writing approach refers to the issues a teacher faces when teaching writing skills. The teacher can use cognitive writing theory to identify problems and improve current practices to improve student academic outcomes. The cognitive approach ignores various environments like enthusiasm, involvement, and social influence. The use of mind maps and classroom exercises can help students generate more ideas and improve their cognitive abilities. But these factors lack external consensus. Creating relationships with students, understanding their social backgrounds, and verbally encouraging them can help them write well. Teachers connect theory and practice to stimulate learners’ learning. Finally, approaches help teachers describe their methods to other students.

Conflict of interests

The author declares no conflict of interest.

15. References

- Bukhari. S.S.F., (2016). Mind Mapping Techniques to Enhance EFL Writing Skill. *International Journal of Linguistics and Communication*. Vol. 4, No.1, pp. 58-77 <https://doi.org/10.15640/ijlc.v4n1a7>
- Cer, E. (2019). The instruction of writing strategies: The effect of the classroom strategy on the writing

- skills of pupils in secondary education. *SAGE Open*, 9(2), 1-14.
- Cevik, Y., & Spahiu, I. (2013). An Overview of Culture to teach EFL through Using Folk Literature: A Sample Case of Nasreddin Hodja. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4(23), 29-32. <https://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/JEP/article/view/8378/8686>
- Davis, K., Christodoulou, J., & Seider, S. (2011). The Theory of Multiple Intelligences. In R. Sternberg & S. Kaufman (Eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Intelligence* (pp.485-503), Chapter 24. Cambridge University Press.
- Di Zhang, E. (2019). An investigation of novice E.S.L. writers' cognitive processes and strategy use of paraphrasing. *Lang Test Asia* 10, 9-14.
- El Soufi, N., & See, B. H. (2019). Does explicit teaching of critical thinking improve the necessary thinking skills of English language learners in higher education? A critical review of causal evidence. *Studies In Educational Evaluation*, 60, 140-162.
- Faraj, A.K.A., (2015). Scaffolding EFL Students' Writing through the Writing Process Approach. *Journal of Education and Practice*. Vol.6, No.13
- Fareed, M. et al. (2016a). E.S.L. Learners' Writing Skills: Problems, Factors, and Suggestions. *Journal of Education & Social Sciences*, 4(2), 83–94.
- Gabrielatos, C. (2016). EFL Writing: Product and Process EFL Writing (December).
- Giridharan, B. (2012). Identifying Gaps in Academic Writing of E.S.L. Students *. *US-China Education Review A* 6, 1548–6613.
- Habibi, A. (2017). Students' Perception on Writing Problems: A Survey at One Islamic University in Jambi. *Ta'dib*, 22(1), 96–108.
- Hodges, k, & Tracey S. (2017). Theoretically speaking: An examination of four theories and how they support writing in the classroom. *The clearinghouse: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues, and Ideas*, 90(4), 139–146.
- Ibnian, S.S.K. (2017). Writing Difficulties Encountered by Jordanian EFL Learners. *Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Studies*, 5(03), 2321–2799.
- Inaltekin, T., & Goksu, V. (2019). A Research on visual learning representations of primary and secondary science in Turkey. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 15(6), 51-65.
- Maarof, N. & Murat, M. (2013). Writing strategies used by E.S.L. upper secondary school students. *International Education Studies*, 6(4), 47–55.
- Moses, R. N., & Mohamad, M. (2019). Challenges faced by students and teachers on writing skills in E.S.L. Contexts: A literature review. *Creative Education*, 10(13), 3385-3391.
- Riwayatiningsih, R. (2015). "Implementing Process Writing Approach to Improve the Writing Skill of the Second Semester Students of Nusantera PGRI Kediri University." *Nusantera of Research*, Vol.2, No.1
- Rusinovci, X. (2015). Teaching Writing through Process-Genre Based Approach. *US-China Education Review A*, October 2015, Vol. 5, No. 10, 699-705
- Spahiu, I. (2013). Using Native Language in ESL Classroom. *International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies*, 1(2), 243.
- Spahiu, I., & Spahiu, E. K. (2018). The Role of Social Interaction in Language Acquisition. *Knowledge International Journal*, 23(5), 1399-1401. <https://ikm.mk/ojs/index.php/KIJ/article/view/1684>
- Selvaraj, M. & Aziz, A.A. (2019). Systematic Review: Approaches in Teaching Writing Skill in E.S.L. Classrooms. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 8(4), 450–473.
- Selvaraj, M. & Aziz, A.A. (2020). Utilizing Flow Chart in Writing Narrative Essay: English as Second Language Students' Perceptions. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 10(3), 1–16.
- Singh, C. K. S. et al. (2017). Grammar Errors Made by E.S.L. Tertiary Students in Writing. *English Language Teaching*, 10(5), 16.
- Sipahi E. (2020). Test Anxiety: A Case of ESL Vocabulary Testing Using Multiple-Choice Items and Error Identification Tests. *kurmanj*. 2020; 2 (4) :1-6 URL: <http://kurmanj.srpup.org/article-2-75-en.html>
- Yunda. R., Komariah & Burhansyah. (2017). Using Story Mapping Technique to Improve Students' Ability in Writing Recount Text. *Research in English and Education (READ)* Vol.2, No.4. pp 32-40

