IQRO JURNALI / 2023
GUVOHNOMA № 060680

E-ISSN : 2181-4341
https://wordlyknowledge.uz
IMPACT FACTOR(SJIF) : 3,934

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 1, 2023 SPECIAL ISSUE

THE EFFECTIVE WAYS TO IMPROVE WRITING SKILLS FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Tursunova Sharofat

Telephone number: +998930850126

Email: sharofattursunova06@gmail.com

Abstract

Improving writing skills is indeed a significant goal, considering the central role of writing in everyday life. This article aims to offer alternative and effective methods to enhance writing skills across various domains. It explores valuable techniques to improve learners' writing abilities within a concise timeframe and provides guidance on effectively instructing students to express their ideas and provide coherent explanations when faced with difficulties. And this article shows how to teach students to write properly when they encounter difficulties in expressing their ideas or giving explanation on them.

Introduction

Writing is indeed a complex activity, and understanding this complexity is crucial for effective teaching of writing. In my article, I provide a brief historical overview of different approaches to teaching writing, including the controlled approach, process approach, and genre approach. The controlled approach to teaching writing focuses on teaching grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structures in a controlled and structured manner. On the other hand, the process approach emphasizes the recursive and dynamic nature of the writing process, where students engage in pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing stages. The genre approach, in turn, highlights the importance of understanding and using different genres and their conventions in writing. To effectively implement these approaches, it is essential to recognize the recursive nature of the writing process. Writing is not a linear activity but involves going back and forth between different stages. Additionally, having a clear understanding of what constitutes competent writing is crucial. Competent writing involves not only linguistic tools for cohesion and coherence but also the ability to structure and develop arguments at both micro and macro levels. Teaching writing should also involve training students in the thinking processes that facilitate good writing. The socio-cognitive approach to teaching writing recognizes the social and cognitive aspects of writing. It focuses on developing students' thinking skills, fostering critical thinking, and promoting metacognitive awareness during the writing process. I discuss the guiding principles and pedagogical implications of the socio-cognitive approach to teaching writing. This approach emphasizes the importance of providing students with opportunities to engage in meaningful writing tasks that require critical thinking and reflection. It also highlights the significance of providing constructive feedback and creating a supportive learning environment for students to improve their writing skills. Furthermore, drawing upon insights from writing research, the chapter offers strategies for enhancing the quality of second language writing. By incorporating evidence-based practices and considering the findings from the literature, teachers can provide targeted instruction to support second language writers and address their specific needs. this chapter provides an overview of different approaches to teaching writing and highlights the socio-cognitive approach as a way to cultivate effective writing skills. By understanding the complexity of

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writing and adopting pedagogical strategies that encompass critical thinking and metacognitive awareness, teachers can effectively guide students in their writing journey and enhance the quality of second language writing.

Literature review.

Raimes(1983) and Silva (1990) mentioned that product-based writing approaches have been known by different names in the literature. Some of these names include the controlled-to-free approach, the text-based approach, and the guided composition approach.

The controlled-to-free approach refers to a gradual progression in writing instruction, starting with more controlled and structured activities and gradually moving towards more open and independent writing. This approach allows students to develop their writing skills step by step, starting with guided practice and gradually gaining more autonomy in their writing.The text-based approach emphasizes the use of authentic texts as models and inspiration for students' own writing. Students study and analyze sample texts to understand the structure, language features, and strategies used in successful writing. This approach provides students with a solid foundation and serves as a guide for their own writing. In addition, Harris(1993) noted that Rhetorical patterns, such as comparison/contrast, cause-effect, classification, and definition, are organizational frameworks that help writers structure and present their ideas coherently and effectively. Each pattern has its own characteristics and language features that are commonly associated with it. The second approach is process-based approach and O'Brien (2004) defines that process-based writing encourages learners to view writing as a means of discovering meaning and generating ideas. Instead of treating writing as a series of isolated grammar exercises, this approach recognizes the importance of engaging with the writing process as a whole. Writers go through various stages, such as prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing, to develop their ideas, refine their arguments, and improve their overall written work. Apart from this, Herwins showed five- step writing process model according to process-based approach. Writing in the process approach is viewed as a dynamic and unpredictable process, as highlighted by Tribble (1990). Writers engage in a continuous cycle of reformulating their ideas and approximating the meaning of what they want to express in their work.The third approach is the genre-based approach, as defined by Hammond and Derewianka (2001), is a way of language and literacy education that integrates the understanding of genre and genre teaching in the writing class.Additionally, the genre-based approach can help students develop a deeper understanding of how language functions in different genres and how to use language choices strategically to achieve specific communicative purposes. It also enhances students' critical analytical skills as they engage in genre analysis and evaluation.

Conclusion

All considered, writing is a highly complex cognitive activity that requires writers to manage multiple variables simultaneously. Developing strong writing skills can greatly enhance students' chances for success in various aspects of their academic and professional lives. Writing is a fundamental aspect of language and plays a crucial role in communication and self-expression. Moreover, good writing skills are vital for students to meet the demands of their educational and career pathways. Whether it's completing assignments, research projects, reports, or communicating effectively in the professional world, the ability to write coherently and persuasively plays a crucial

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role in achieving success and meeting the expectations of diverse academic and professional environments.

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KNOWLEDGE