

Developing writing skills in English language teaching

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Abstract. *Acquiring writing skills for the students who study English for specific purposes is of great importance. This article discusses an important skill in language teaching – developing writing skills and reveals the main ideas for teaching writing, how it should be taught to students of different levels and specialties in the English classroom at University.*

Keywords: *writing skills, teacher, student. learners, English, classroom.*

Some learners may need to develop writing skills to quite a high level. For example, they may wish to study at a university in an English-speaking country. Other learners, who don't need to write in English in real life, sometimes resent too much classroom time being spent on developing writing skills. Teachers should always be aware of learners' needs, although as practice shows, some writing practice is likely to contribute to overall language development. This is because writing can help learning English. Even at a simple level, learners who copy new language from the board into a notebook are more likely to remember it than those who don't. Writing can help learners to work on accuracy. Writing allows more thinking time and space for reflection than speech and this too can be useful. In addition, short writing activities can also provide a variety of pace in a lesson and many learners probably expect a proportion of their course to include such writing activities [2].

We will now look at some classroom activities for teaching English writing. For each activity, it must be considered whether it practises writing as a means of communication, or whether writing is being used as an aid to learning.

For example, the **1 activity**: learners are given five sentences each containing the second conditional . The words for each sentence are jumbled up and the learners have to put them into the correct order [3].

Activity 2: the teacher sets up a class blog that all learners can access to write about their interests and get reactions from their colleagues.

Activity 3 : the learners work in groups of three to write an essay on a given subject. They write on large pieces of paper which are later displayed around the room.

The learners then circulate, reading each other's work, and are invited to write comments on the essays – identifying the parts they agree or disagree with. They can also highlight any bits of language that they think may be wrong (grammar mistakes, spelling problems and so on). When this has been completed, the learners look again at their writing and make any changes they wish to, based on the comments [1].

Activity 4 : the learners are given the beginnings and endings of sentences and also a list of linking words. They match each section to make sentences.

Running dictation. The teacher selects or creates a short text of around 60-70 words and produces several copies of it. The teacher then divides the class into pairs. Student A runs to the nearest copy of the text, reads a phrase or two and then runs back to student B and dictates what they read. Student B listens and writes what they hear. Roles can be swapped every few minutes. The first pair to finish wins and when a pair has completed their text, they compare what they have created with the original [5].

Webquest. The learners work in small groups to prepare a presentation. They must use online resources to find out information on their chosen topic. Learners could access both written and spoken texts. When the learners have had the chance to prepare, they give a short presentation to the rest of the class. After the presentation, the teacher provides feedback. For further homework, the learners write a summary of what they found out and reflect on the process of preparing the presentation. Clearly, this activity has a strong communicative focus, with the goal being to successfully complete the task [4].

Conclusion. Like the other skills, writing is a means of communicating. Effective writers tend to go through a process of writing. Teachers need to help learners go through a similar process. Some ideas for teaching writing, which were discussed in the article can be also a useful aid to learning.

References

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