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QUALIFICATION PAPER

TEACHING CREATIVE WRITING TECHNIQUES

5220100-Philology and teaching languages (The English Language) for granting the bachelor's degree

THE QUALIFICATION PAPER IS ADMITTED TO DEFENSE

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Introduction

The President of Republic of Uzbekistan I.A. Karimov stresses “The task of a science is establishment of our future, directions of future, natural law which will be in reality. The science must become the means strength driving development of society forward”[1].

Under the guidance of President Islam Karimov a special attention is paid to formation of harmoniously developed, highly educated, modern thinking generation, able to take responsibility for the fate of the country. It is hard to overestimate the role of teachers and mentors in furthering this responsible goal.

“The task of science is to form our future, trends for tomorrow, the laws of nature, to show the way it will be. Science must be the means and the force driving forward the development of society”.[2]

The given qualification paper is dedicated to one of the actual problems nowadays connected with the study of the convention of creative writing techniques and its peculiarities.

The actuality of the work. In recent years language researchers and practitioners have shifted their focus from developing individual linguistic skills to the use of language to achieve the speaker's objectives. This new area of focus, known as communicative competence, leads language teachers to seek task-oriented activities that engage their students in creative language use. In the process of learning English as a foreign language, writing is considered as one of the most essential skills. In addition to being a communicative skill of vital importance, it is a skill which enables the learner to plan and rethink the communication process. Therefore, teaching writing skills should be taught gradually starting from instrumental skill to content-based writing. Teaching writing should be started from beginning level. Most school textbooks are focused on teaching writing separately without integration of other skills. In other words, our qualification

[1] Каримов И.А. ‘‘Без памяти нет будущего”Узбекистан 1999 стр 149-150.

[2](Karimov. There Is No Future Without Historical Memory / We Are Constructing Our Future with Our Own Hands. Vol.7. Tashkent: "O’zbekiston", 1999. p. 146)

work pursues as its major aim to help foreign students improve their writing skills with the integration of other skills from the beginning level. The significance of our work can be proved that we tried to find optional methods of improving writing skills from the beginning level and we applied them in practice.

The main aim of the qualification paper is to analyze the techniques of creative writing and its peculiarities .

The purpose directs us to arrange some **tasks** to carry out in revealing the chosen theme. So we have arranged the following to discuss:

a) To study, analyze, and sum up the modern methods of teaching writing;

b) To analyze the major results achieved in the studied field;

c) To prove the idea of importance of improving students' writing skills;

d) To analyze school textbooks and work out a series of activities for improving students' writing skills.

The degree of study of the research. Many scholars approached to writing process with various ways as Wilga Rivers makes the distinction between notation, or writing practice, and expressive writing, or composition, Rico, G.L.made an research on pre- writing process in 1986, Tannen. D. learned coherence in spoken and written discourse in 1984, Spiro, Jane investigated the ways of creative poetry writing in 2004, Tan, Bee Tin explored the problems of creative writing in EFL/ESL Classrooms in 2004, Mukundan and Jayakaran studied the difficulties and the methods of creative writing in EFL/ESL Classrooms in 2006, Ron White and Valerie Arndt in their "Process Writing" gave all possible ways of writing process in 2006. As we see after getting acquainted the above given scholars work we found out that the teaching creative writing techniques not learned completely and still we need to do research works on it .

The methods of the research. The main methods for compiling our work are the method of analysis and the method of research. In our work, we analyzed school textbooks and added some new activities which we considered suitable for

teaching and improving students' writing skills.

Material. In our research we used the ideas of Uzbek, Russian and foreign methodologies who worked in the sphere of foreign language teaching methodology and language learning. We addressed to works of J. Jalolov, G. Rogova, Spack.R, G. L. Rico, J. Arnold, M. Boden and others for theoretical part of our work. In practical part of our work we appealed to school textbooks "Fly High" 5 and 7.

The novelty of this research work is to find information about how to improve students' writing skills, analyzing school textbooks and applying found ideas into the lessons appropriately. This theme has been worked out by many scientists and researchers before but from the point of analyzing Uzbek school textbooks and creating a series of writing tasks in those textbooks hasn't been done yet. Also, we consider the idea of approbating new writing materials on English language lessons during our pedagogical practice is also one part of the novelty of our work.

The object of research is peculiarities of writing techniques.

The subject matter of the qualification papers is the process of teaching writing and conventions of creative writing.

The theoretical value of the paper is defined by the investigation of the common and specific properties of the writing process, especially studying of the important characteristics of the language of one of its integrated skill.

The practical importance of the paper is that the present work might find a good way of implying in the following spheres:

1. In High Schools and scientific circles of language teaching methodology it can be successfully used by teachers and philologists as modern material for writing research works dealing with improving writing skills.

2. It can be used by teachers of schools, lyceums and colleges by teachers of English as a practical manual for teaching writing.

3. It can be useful for everyone who wants to enlarge his/her knowledge in

English.

Structurally the Qualification Paper consists of an Introduction, three chapters and a conclusion, which followed by the list of literature used in the course of research.
Introduction determines the actuality, scientific novelty, the aim and tasks of the work, its practical value, shows the material that served the basis for executed work.
Chapter one is devoted to the general theory of ELT and the Teaching of Writing in the Uzbekistan Educational System.

In chapter two we discussed issues such as skill building and the process approach to writing, main techniques for getting started writing process and teaching writing techniques.

In the third chapter (practice part) of main part we described different types writing activities and included worksheets. In the conclusion part our qualification work we tried to draw some results from the scientific investigations made within the main part of the qualification work.

The results of the research , that have been announced. On the basis of the theme of the qualification paper an article in the English language have been published: the article under the title of "Teaching creative writing techniques".

Conclusion submits the results of the investigation done.

Bibliography presents the list of the used literature, including scientific books and we mentioned more than 25 sources which were used while compiling the present work. It includes linguistic books and articles dealing with the theme, a number of used encyclopedias, textbooks and some internet sources.
There is an article has published about "Teaching creative writing techniques" in the press of the University.

CHAPTER ONE. ELT AND THE TEACHING OF WRITING IN THE UZBEKISTAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

Having gained, after Second World War, a world-wide recognition as an international language, English is now almost vitally required and needed not only in the people's daily life for communicative purposes, but also taught and learnt throughout the world to fulfill utilitarian goals. The growth of world trade, the development of science and technology, and the spread of pop culture gave such an impulse to its diffusion that many dialects have developed: American, British, Canadian, Indian, and Australian, to name a few. The idea that the English language hegemony will not be challenged for years has been stated by Hasman[3] who writes:

[3] Hasman, M.A.. "The Role of English in the 21st Century" English Teaching Forum, 38 (1), 2000.- pp. -2-5.

"We have still about 100 years before a new language dominates the world …It may supplement or co-exist with other languages by allowing strangers to communicate across linguistic boundaries. It may become one tool that opens windows to the world, unlocks doors to opportunities and expands our minds to new ideas".

The use of English for air-traffic control, its use in the different United Nation's bodies and institutions, the telecommunication revolution displayed through the various dominant international media, radio, TV, magazines and newspapers, the reliance of the international pop-music industry on English, gigantic advances in space science and computing technology indisputably imposed English as the "lingua franca" all over the world irrespective of peoples' nationalities and countries' historical events[4].

Uzbekistan, therefore, could not actually escape this wide effect of the English spread. Despite the fact that the Uzbek language situation was relatively different due to particular historical-political and socio-economic factors, and besides the officials' scornful consideration for English as being a former colonial language as well as a language of a former imperialist country, a positive adhesion to its promotion was undertaken by decision makers for its incontestable utilitarian uses and benefits . Nonetheless a noticeable distinction has to be made as to the status of English in the Uzbekistan educational system as well as to the teaching writing place in particular.

Higher Education in Uzbekistan is initiating a major reform by implementing use of the Common European Framework of Reference for languages -learning, teaching and assessment (CEFR) - and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in the country.

Both projects will be part of the implementation of Presidential Decree Number 1875 of December 2012 in enhancement of the teaching and learning of foreign

[4] Strevens, P. "English as an International Language" English Teaching Forum, 25 (4), 1987.-PP.- 56-63

languages in order to strengthen the communication skills and international effect of future Uzbekistan specialists in all fields.

The Uzbekistan State World Languages University will be the main partner in implementing the use of the CEFR for General English, Medical English, and English for Agriculture and other instances of English for Specific Purposes.

However, this innovation brings a new way of learning, teaching and assessment in compulsory education for children from 7-19 years old and higher education for older youth, who are the intellectual potential of the country.

Teaching is a sacred notion that can yield something amazing when the right ideas and beliefs are implemented in the classroom. I believe no other profession is highly appreciated or fulfilling but honorful like teaching. By this way CEFR activities play the most important role in English lessons. Creativity: Today's modern teachers should have more qualities than ever because modern children are not like those whom you can satisfy by treating them candies to keep still at the lesson. Being creative and innovative are important qualities and these make your lessons more interesting and fun.

1.1. English Language Teaching Status in the Uzbekistan Educational System.

Considering the fact that English is generally distinguished in the language learning/teaching field as having two statuses: English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL), we would attempt here to clarify and explain these two concepts so as to see which status English occupies in the Uzbekistan educational system.

Actually, the difference is of high importance as far as the two concepts are concerned particularly when these are related to the language learning /teaching of English as Strevens[5] writes:

"It makes a considerable difference, when it comes to the teaching and learning of English, whether the environment is FL or SL: it affects the extent of the learner's prior familiarity with English, it affects the learner's expectations of success, and it affects both the average level of attainment reached by most learners (higher overall in ESL than in EFL countries) and the ultimate norms or goals for success which learners and teachers set (aspiring to L1 like in EFL countries, aspiring rather to an NNS (Non Native Speaker) target in ESL countries".

Under the guidance of President Islam Karimov a special attention is paid to formation of harmoniously developed, highly educated, modern thinking generation, able to take responsibility for the fate of the Homeland.
In consistent realization of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Education", National Program of Personnel Training, significant place is reserved for construction of new schools, academic lyceums, vocational colleges, higher education institutions, capital reconstruction and strengthening material-technical base of the existing ones, their provision with modern educational equipment.

The resolution[6] of the President of Uzbekistan "On measures to further improve system of foreign languages teaching" dated from 10 December 2012 is being implemented in Tashkent region as well. This document serves as an important guideline in development of new textbooks for teaching foreign languages, introduction of advanced teaching methods using modern pedagogical and information-communication technologies, education of a new generation to foreign languages, cardinal improvement of the system of training of specialists, fluent in

[5] Strevens, P. "English as an International Language" English Teaching Forum, 25 (4), 1987.-P.- 60.

[6]Каримов И.А. По пути безопасности и стабильного развития. – Ташкент: Узбекистан, 1998. – с. 21.

these languages, creation of conditions and opportunities for wide use of information resources by students.

Persistent works on raising awareness of the public concerning the essence and significance of the resolution, ensuring its execution are being carried out.

– Aiming to implement the resolution, we are working on preparing and approving new teaching plans and programs taking into account introduction of foreign language teaching from the initial classes of the public schools, – says the head of the Tashkent regional public education department A. Azamatov. – Currently at 883 public schools in our region over 1600 teachers educate children to foreign languages.

Starting from 2013/2014 school year, learning of foreign languages will begin from the first classes of the public schools. Naturally, demand for specialists in this sphere will increase. Accordingly, the Tashkent Regional State Pedagogical Institute in cooperation with the Uzbek State University of World Languages is working on this issue. Training of teachers of foreign languages is also continuing[7].

Increasing globalization has created a large need for people in the workforce who can communicate in multiple languages. The uses of common languages are in areas such as trade, tourism, international relations, technology, media, and science. Many countries such as Korea, Japan, Uzbekistan and China frame education policies to teach at least one foreign language at the primary and secondary school levels. However, some countries such as India, Singapore, Malaysia, Pakistan, and the Philippines use a second official language in their governments. For instance: in 2010 China has recently been putting enormous importance on foreign language learning, especially the English Language.

1.2.English as a foreign language

[7]http://www.edu.uz/en/ministry/activities/higher_education/485/

English as a foreign language is regarded not only as having 'no special standing' and 'just another language'[8], but also as not being the official language of the country. It may, however, have an important role both in schools, as a school subject, and in other fields for utilitarian reasons such as tourism and business .

Departing from the Arab world situation, Al Mutawa and Kailani[9] hold that the FL learning is restricted to the classroom use, out of which there is little or no reinforcement at all. Furthermore, learning English as a FL in a non-English setting "affords a window on the world of advanced technology and industrial development".

Whereas a foreign language is, in some instances, "studied for the insight it affords into the life of another nation"; it is, in some other instances "used for the purpose of absorbing the culture of another nation". In other terms, it is usually considered as 'a cultural island' [10] where motivation for learning it emanates either from the teacher's initiative or the student's good will or from both so as to achieve success. Strevens (op.cit.) concludes that considering these two terms together, some of the NNS population of English users are dispatched in EFL countries while others are found in ESL countries. In both situations, however, English is 'chronologically' a second language. Instances of these cases are, for example, Korea, Brazil, China, France, Sweden, Indonesia, Algeria, Morocco, and so on, where English is EFL; and Nigeria, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Cyprus, Gibraltar, Fiji and so forth, where English is ESL[11] .

Having then the status of a foreign language, English had been, in fact, already adopted under the big influence of the world leading Anglo-Saxon music and songs on the one hand, and under the successive approaches and

[8] Strevens, P. "English as an International Language" English Teaching Forum, 25 (4), 1987.-PP.- 60

[9] Al Mutawa, N. and Kailani. T..Methods of Teaching English to Arab Students. UK : Longman Group, 1989.-P-3

[10] Ellis, G. "How Culturally Appropriate is the Communicative Approach"ELT Journal, 50 (3), 1996.-pp.-215.

[11] Strevens, P. "English as an International Language" English Teaching Forum, 25 (4), 1987.-PP.- 60

methods of the 1960's and the 1970's, such as the Grammar Translation Method, the Audio-lingual Method, the Direct Method, and the Structural approach, to name a few.

Uzbekistan's interests in the fields of Petroleum, natural gas, iron and steel, electronics, planning, design and construction orientates her increasingly economic interests to the English speaking West, not only the U.S and U.K but Germany, Japan, and other countries of the third world. This theoretical claim would lead English to gain a relative practical importance comparatively to the other existing FL bearing in mind the increasing number of teachers trained in the ITE (Teacher Training Institute for Middle Schools)[12] . The gradual removal of the other foreign languages such as German, Russian, and Italian from the secondary schools was another significant factor that helped, later on, challenges the 'privileged' status of French as a first foreign language.

1.3.English as a second language

By English as a Second Language, it is usually meant the sole or major language, among others, used in almost all country's institutions such as government, law, media, business, and education. It is considered by its users as a local language through which communication is established.

[12] Khelloufi, S.A. A Study of the Teaching of English with Special Reference to Existing Policies, Teaching Methods and Students' Attitudes. University of Algiers: Unpublished MA Thesis, 1983. -P-19

While Christophersen [13] refers to the definition given by some linguists and educators to 'second language' as being the language "studied for more utilitarian reasons because of its direct value to the speaker or writer as a citizen of his own country", and that it constitutes an 'alternative' which enables its users to express one's own culture. Ellis , in his turn, writes that since "ESL takes place within an English speaking environment … so the ESL students will have a greater need to communicate". Thus, ESL is seen as having an 'integrative' aspect that will help individuals to function in the community. Contextually, Strevens writes:

English is a second language when it has special standing such as being acceptable in the courts of law, being the medium of institution in major sectors of the educational administration, being commonly used on radio or television, and where there are major newspapers published in English.

With regard to these definitions given to the term 'ESL', we would assert that this status does not fit the Uzbekistan educational system; therefore the teaching of English has not the status of ESL.

1.4. Problems of teaching writing in English in educational establishments

Professors in departments other than English often feel writing is outside their area of expertise. Many of us in English departments (I'm generalizing here) feel that students should have gotten rudimentary skills and grammar in high school, so that we can focus on ideas and critical thinking and mastery.

[13] Christophersen, P. Second-Language Learning, Myth and Reality. London: Penguin Education. -1973.-P-30

In larger universities, graduate students teach writing, though they seldom are trained in the teaching of writing. We always felt that writing came easily to me, so it should be easy to teach.

Teaching writing is not an impossible task, though. If it were, our entire career would have to be classified as a failure. It does require a balance of guiding students through the process of writing and helping them to understand and evaluate the products of writing. It requires that students buy in to the importance of writing—and that means that they have to see writing valued in all classes.

The best thing a Writing Across the Curriculum program can do toward this end is to train professors how to evaluate student writing. The best thing a teacher of writing can do is spend one-on-one time with students, guiding them and helping them to shape their ideas.

Yet colleges put a lot into their writing programs. Most offer two classes, introductory composition and researching. All have a tutoring lab to offer additional assistance to students. Writing Across the Curriculum programs validate the need for writing in all disciplines.

Why isn't this working? The reasons are many and complicated, but two are at the forefront for me.

The first is student attitudes. In general, students aren't convinced that writing will play a major part of their careers. They also aren't convinced they can learn to write: some people are born with the talent and some are not, they believe. These students, when presented with information about how to write better pretty much ignore it and continue to do what they have always done, even if ineffective.

The second reason is students want rules and structure. It's also easier to teach writing as a set of rules and structures—that is why the Five-paragraph Theme and grammar instruction are so pervasive, especially in high school. Students today are

trained to learn the right and wrong answers. Writing isn't like that. The best writing teachers offer guidelines and teach the process. What makes good writing depends so much on context, audience, and purpose. Students hate that kind of ambiguity.

The "rules" of writing taught in college for academic writing don't transfer to the workplace. Students need to learn the critical thinking and analytical skills to assess their various writing situations and make decisions about how to communicate effectively. That is difficult to teach, difficult to learn, and difficult to grade.

According to *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 44% of college professors feel that their students are not prepared for entry-level college writing. Why is this happening? Some experience has led us to a few insights into the shortcomings of our system.

First, high school students are learning different skills to succeed in high school than those they need in college. In high school, teachers have to contend with many competing demands: discipline, curriculum requirements, testing, content-specific reporting.

Students learn to answer content related questions to show that they know required information and to report facts culled from research. That is very different from what we would expect of our students in a college class, which may be way the 2010 Deloitte Education Survey states that only 31% of high school teachers think their students are ready for college.

In college, we expect students to be able to apply critical thinking skills to formulate original insights into their topics. We expect them to synthesize information from their research into well-developed academic arguments. And we expect them to offer credible evidence for the claims they make. College students

need to offer logically developed and organized papers. These are the standards of college-level work, along with being able to integrate sufficient breadth and depth knowledge on a topic (perhaps the single point of intersection with high school expectations).

The situation seems to be this: high schools tend to focus (largely but not exclusively) on other skills than those colleges expect, and nothing to enhance writing skills happens during the summer between students graduating from high school and beginning college.

What's the solution? Additional writing classes in high school? Summer writing workshops to prepare students? More remedial classes (those these are often portrayed as the road to dropping out)?

I have often thought that even in college, if we truly wanted students to learn to write, instead of offering one or two semesters of writing classes, we would assign each student to a writing workshop and provide each with an individual tutor. The students would continue in the workshop and with the tutor until they could reach a basic level of competence. Of course, the expense of this, through student tuition or other means, would be enormous.

CHAPTER TWO. TEACHING WRITING AS A TYPE OF COMMUNICATION

2.1.The process approach to writing and building skills on it

Within the communicative framework of language teaching, the skill of writing enjoys special status—it is via writing that a person can communicate a variety of messages to a close or distant, known or unknown reader or readers. Such communication is extremely important in the modern world, whether the interaction takes the form of traditional paper-and-pencil writing or the most ad-

vanced electronic mail. Writing as a communicative activity needs to be encouraged and nurtured during the language learner's course of study, and this work will attempt to deal the early stages of EFL writing. The view of writing as an act of communication suggests an interactive process which takes place between the writer and the reader via the text.1 Such an approach places value on the goal of writing as well as on the perceived reader audience. Even if we are concerned with writing at the beginning level, these two aspects of the act of writing are vital importance; in setting writing tasks the teacher should encourage students to define, for themselves, the message they want to send and the audience who will receive it.

The writing process, in comparison to spoken interaction, imposes greater demands on the text, since written interaction lacks immediate feedback as a guide. The writer has to anticipate the reader's reactions and produce a text which will adhere to Grice's cooperative principle. According to this principle, the writer is obligated (by mutual cooperation) to try to write a clear, relevant, truthful, informative, interesting, and memorable text. The reader, on the other hand, will interpret the text with due regard to the writer's presumed intention if the necessary clues are available in the text. Linguistic accuracy, clarity of presentation, organization of ideas are all crucial in the efficacy of the communicative act, since they supply the clues for interpretation. Accordingly, while the global perspective of content organization needs to be focused on and given appropriate attention, it is also most important to present a product which does not suffer from illegible writing. Writing is, in a very sense, a mirror image of reading. Both are interactive. Readers decode what writers encode. Both draw upon schemata. The reader brings prior knowledge to the comprehension of a text; the writer draws upon similar knowledge in composing a text.

Wilga Rivers makes the distinction between notation, or writing practice, and expressive writing, or composition. Notation ranges from mere copying to the construction of simple sentences describing facts or representing typical,

uncomplicated speech. Expressive writing or composition involves the development of ideas either of a practical or a creative nature. Pedagogically, there is considerably more control in the development of notational skills than in more expressive types of writing. The expectation is that the EFL student will progress through several stages of writing practice to the early stages of creative composition. This development from control to creativity continues a line drawn throughout this manual in the chapters on dialogues, oral exercises, and reading comprehension.

The first activities are skill building exercises taking the learners from the very beginning to the mid-intermediate proficiency level. Here the focus is on structural detail and accuracy in the use of the written language. Learners are presented with textual segments, clues, and models of typical prose to assist them as they attempt to rearrange words or sentences, complete partially written texts, and imitate or modify entire paragraphs. In skill building exercises the progression is from simple to more complex structures, a so-called bottom up approach. The second part of the chapter, which is meant for intermediate and advanced learners, shifts the focus from the mechanical manipulation of structure to the more creative activities of process writing.[14]

The process approach to writing is based upon a set of principles basically different from those underlying skill building. Where skill building exercises move from simple to complex structures, process writing, which is a top down model, starts with a concept or theme and works down to the grammatical and semantic units. In the process approach each learner completes a writing assignment in a group, exchanging ideas with other members of the group and receiving editorial help at various stages of composition. When conducted properly, process writing is a prime example of cooperative learning.

The process approach, with its stress on group interaction, is a direct offshoot of communicative language learning, just as pattern practice was a

[14] Rico, G.L. Clustering: Pre- writing process. Sacramento. California State Department of Education. 1986.

product of the audio-lingual method. For many years preoccupation with structural accuracy allowed little room for the development of cognitive strategies in creative writing. Students, left to their own resources, were often at a loss as to how to formulate ideas on a topic or theme. Process writing provides for the formulation of ideas and plans through learner cooperation, Rivers eliminating much of the isolation, frustration, and uncertainty encountered in writing programs of the past.

Recent studies have attempted to redirect the process approach with its stress on the general mechanics of creative composition to training in writing for specific content areas. The reason for this is a fear that process writing does not prepare students adequately for an academic career. In a content-based approach students develop writing skills within specific academic disciplines so that they will be able to compose essays and reports using the specialized vocabulary and structures peculiar to these disciplines. Usually offered at the university level, such courses are often adjuncts to academic courses, such as economics, history, or physics. Sometimes they are taught by teams composed of an EFL/ESL teacher and an instructor from the specific content area. In many respects, the content-based approach to writing has a lot in common with English for Special Purposes (ESP) courses, which are geared to developing oral and written proficiency in specific occupational fields.

In a similar reaction to process writing, other researchers have suggested that teachers of writing classes concentrate on what is expected in the American academic community. Advocates of what has come to be known as the audience-based approach mean to train students in the type of writing that will be expected of them at a university or college. Valid as they are, neither content- nor audience-based approaches to writing lie within the scope of this handbook, which is meant to assist instructors in teaching "general English." The range of topics and fields to which students might direct their knowledge of the language is very wide, ranging from critical appraisals of literature at one end of the scale, to issuing written staff orders for the daily management of a hotel at the other. Basic fluency can always

be channeled into specific directions at a later date, particularly through the acquisition of specialized vocabulary. Skill building exercises have been divided into three categories as follows:

I. Constructing Sentences from Words and Phrases;

II. Constructing Paragraphs from Words, Phrases, and Sentences;

III. Constructing Paragraphs from Original Material.

The purpose throughout is to train the learners to think in logical sequences and to draw upon what they know of the target language in producing limited but meaningful prose.

I. Constructing Sentences from Words and Phrases. At this stage the learner is engaged in the rudiments of writing practice as a means of reinforcing the command of basic syntactic structures. Intended for use with beginning level students, the exercises below are strictly controlled. In some cases the components of the structures are provided in random sequence, which the student is to arrange correctly. In others, essential elements of the sentence are omitted, and the student is to supply them. Both types of exercises involve copying, since the student should write out all completed sentences scattered elements provide practice in building both semantic and grammatical units.

1. | she intends | a teacher | Mary is planning to go | to become | to the university | because 2. | the village | the mountain | after | were | difficult climb | Anna, Bob, and Ralph their | when | very tired | up | they reached | Adding missing items to incomplete sentences encourages learners to draw upon or enlarge their repertory of vocabulary items. Learners complete the sentences below by putting the correct word in the blanks. In some slots more than one answer may be appropriate.

1. Mary _____ very happy_____ see Harry _____ he returned _____his trip. _____ he _____ been away for _____ time.

2. _____ you like _____ go fishing _____ in _____ morning _____ the sun comes_____?

II. Constructing paragraphs from words, phrases, and sentences.

And this is what truly distinguishes the spoken from written language. People do not normally speak in paragraphs. The spontaneous give and take of conservations is composed of elements that are seldom longer than sentences or sentence fragments. A short series of logically connected sentences may be uttered ina conversation, but carefully structured paragraph belongs to writing.

This type of writing exercises are meant to train learners first, to think logically in arranging words, phrases, and sentences in their proper order and second, to use limited amount of imagination and creativity in completing or composing sentences as part of paragraphs which have already been defined or described in some way. The tasks in section A do not require original contributions in the target language by the students. The tasks in section B do.

Section A. Constructing paragraphs from material provided in full.

Rearranging Full Sentences. Arrange the six sentences below in correct logical order to form a unified paragraph by placing a number in the blank to indicate the correct sequence.

____ After that they walked over to see the animals.

____ They told some funny jokes and did lots of tricks.

____ Last week, Harry took Mary to the circus.

____ Harry said there would be many different kinds, both fierce and friendly.

____ First, they went to see the clowns.

____ Mary thought they were interesting, but she preferred the clowns.

Section B. Constructing paragraphs from incomplete text. Here, as in the section above, Constructing Paragraphs from Material Provided in Full, learners are asked to draw upon their vocabulary resources. But at this point they are required to supply mainly lexical rather than grammatical forms as well as longer, more complicated structures. In the two exercises below learners fill in the blanks with words or larger constructions to form a logical and consistent paragraph. There is more than one possible solution to these exercises.

Supplying Missing Words or phrases.

Harry was carrying a large _____ in his with a lot of fruit in it. His _____, Tom, was carrying _____ too, but there wasn't any in it. There was just _____

Harry took a look at Tom's _____ and started to laugh. "I couldn't find any _____ this year," he _____ . "So I had to buy_____ instead. But you were clever, Tom. Where did you find that _____?"

III. Constructing paragraphs from models. The activities presented here are based upon specimens of writing which serve as models for the iss. The exercises have two facets. First, they require that the learners understand the structure as well the content of the model paragraphs. Second, they direct the learners to imitate certain aspects of the structure and content of the model while making changes in others. In this way both reinforcement and activity are brought into play. The changes called for by these exercises may be purely grammatical, or they may involve vocabulary items of varying length and complexity. The goal, in all cases, is to achieve a certain degree of flexibility in the usage of individual elements while retaining a clear picture of the message and purpose of ae paragraph as a whole. The models used in this section are restricted to narratives. Learners rewrite the model paragraph below according to the instructions given in each exercise. As many altered compositions as time allows are read to the class, at which time corrections or improvements will be suggested. Model:

It is a typical winter day, and Mr. Preston is taking a walk downtown. Even though the sun is shining brightly, it is bitterly cold, with a sharp wind. As he is walking along a side street, the wind suddenly blows his hat off his head and onto the roof of a nearby house. Mr. Preston is at first surprised and then quite angry. He fears that he has lost the hat forever because he is simply too old to climb houses. Since he is a reasonable man, however, he decides to forget the entire affair. Just as he is starting off again, another gust of wind blows the hat off the roof, and it lands at his feet. As he is bending over to pick it up, Mr. Preston thinks to himself, "I wish I were as lucky with things in general as I have been today with the wind."

A.Grammatical changes. 1. Gender The model paragraph is written about Mr. Preston. Change Mr. to Mrs. and make all other necessary alterations throughout the paragraph. 2. Tense The model paragraph is written as if the author were describing an event that is taking place at this moment. Rewrite the paragraph as if the action took place yesterday.

B.Vocabulary changes. 1. Substitution from a List . All of the items in the following list can be used as substitutes for items in the model paragraph. Take each item in the list and use it as a substitute for an item in the original. Make any other changes in the paragraph which are necessitated by the substitutes. The substitutes will be given in the list. 2. Free substitution. Learners rewrite the paragraph making any changes they wish. These may be in the nouns, verbs, adjectives, prepositional phrases, or any other constructions. Substantial additions or deletions should not be attempted; the general frame of the original should be maintained.

IV. Constructing paragraphs from cues. At this stage the students are expected to compose structured prose either with the direct aid of notes or with the indirect assistance of partial paragraphs which they are to complete. The first group of exercises under A below offers the students either a portion of completed prose as a guideline or a set of notes as an additional aid. The second group under B

consists of completed sentences or short paragraphs upon which the students are expected to build. Students compose paragraphs using the cues and following the instructions provided for each exercise in sections A and B below. Completed work will be submitted to the entire class for evaluation and possible improvement.

A. Models and notes as cues. In this exercise the first paragraph is given in its entirety as a major cue. Write a second paragraph, using the notes provided.

Friday morning Bill Brown walked over to the university library to pick up some books. His father, who was a professor of English literature, needed them for a seminar he was giving that afternoon. On his way home Bill decided to stop and visit his good friends, Phil and Alice Cooper, whom he had not seen in a long time. The three of them sat down to talk, and after a while, Alice asked Bill if would like to join them for lunch. Naturally, Bill was delighted.

(lunch delicious; three friends sit down; play cards; forget time; two hours later; realize the time; run home; father angry; students happy; no seminar)

B. Only notes as cues. Writing composition of two paragraphs, using the following notes. (Jim on way home, crossing street, not see car, driver try to stop, hit Jim, take to hospital, doctor examine, x-ray, no broken bones, two days in hospital, happy not serious, happy see visitors, happier go home)

Once students have been through skill building exercises, they are ready to start composing original essays, using process writing procedures. Working in small groups, they complete a writing assignment by mutual cooperation and assistance in giving expression to their thoughts, getting them down on paper, and molding them into a final product. They do not produce a single group essay, but each student composes his or her own composition, with the group serving as a resource for suggestions, criticisms, and evaluation. In process writing the teacher guides the students through all phases of an assignment by providing directions for the work sessions, monitoring the sessions, and evaluating the finished essays. Both documents are models and may be photocopied and used as they are or

modified to suit individuals and groups, especially as the writing proficiency of the class develops. As learners develop facility in generating ideas and engaging in group dynamics, the role of the teacher may be reduced. However, instructors should always be ready to offer suggestions for developing ideas in the group sessions and notes for editing and correcting errors. The active participation of the teacher in each assignment is crucial to success.

Three level of writing activity are presented in this stage. At the first level teacher presents parts of an essay or article as guidelines for further development. In this way, students are not only given a topic, but also some information and details contained in the piece. At the second level, the teacher gives the class a definite theme to write on. It is up to the students to develop information on this topic in their group sessions. At the third level, students must select and develop their own topics in group sessions. At this level each group may very well generate a different topic.

Level 1. Completing a partial composition. This level is close to free composition. In this case only minimum directions are provided in the form of initial and concluding sentences. Students are to complete each composition based on the information provided in the sentences.

Level 2. Reviewing an essay or article. In this level no linguistic clues are provided. However, the theme is determined by the material under review.

Level 3. The theme provided by the teacher. Again, although the composition is composed solely by the teacher, the teacher exerts some control by providing the topic.

Level 4. The theme developed by the students. In this level, each student writes down a few ideas for a topic and ideas he or she might have concerning the topic.

2.2.Teaching main techniques for the writing process

Regardless of the type of writing tasks the teacher might favor assigning, a good place to begin classwork is to explore the prewriting stage, the stage prior to actual production of a working text. Because there isn't one composing process, the goal of the teacher should be to expose students to a variety of strategies for getting started with a writing task and to encourage each student to try to discover which strategies (in which circumstances) work best for him or her. Several heuristic devices1 (or invention strategies) which can be explored in class for the purpose of providing students with a repertoire of techniques for generating ideas are the following:

1. Brainstorming: This is often a group exercise in which all of the students in the class are encouraged to participate by sharing their collective knowledge about subject. One way to structure teacher to suggest a broad topic, such as for choosing a particular academic major, and have students call out as many associations as possible which the teacher can then write on the board. The result would be far more material generated than any student is likely to think of on his/her and then all students can utilize any or all of the information when turning to the preparation of their first drafts.

2. Listing: Unlike brainstorming, as described above, listing can be a quiet essentially individual activity. Again, as a first step in finding an approach to a particular subject area (such as the use and abuse of power, to cite an example), the students are encouraged to produce as lengthy a list as possible of all the subcategories that come to mind as they think about the topic at hand. This is an especially useful activity for students who might be constrained by undue concern for expressing their thoughts grammatically correct sentences, because lists do not require complete sentence

3. Free writing: Suggested by Elbow for helping native speakers break through the difficulty of getting started, free writing is also known by various other terms, such as "wet ink" writing and " quick-writing." The main idea of this technique for students to write for a specified period of time (usually about 5 minutes) without taking their pen from the page. As Elbow puts it, "Don't stop for anything. . . . Never stop to look back, to cross something out,. . . to wonder what word or thought to use ... If you get stuck it's fine to write 'I can't think what to say. . . as many times as you like."1 Freed from the necessity of worrying about grammar and format, students can often generate a great deal of prose which provides useful raw material to use in addressing the writing assignment at hand. For EFL students, this technique often works best if the teacher provides an opening clause or sentence for the students to start with. So, for example, if the next assignment is to write a paper about one's personal philosophy of life, a short free writing session can begin with the words "Life is difficult but it is also worthwhile." The free writing generated after the students copy this sentence and continue to write down whatever comes into their heads can be kept private or shared with other students. It can also be used as the basis for one or more subsequent 5- to 10-minute free writing "loops" which are additional free writing sessions starting with whatever key idea derives from material discovered through the process of the previous quick-writing step.

4. Clustering: Another technique for getting many ideas down quickly, clustering begins with a key word or central idea placed in the center of a page (or on the blackboard) around which the student (or teacher using student-generated suggestions) jots down in a few minutes all of the free associations triggered by the subject matter—using simply words or short phrases. Unlike listing, the words or phrases generated are put on the page or board in a pattern which takes shape from the connections the writer sees as each new thought emerges. Completed clusters can look like spokes on a wheel or any other pattern of connected lines, depending on how the individual associations are drawn to relate to each other. By having students share their cluster patterns with other students in the class, teachers allow

students to be exposed to a wide variety of approaches to the subject matter, which might further generate material for writing. Rico notes that clustering allows students to get in touch with the right-hemisphere part of the brain to which she attributes "holistic, image-making, and synthetic capabilities." She further notes that clustering makes "silent, invisible mental jesses visible and manipulable"

It is very important that students experiment with each of these techniques in order to see how each one works to help generate text and shape a possible approach to a topic. The purpose, after all, of acquiring invention strategies is for students to feel that they have a variety of ways to begin an assigned writing task and that they do not always have to begin at the beginning and work through an evolving draft sequentially until they reach the end. Spack underscores the importance of having students practice a variety of strategies since she observed that none of her EFL students utilized invention strategies presented in the course textbook which they had read about but not practiced. She further notes that students may also devise their own invention strategies once they have learned the value of systematic exploration of a topic. But we must keep in mind the fact, as

Reid asserts, that for some students, the strategy of choice may be to produce a text in a linear fashion, possibly generated by an outline prepared prior to writing a full first draft. For some people, she points out, brainstorming can be more difficult than, and not as successful as, outlining.

Using Readings in the Writing Class. The use of readings in the writing class is another topic that has generated a great deal of debate among those searching for methodologies which promote improvement in writing proficiency. Before awareness of how to address the writing process in class and of the importance to students of actually doing writing in class, the primary activity of so- called writing classes was actually reading. As mentioned earlier, the traditional paradigm for L1 writing classes was rooted in having students read and discuss texts which they would then go on to write about. When the process approach was first introduced, many writing instructors eliminated the use of readers, and used only texts written

by the students themselves as the reading material for the course. The dominant philosophy seemed to be that one learns to write by writing, and that perhaps reading had very little to do with the acquisition of writing. ESL teachers following the developments in L1 writing classrooms also went through a period in which reading played almost no role in the writing classroom. But the pendulum has begun to swing in the opposite direction, and while readings have been reintroduced into the so-called modern process writing class— both LI and L2— the nature of the readings and their function is viewed quite differently.

On one level, readings serve some very practical purposes in the writing class, particularly for ESL writers who have less fluency in the language. At the very least, readings provide models of what English texts look like, and even if not used for the purpose of imitation where students are asked to produce an English text to match the style of the model text, readings provide input which helps students develop awareness of English prose style. Krashen makes the case even stronger by claiming, "It is reading that gives the writer the 'feel' for the look and texture of reader-based prose."[15]

In class, close reading exercises can be done to draw students' attention to particular stylistic choices, grammatical features, methods of development, and so on. Such exercises help to raise student awareness of the choices writers make and the consequences of those choices for the achievement of their communicative goals. Spack points out, "An active exploration of the writer/reader interaction can lead students to realize and internalize the idea that what they write becomes another person's reading and must therefore anticipate a reader's needs and meet a reader's expectations." On another level, writing tasks assigned by many professors require students to do a great deal of reading in order to synthesize and analyze academic material in particular content areas. Thus, the EFL writing class can incorporate lessons which assist students in preparing academic writing

[15] Krashen, Stephen. Second edition. The Power of Reading. Portsmouth NH: Heinemann.- 2004.

assignments by using readings as a basis to practice such skills as summarizing, paraphrasing, interpreting, and synthesizing concepts.

Finally, many EFL students are not highly skilled readers, having had limited opportunities to read extensively in English; it is highly unlikely that anyone who is a nonproficient reader can develop into a highly proficient writer. For that reason alone, EFL teachers are well advised to include a reading component of one nature or another in their classes.

Writing Assignments. As the object of any writing class is to have students work on their writing, the topics students write about must be carefully designed, sequenced, and structured so that the teacher knows exactly what the learning goal of each paper is and so that the student gains something by working on the assignment. There are many factors to consider in selecting topics for student writing, but even if not consciously aware of it, the teacher will be primarily influenced by a particular philosophy about teaching writing which he or she (or the textbook being followed) adheres to and which significantly shapes the approach to topic design. In fact, even when topics are chosen in a random and ad hoc fashion, the teacher will probably select an assignment which seems appropriate on the basis of a felt inner sense of appropriateness, reflecting perhaps unconsciously how the teacher views the goals of the course, the ways in which writers learn, and what he or she values as good writing. For example, if the teacher wants the students to focus on standard organizational patterns common to English writing, it is usually because the teacher values essays which follow discernible patterns and/or believes that training students to recognize and produce those patterns is an important goal of the course. If the teacher believes that writers learn best by writing about topics of their own choosing and that text to be valued is that which reveals the most about the persona of the writer, then the assignments in that teacher's writing class will be presented to achieve those goals.

One very common approach to topic generation may be referred to as the "rhetorical patterns" approach, in which EFL students are exposed to a variety of

types of discourse structure common to English prose. This is done by presenting examples of professional writing or samples of prose written by textbook writers for the purposes of illustrating a particular pattern that forms the focus of a lesson or sequence of lessons. Some textbooks also offer edited or unedited essays written by EFL students as samples of the various prose patterns. Then, typical writing assignments which derive from this philosophy ask students to imitate the structural pattern of the prose model—be it a genuine piece of professional or student writing or an artificially constructed one—using different content.

These sorts of assignments will usually be presented so that the student has to either create or plug in particular content according to a specified manner of presentation. Examples of the "create" assignments are those which specify an organizational structure, such as comparison and contrast, but do not specify any content. Examples of the "plug in" assignments are those which specify an organizational structure, such as "cause and effect," and also specify the content area, such as "drugs and crime." The student's task in the former case is to identify two items which can be compared and contrasted and which lend themselves to presentation in that manner. The student's task in the latter case is to write about drugs and crime in such a way as to show the cause-and-effect relationship. Other patterns commonly included in the organizational approach to specifying writing assignments are chronological order, exemplification or illustration, classification, analysis, problem solution, and definition—all commonly referred to as patterns of exposition. Regardless of what else takes place in the class that shows concern for the process of writing, the "products" which result from this philosophy of assigning topics will invariably be judged primarily on how closely they follow discernible and traditional formats of the specified rhetorical pattern.

There is ample evidence that "real- world" writing does not get produced in this fashion, which is one of the major criticisms leveled at textbooks which encourage these approaches. Not only do real writing tasks not begin from a particular form which merely lacks content to be complete, but content itself

usually does not get generated without the writer's first having a purpose for writing. Taylor also points out that “a major result of a writing program which focuses primarily on form is an insufficient emphasis on content which would create the opportunity for students to experience the process of discovering meaning and then of struggling to give form through revision.”

A completely different philosophy of teaching leads to viewing writing as a vehicle of self-revelation and self-discovery, and assignments are presented to students in which they must reflect on and analyze their own personal experiences. Some examples would be asking students to write about their experiences as second language learners or to reflect on a lesson learned in childhood. The content in either case would arise from their own personal biographies. This type of assignment has the potential of allowing the writer to feel invested in his or her work, not usually the case with the rhetorical pattern approach. Perhaps more centrally, the value of writing is seen in its role as a tool of discovery of both meaning and purpose. Proponents of the discovery approach claim that the writing skills learned in practicing personal writing will transfer to the skills required to produce academic papers.

Regardless of the underlying philosophy of teaching which motivates the types of assignments presented to students, teachers must also make a number of other decisions about assignments. They must decide where the writing is to be produced: in class or at home. When students are writing in class, teachers are often uncertain of what they themselves should be doing while the students are writing. Students also generally feel pressured by the limited amount of time available. When students write at home, teachers may be concerned that the student might receive outside input from another writer or from textual material, rendering the student's text unrepresentative of his/her own writing. For some students, writing at home will be completed in even less time than writing produced in class. One way to resolve this is that some assignments should be considered "timed" writing, written in a given time framework, submitted, and

responded to as final products, while other writing assignments can be prepared over a span of several class periods (either in class or at home) and feedback provided to assist in the revision process.

In fact, other decision teachers must make concerns the number of drafts for any given text that they want students to produce. Given the immense value to the student writer of learning to revise text and to work through a series of drafts before considering a paper "finished," new writing topics should not be assigned before the student has had a chance to work through a cycle of drafts on a prior assignment. If the teacher's goal is to foster student improvement, then providing a multiplicity of writing assignments on different topics (whether they be of the rhetorical pattern type or prompted by a more open- ended approach) will not allow students sufficient time to devote to working on writing in progress. That is, students working on a second or third draft of a given topic which is scheduled to be submitted the following week should not simultaneously be working on a first draft of yet another topic. But as Reid cautions us against dogmatism in presenting approaches to how students generate texts, Harris cautions us against dogmatism in applying an inflexible call for revision. In her research, Harris finds that writers range along a continuum from what she calls "one- to multi-drafters," and not everyone benefits from being asked to produce multiple revisions since the preferred strategy for some successful writers is to produce a single, polished draft. She notes, in fact, that "studies of revision do not provide the conclusive picture that we need in order to assert that we should continue coaxing our students into writing multiple drafts" because both efficient and inefficient writers are to be found who favor one or the other of these approaches to writing.

A final consideration regarding topic design is one of essay length, for in cases where teachers don't specify length, students often want to know how long their papers should be. Many ESL students are concerned with doing the bare minimum and will invariably submit very short papers; others may produce too much text for the teacher to find time to respond to, or for the student to be able to

process and benefit from the extensive feedback that the teacher might need to provide on a lengthy but highly problematic text. One must bear in mind the need for a relationship between what the topic calls for and the length of paper produced. For example, to ask students to write 250 words on an encyclopedic topic is to ensure superficiality of treatment; conversely, to ask them to produce a lengthy paper on a narrowly focused topic is to invite padding and digressions. Also, what a teacher believes a student will learn from preparing a particular assignment should not be out of proportion to the amount of time the student will need to invest in preparing it.

Finally, if one believes that students' best learn to write by writing, then the design of writing tasks is perhaps the key component of curriculum design. It is in the engagement with, and the completion of, writing tasks that students will be most directly immersed in the development of their writing skills; thus, a great deal of thought must go into choosing such tasks.

Goal Setting. "Responding to student writing has the general goal of fostering student improvement. While this may seem to be stating the obvious, teachers need to develop/adopt responding methodologies which can foster improvement; they need to know how to measure or recognize improvement when it occurs. Although the teaching of first language writing has come a long way since most response took the form of written criticism by the teacher detailing what the student had done wrong on a paper, and teaching EFL has ceased to be seen as a vehicle for monitoring student acquisition of grammar, remains no easy answer to the question of what type of response will facilitate improved student mastery of writing. In reviewing dozens of research studies investigating various methodologies of responding, Hillocks concluded, "The results of all these studies strongly suggest that teacher comment has little impact on student writing." Therefore, in setting goals, teachers should focus on implementing a variety of response types and on training students to maximize the insights of prior feedback on writing occasions.

Shaping Feedback. Regardless of whatever repertoire of strategies teachers develop to provide feedback on student papers, students must also be trained to use the feedback in ways that will improve their writing—be it on the next draft of a particular paper or on another assignment. Without such training, it is quite likely that students will either ignore feedback or fail to use it constructively. In fact, research studies to date have shown a number of discouraging findings. Research on how LI students process written response from teachers has indicated that ;

1) sometimes students fail to read the written comments on their papers, caring only about the grade1;

2)sometimes they do not understand or indeed misinterpret the written comments, and find themselves unable to make appropriate changes in future drafts;2

3) sometimes they use comments to psych out a particular teacher's personal agenda, only hoping "to make the teacher happy" in the future;1

4) sometimes they become hostile at the teacher's appropriation of their text

In research on student response to comments in an L2 environment, Leki found that students expressed a lack of interest in teacher reaction to the content of their papers, and instead indicated a desire to have every error marked on their papers. Cohen found that students had a very limited repertoire of strategies for processing feedback, and as such, Cohen and Cavalcanti conclude, "Clear teacher-student agreements on feedback procedures and student training in strategies for handling feedback could lead to more productive and enjoyable composition writing in the classroom."

To address some of these issues, one step is to assure that the feedback on a particular piece of writing addresses that text in the context of how it was produced and with a clear agenda for what the student is expected to do with any feedback. In a process-oriented produce more than one draft of an essay, reflecting the steps of producing real-world texts. Thus, feedback on a first draft should most

appropriately provide guidelines and suggestions for how to produce a second draft which would show improvement at the level of content and organization. However, Zamel (1985, p. 81) reported that studies provide "overwhelming evidence that teachers attend to surface-level features in what should otherwise be considered first drafts," completely ignoring the philosophy of process which they claim to espouse. In examining the responding behaviors of 15 EFL teachers by reviewing their written comments on portfolios of student papers, Zamel goes on to identify a host of "incongruous types of comments" in which "the major revisions suggested and the interlinear responses are at odds with one another." This use of "mixed signals" helps explain why many students find it difficult to decipher teacher commentary. Why, for example, should the student pay attention to problems in the sequence of tenses in a particular paragraph if a marginal or end note indicates that the whole paragraph is irrelevant to the development of the paper?

As with other issues we have discussed, the question of the teacher's philosophy is a key determinant of his or her approach to commenting. Zamel notes of her 15 ESL teacher subjects “the teachers overwhelmingly view themselves as language teachers rather than writing teachers; they attend primarily to surface-level features of writing and seem to read and react to a text as a series of separate sentences or even clauses, rather than as a whole unit of discourse.” Unless the teacher adopts the stance of a writing teacher, he or she will be unable to provide feedback appropriate to that role.

Forms of Feedback. Up to now we have been discussing feedback that is provided in writing by the teacher on various drafts of a student paper, a fairly traditional and undoubtedly time-consuming method, even for those teachers who do not respond to every draft as a finished product. But there are other ways for students to receive feedback on their writing which can and should be considered in structuring a writing course. Writing teachers who view themselves as judges or repositories of certain truths about effectiveness in writing will want, of course, to be in charge of providing feedback to their students, believingthatsuch feedback

can play a vital role in the improvement of student writing. Those who view themselves as coaches or editorial advisors will also want to provide feedback, though not necessarily in the same way. Teachers should bear in mind that feedback can beoral as well as written, and they should consider the value of individual conferences7 on student papers and/or the use of tape cassettes as two additional ways to structure teacher feedback. From another point oi view, most writing teachers realize that they have many students in one class and they might also be teaching two or more writing classes, so the teacher has a very limited amount of time to provide feedback to any one student. Teachers whose philosophies embrace the value of collaborative learning1 therefore turn to the other students in the class to assist in the feedback process. Other students in the writing class can be taughtto provide valuable feedback in the form of peer response, which serves to sharpen their critical skills in analyzing written work as well as to increase their ability to analyze their own drafts critically.

Oral Teacher Feedback. Because of potential communication problems, EFL students in a writing class need to have individual conferences with their teacher even more than native-speaking students do. Conferences of about 15 minutes seem to work best, and can provide the teacher an opportunity to directly question the student about intended messages which are often difficultto decipher by simply reading a working draft. Further, conferences allow the teacher to uncover potential misunderstandings the student might have about prior written feedback or issues in writing that have been discussed in class. Another benefit is that students can usually learn more in the one-to- one exchange than they can when attempting to decipher teacher-written commentary on their own.

Some teachers provide all their feedback orally by asking students to submit a cassette tape with each draft. This method probably works best when the teacher silently reads a student's paper and makes comments directly into the tape recorder while marking some accompanying numbers or symbols on the student's text. For EFL students, this method has the advantage of providing more extensive feedback

than that likely to be made in writing, as well as allowing the student to replay the tape as many times as necessary to understand and benefit from the teacher's comments. Once the teacher has learned to use this technique, it probably takes less time to complete taped remarks about a paper than it would to put them in writing.

Peer Response. Because the use of peer response is a key component of classrooms teaching writing as a process in the LI environment, many ESL teachers embraced the idea of having students read and/ or listen to each other's papers for the purpose of providing feedback and input to each other as well as helping each other gain a sense of audience. But embracing a philosophy without understanding how to translate it to the L2 environment can often lead to rather disappointing results. That is, simply putting students together in groups of four or five, each with rough draft in hand, and then having each student in turn read his or her paper aloud, followed by having the other members of the group react to the strengths and weaknesses of the paper in the role of interested audience member, indicating further reader needs that have not been addressed, is not a format likely to work with even the most sophisticated class of ESL students. Because ESL students lack the language competence of native speakers, who can often react intuitively to their classmates' papers, peer responding in the ESL classroom must be modeled, taught, and controlled in order for it to be a valuable activity.

One way to control peer response is for teachers to provide a short list of directed questions which students address as they read their own or other students' papers. A first exercise of this type can involve giving students a short checklist of attributes to look for in their own papers, such as to check for a particular grammatical feature that might have been discussed in class (e.g., subject- verb agreement) or to check to assure that no irrelevancies have been included. The checklist is submitted with the paper as a way for the student to assume responsibility for reading over his or her paper carefully. Next, students can be trained to read and respond to other students' papers by reviewing an essay written

by a student in a previous class and working through, as a class, a peer editing sheet that asks a few specific questions that would elicit both a general reaction to the paper and suggestions for improvement. As the students gain practice in reading and analyzing each other's papers and their awareness of the conventions of writing increases, the questions can be made more complex and varied. Some typical questions to begin with might include these: "What is the main purpose of this paper?" "What have you found particularly effective in the paper?" "Do you think the writer has followed through on what the paper set out to do?" Some peer guideline sheets for students who have more practice in the technique might include the following steps: "Find at least three places in the essay where you can think of questions that have not been answered by the writer. Write those questions in the margins as areas for the writer to answer in the next draft." "Read only the introduction and then write what you predict the rest of the essay will discuss. Then read the essay and compare your predictions with the actual content of the essay."

In order to maximize the value of the feedback to the EFL student, responses should be written, incidentally providing practice in the valuable skill of text analysis for the student commentator. These written responses can be given to the student writer with or without the anonymity of the student reader preserved or used as the basis for oral discussion between reader(s) and writer. The teacher might also want to read the student feedback sheets to assess the analytical skills of the student readers.

Error Correction. Regardless of what agenda the writing teacher sets and the number of drafts that students produce, the papers that EFL students write are likely to exhibit problems in language control. However, it is very important that the teacher not be swayed by the presence or numbers of these problems into turning a writing course into a grammar course. Rather, error must be dealt with at an appropriate stage of the composing process, and is perhaps best considered part of the final editing phase. The role of editing, when seen as distinct from rewriting,

is essentially working to eliminate grammatical problems and stylistic infelicities; this type of editing is certainly essential to the production of good prose, but it should be an activity that is probably best attended to when a text is considered complete in terms of having been shaped by content, organization, attention to the needs of the reader, and a consideration of its purpose. In fact, editing or correcting errors on first drafts can be a counterproductive activity, possibly exacerbating whatever insecurities students might have about their writing and drawing their attention away from the other kinds of revision work that must be attended to. Chenoweth concedes, "It may be hard for teachers to give up their habit of correcting every grammatical mistake," but also believes grammatical problems should only be dealt with "when the meaning the student wants to express has been adequately dealt with.

In addition to deciding when to correcf errors, teacher must also decide who will cor rect the errors, which errors to correct, and how to correct errors. Besides the obvio role the teacher plays as a corrector of errors, the student writer and other students in the class can also be called upon to provide feedback on errors as part of the peer feedbac process. Again, the use of a checklist naming specific grammatical features often helps to focus student attention on areas the teachei feels the student should be able to monitorfoi and self-correct.

The decision whether to address all or selected errors is a complex one and probably depends a great deal on the level of writing the student is capable of producing, However, correcting all of a student's errors is probably rarely called for, unless there are very few errors present in the text. Rather,the teacher should probably concentrate on calling the student's attention to those errors which are considered more serious and/or represent a pattern of errors in that particular student's writing. Traditionally, we take "serious" to mean that which most interferes with communication, soer rors of sentence structure are very important to deal with, while those errors which are unlikely to lead to faulty interpretation or to interfere with the reading process might be seen to be less significant.

Unfortunately some errors which are not serious by these standards tend to have an "irritation factor," and many faculty outside EFL programs, for example, find little tolerance for errors in EFL writing which seem like careless proofreading mistakes to them, most notably mistakes in article usage. Since mastery of the article system is actually a very difficult task, con- I sciousness raising about typical ESL learner problems among non-ESL faculty might be just as important as attempts to improve proficiency in article usage among ESL students.

Finally, the "how" of calling students' attention to the errors they have committed is also a complex issue. Teachers can choose to (1) point out specific errors using a mark in the margin or an arrow or other symbolic system; (2) correct (or model) specific errors by writing in the corrected form; (3) label specific errors according to the feature they violate (e.g., subject-verb agreement), using either the complete term or a symbol system; (4) indicate the presence of error but not the precise location (e.g., noting that there are problems with word forms); or (5) ignore specific errors. Most teachers use a combination of two or more of the methods mentioned above, depending on what they perceive to be the needs of the student, and studies of acher feedback are inconclusive as to what the best methodology might be. One study of feedback procedures by Robb, Ross and Irortreed, for example, concludes that "the more direct methods of feedback do not tend to produce results comment- ' rate with the amount of effort required of the instructor to draw the student's attention to the surface error." However, another study by Fathman and Whalley involving feedback on content versus feedback on pnmar reports that all students who revived feedback on grammar improved the grammatical accuracy of their revised texts while only some students improved the content of their writing following feedback on content. The best approach to feedback on errors must undoubtedly derive from considering the circumstances of the individual student coupled with the goals of the , course and the stage of the composing process a particular draft reflects.

Students need to be personally involved in writing exercises in order to make the learning experience of lasting value. Encouraging student participation in the exercise, while at the same time refining and expanding writing skills, requires a certain pragmatic approach. The teacher should be clear on what skills he/she is trying to develop. Next, the teacher needs to decide on which means (or type of exercise) can facilitate learning of the target area. Once the target skill areas and means of implementation are defined, the teacher can then proceed to focus on what topic can be employed to ensure student participation. By pragmatically combing these objectives, the teacher can expect both enthusiasm and effective learning.

Choosing a Target Area . Choosing the target area depends on many factors; what level are the students? What is the average age of the students, Why are the students learning English, Are there any specific future intentions for the writing (i.e. school tests or job application letters etc.). Other important questions to ask oneself are: What should the students be able to produce at the end of this exercise? (a well written letter, basic communication of ideas, etc.) What is the focus of the exercise? (structure, tense usage, creative writing). Once these factors are clear in the mind of the teacher, the teacher can begin to focus on how to involve the students in the activity thus promoting a positive, long-term learning experience. Having decided on the target area, the teacher can focus on the means to achieve this type of learning. As in correction, the teacher must choose the most appropriate manner for the specified writing area. If formal business letter English is required, it is of little use to employ a free expression type of exercise. Likewise, when working on descriptive language writing skills, a formal letter is equally out of place. With both the target area and means of production clear in the teacher's mind, the teacher can begin to consider how to involve the students by considering what type of activities are interesting to the students: Are they preparing for something specific such as a holiday or test?, Will they need any of the skills pragmatically? What has been effective in the past? A good way to approach this is by class feedback, or brainstorming sessions. By choosing a topic that involves the

students the teacher is providing a context within which effective learning on the target area can be undertaken.

Finally, the question of which type of correction will facilitate a useful writing exercise is of utmost importance. Here the teacher needs to once again think about the overall target area of the exercise. If there is an immediate task at hand, such as taking a test, perhaps teacher-guided correction is the most effective solution. However, if the task were more general (for example developing informal letter writing skills), maybe the best approach would be to have the students work in groups thereby learning from each other. Most importantly, by choosing the correct means of correction the teacher can encourage rather discourage students.

The most important factor in writing exercises is that students need to be personally involved in order to make the learning experience of lasting value. Encouraging student participation in the exercise, while at the same time refining and expanding writing skills, requires a certain pragmatic approach. The teacher should be clear on what skills he/she is trying to develop. Next, the teacher needs to decide on which means (or type of exercise) can facilitate learning of the target area. Once the target skill areas and means of implementation are defined, the teacher can then proceed to focus on what topic can be employed to ensure student participation. By pragmatically combing these objectives, the teacher can expect both enthusiasm and effective learning.

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Writing, like all other aspects of language, is communicative. Think about what we write in real life. We write e-mails, lists, notes, covering letters, reports, curriculums, assignments, essays perhaps if we study. Some of us write articles or work on blogs, forums and websites. A few write stories and poems - but very few. All of these writing tasks have a communicative purpose and a target audience. In the English language classroom, however, writing often lacks this. There are lots of reasons, as there are lots of ways to make the writing we do with learners more

communicative. By its nature, writing is often a solo activity, done silently, involving physical effort and taking a lot of time. This may not make it attractive to learners or teachers as a classroom activity. In addition to this, writing is difficult, even in L1. There are linguistic, psychological and cognitive problems involved, making teaching it and learning it a considerable challenge. It is also important to remember that many people never write anything of any length in their daily lives, or anything using paper and a pen, or without using a spellchecker. But this is often what we ask them to do in English.

Responding appropriately to writing that learners give us is time-consuming and taxing, whether we are addressing errors or the content. We often have to work as hard as our learners have done. Our response is also often dictated by our concern with sub-skills and so correction is often at this level rather than at that of communicative competence. This is aggravated by the fact that it is not easy to evaluate this competence, especially formally - as can be seen in the complexity of the speaking criteria for exams such as IELTS and Cambridge Main Suite. In addition, it is important to recognize that learners are equally concerned about correctness in writing at a sub-level, in areas such as spelling and punctuation. This is especially true when compared to speaking. This inhibits communication.

The kinds of tasks we set learners may not be motivating, relevant or indeed very communicative. Writing is rarely incorporated into a lesson, ending up relegated to homework - which reduces the possibilities to be communicative. We need to give learners tasks that are intellectually satisfying, especially when writing. Adult learners become aware of their limitations very quickly when they try to express complex ideas on paper. As a final note coursebooks don't necessarily always help us develop writing. We need materials that provide relevant, real and communicative practice.

We need to make a distinction between writing to learn (other things, like structures, spelling and vocabulary) and learning to write. If we understand this distinction and make sure our learners do too then the communicative purpose of

writing will be clearer.

We need to work hard on developing ways of responding to the content of what our learners write - the message - and not just the level of language. If we can do this effectively, then our learners will make more effort to communicate when they write for us. This can support an emphasis on the importance of writing for a real audience, but we do also need to find real audiences for learner writing. This could include ourselves if we can respond as readers, other learners and groups, and public forums such as blogs, websites and letter pages.

We need to find ways to integrate writing with other skills and activities, giving it more relevance and importance - and also making it more interesting. We need to use meaningful, realistic and relevant writing tasks, based on our learners' needs and interests. We may need to design individual tasks based on what individual learners need to write. In addition we should talk about writing with our learners, how we write well, why we write and for who, and what makes it difficult. Learner training like this can provide valuable support and motivation.

Finally, we need to evaluate the impact on our learners' written English when most of our focus on writing is as homework. Are we supporting them as well as we could as they tackle the difficulties we discussed above?

The following ideas are helpful to make writing communicative:

1) Publishing in blogs, in newspapers, and on posters. Get learners to create individual and group profiles on social utility sites such as Facebook. Publish a class magazine of previous writing work.

2) Encouraging learners to write with a clear purpose and for a clear audience, for example in letters to newspapers, pen friends, to teachers and other students.

3) Finding challenging and rewarding tasks which can support a variety of learning aims and integrate other skills and language systems, such as

summarising, project work, translation, writing up notes from interviews, and preparing a briefing or talk.

4) Using relevant and realistic tasks such as writing notes, recipes, e-mails, filling in forms and preparing signs for the class.

5) Responding to the content of the work that the learners give us as well as correcting the errors they make, by adding your own comments to their homework or establishing a dialogue through e-mail and learner diaries.

6) Making writing easier and more fun by doing group writing activities and group correction and editing of work. Process writing includes elements of this.

7) Supporting writing with reading. This not only helps learners develop the sub-skills they need but also helps them understand that good writing is a powerful and important communication tool.

CHAPTER THREE. TEACHING CREATIVE WRITING TECHNIQUES

3.1. The methods of developing creative writing skills

Creative writing normally refers to the production of texts which have an aesthetic rather than a purely informative, instrumental or pragmatic purpose. Most often, such texts take the form of poems or stories, though they are not confined to these genres. (Letters, journal entries, blogs, essays, travelogues, etc. can also be more or less creative.) In fact, the line between creative writing and expository writing is not carved in stone. In general, however creative writing texts draw more heavily on intuition, close observation, imagination, and personal memories than expository texts.

One of the chief distinguishing characteristics of creative writing texts is a playful engagement with language, stretching and testing its rules to the limit in a guilt-free atmosphere, where risk is encouraged. Such writing combines cognitive with affective modes of thinking. As the poet, R.S. Thomas once wrote, ‘Poetry is that which arrives at the intellect by way of the heart.’ The playful element in

creative writing should not, however be confused with a lax and unregulated use of language. On the contrary, creative writing requires a willing submission on the part of the writer to the 'rules' of the sub-genre being undertaken. If you want to write a Limerick, then you have to follow the rules governing limericks. If not, what you produce will be something other than a limerick: obvious, perhaps, but important too. The interesting thing is that the very constraints which the rules impose seem to foster rather than restrict the creativity of the writer. This apparent paradox is explained partly by the deeper processing of thought and language which the rules require. Creative writing aids language development at all levels: grammar, vocabulary, phonology and discourse. It requires learners to manipulate the language in interesting and demanding ways in attempting to express uniquely personal meanings. In doing so, they necessarily engage with the language at a deeper level of processing than with most expository texts.

The gains in grammatical accuracy and range, in the appropriacy and originality of lexical choice, in sensitivity to rhyme, rhythm, stress and intonation, and in the way texts hang together are significant.

As mentioned above, a key characteristic of creative writing is a willingness to play with the language. In recent years there has been a resurgence of interest in the role of play in language acquisition. In some ways, the sunami of the Communicative Approach has done a disservice to language teaching by its insistence on the purely communicative functions of language. Proponents of 'play' point out, rightly, that in L1 acquisition, much of the language encountered by and used by children is in the form of rhythmical chants and rhymes, word games, jokes and the like. Furthermore, such playfulness survives into adulthood, so that many social encounters are characterized by language play (punning, spontaneous jokes, 'funny voices', metathesis, and a discourse which is shaped by quasi-poetic repetition2. These are precisely the kinds of things L2 learners are encouraged to do in CW activities. This playful element encourages them to play creatively with the language, and in so doing, to take the risks without which

learning cannot take place in any profound sense. As Crystal states, 'Reading and writing do not have to be a prison house. Release is possible. And maybe language play can provide the key[16].'

Much of the teaching we do tends to focus on the left side of the brain, where our logical faculties are said to reside. Creative writing puts the emphasis on the right side of the brain, with a focus on feelings, physical sensations, intuition and musicality. This is a healthy restoration of the balance between logical and intuitive faculties. It also affords scope for learners whose hemisphere dominance or learning-style preferences may not be intellectual or left brain dominant, and who, in the normal process of teaching are therefore at a disadvantage. Perhaps most notable is the dramatic increase in self-confidence and self-esteem which creative writing tends to develop among learners. Learners also tend to discover things for themselves about the language… and about themselves too, thus promoting personal as well as linguistic growth. Inevitably, these gains are reflected in a corresponding growth in positive motivation. Among the conditions for promoting motivation, Dornyei cites[17]:

1. Create a pleasant and supportive atmosphere.

2. Promote the development of group cohesiveness.

3. Increase the students' expectation of success in particular tasks and in learning in general.

4. Make learning more stimulating and enjoyable by breaking the monotony of classroom events.

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[16] Mukundan, Jayakaran. (ed) Creative Writing in EFL/ESL Classrooms II. Petaling Jaya: Pearson Longman Malaysia. 2006

[17] Dornyei,ZoltanMotivational Strategies in the Language Classroom. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2001

5. Make learning stimulating and enjoyable by increasing the attractiveness of tasks.

6. Make learning stimulating and enjoyable for learners by enlisting them as active task participants.

7. Present and administer tasks in a motivating way.

8. Provide students with regular experiences of success.

9. Build your learners' confidence by providing regular encouragement.

10. Increase student motivation by promoting cooperation among the learners.

11. Increase student motivation by actively promoting learner autonomy.

12. Increase learner satisfaction.

All these conditions are met in a well-run creative writing class. The exponential increase in motivation is certainly supported by my own experience in teaching creative writing. Learners suddenly realize that they can write something in a foreign language that has never been written by anyone else before, and which others find interesting to read. Hence the importance of 'publishing' students' work in some form. And they experience not only a pride in their own products but also a joy in the 'flow' of the process.

Finally, creative writing feeds into more creative reading. It is as if, by getting inside the process of creating the texts, learners come to understand intuitively how such texts function, and this makes similar texts easier to read. Likewise, the development of aesthetic reading skills provides the learner with a better understanding of textual construction, and this feeds into their writing. Teachers, as well as learners, should engage with extensive reading. In the same spirit there are significant benefits to teachers if they participate in creative writing. There is little point in exhorting learners to engage in creative writing unless we do

so too. The power of the teacher as model, and as co-writer is inestimable.

Creative writing is one way of keeping teachers' English fresh and vibrant. For much of our professional lives we are in thrall to the controlled language of textbook English and the repeated low level error-laden English of our students. As teachers of language, we surely have a responsibility to keep our primary resource alive and well.

Creative writing seems to have an effect on the writer's level of energy in general. This tends to make teachers who use creative writing more interesting to be around, and this inevitably impacts on their relationships with students. The experimental stance with regard to writing in general appears to fee back into the teaching of writing. Teachers of creative writing tend also to be better teachers of writing in general.

3.2. Activities for teaching creative writing techniques

There are a lot of techniques to teach writing. One of them is using mind maps. Using mind maps is effective to develop writing. Mind maps can be used for a multitude of purposes. They can effectively be used to help support and develop students' writing skills. A mind map, or spidergram, is a strategy for making notes on a topic, prior to writing. It is a structured strategy, which shows the (hierarchical) relationship of ideas, as opposed to an unstructured strategy, such as brainstorming, in which students produce notes at random on paper. Having an organized display of information from the outset of the writing process may help some students, as it is more easily converted into a draft, whereas in brainstorming, the random recording of ideas might lead to problems with the structure of students' texts. Making a mind map should be a spontaneous pre-writing activity. Students start with a topic at the centre and then generate a web of ideas from that, developing and relating these ideas as their mind makes associations. Mind maps work well as their visual design enables students to see the relationship between

ideas, and encourages them to group certain ideas together as they proceed. Mind maps work especially well when created in groups, since the discussion this engenders aids the production of ideas, and makes the task livelier and more enjoyable. The procedure for organizing mind map is the following:

1. Choosing a topic. Traditionally, students are given a topic to write on by the teacher. However, with certain classes, students may prefer to nominate the topic themselves. This can lead to greater interest in the task on the part of the student, as well as, perhaps, greater knowledge of the topic under study. The mind map strategy can be used to explore almost any topic, though discursive essays and narrative work particularly well as they front students' ideas and lend themselves to discussing ideas in groups. For instance, choose a discursive essay with the title *"Why do people start smoking*?" In this genre the language is used to give reasons and explanations. The discursive text is useful in highlighting this feature of English, and in raising awareness of the noun phrase, a particularly tricky area for intermediate students.

They close their eyes and think about it for a minute or two, in silence. They then have two minutes in which to note down their ideas. If they do not know a word in English, they can write it in L1 at this stage, as dictionaries or too much teacher intervention tend to halt and inhibit the creative flow. Then, working in groups, they can compare and discuss their ideas, perhaps adding to their mind maps as they go. This stage also provides the opportunity for peer teaching, as other students may be available to provide the English word for the idea that was noted down in L1.

3. Feedback. The next stage, in which the teacher makes a collective mind map on the board, is optional, but is useful for students who are new to the idea of mind maps, or for weak classes. It is also in this feedback stage that any remaining language problems can be ironed out. As the teacher elicits students' ideas, and reformulates expressions or corrects, students will learn how to express their ideas in English. Such personalization is said to aid vocabulary learning. The map is

fluid and changeable, and new connections or subgroups can be made, or branches added, as the students make suggestions. The end result should be an organized display of information, showing the central topic, and a number of subtopics and further points that stem from it.

4. Organizing mind maps. In the next stage the students organize their mind maps into a linear format to decide the best way in which to present their points. They should first think about the overall structure, i.e. the order in which to relay the information, and then focus on the precise function each paragraph will have in their final text, as this helps to clarify their writing. This can be done in groups, or as a class with the teacher leading the discussion. However it is carried out, it is important to provide a context and audience. I told my class, who were writing about drugs, that they were writing for their college magazine. Having an audience in mind helps students to decide which ideas are most important, and also helps students to choose the appropriate style.

5. Writing. Students should then begin to write their compositions, working in pairs if they wish. After two paragraphs, they should exchange their compositions, so they become readers of each other's work. This allows for feedback, and possible re-writing. Once they have finished, they should again exchange their texts. This gives their texts a communicative purpose, as well as developing an awareness of the fact that a writer is always producing something to be read by someone else, rather than for the display of writing alone.

5. Continuation. Once students are familiar with the idea of making mind maps, they can be encouraged to use this skill for further writing activities. It is a useful technique and often improves the clarity and organization of student texts.

This writing technique is applied to the following lesson which we used in English classes during school practice.

Lesson 6. “Fly High” 7. Project 1. p.35[18]

1.Choosing a topic. ‘The Olympic Games are a good/bad thing’

Students sit in pairs and decide what side to support.

2. Note making. Once the topic has been introduced, students are encouraged to think about it for a minute or two. They then have two minutes in which to note down their ideas. Some ideas are already given in the book. They can choose from this list or write their own.

3. Feedback. The teacher elicits students' ideas, and reformulates expressions or corrects, students will learn how to express their ideas in English.

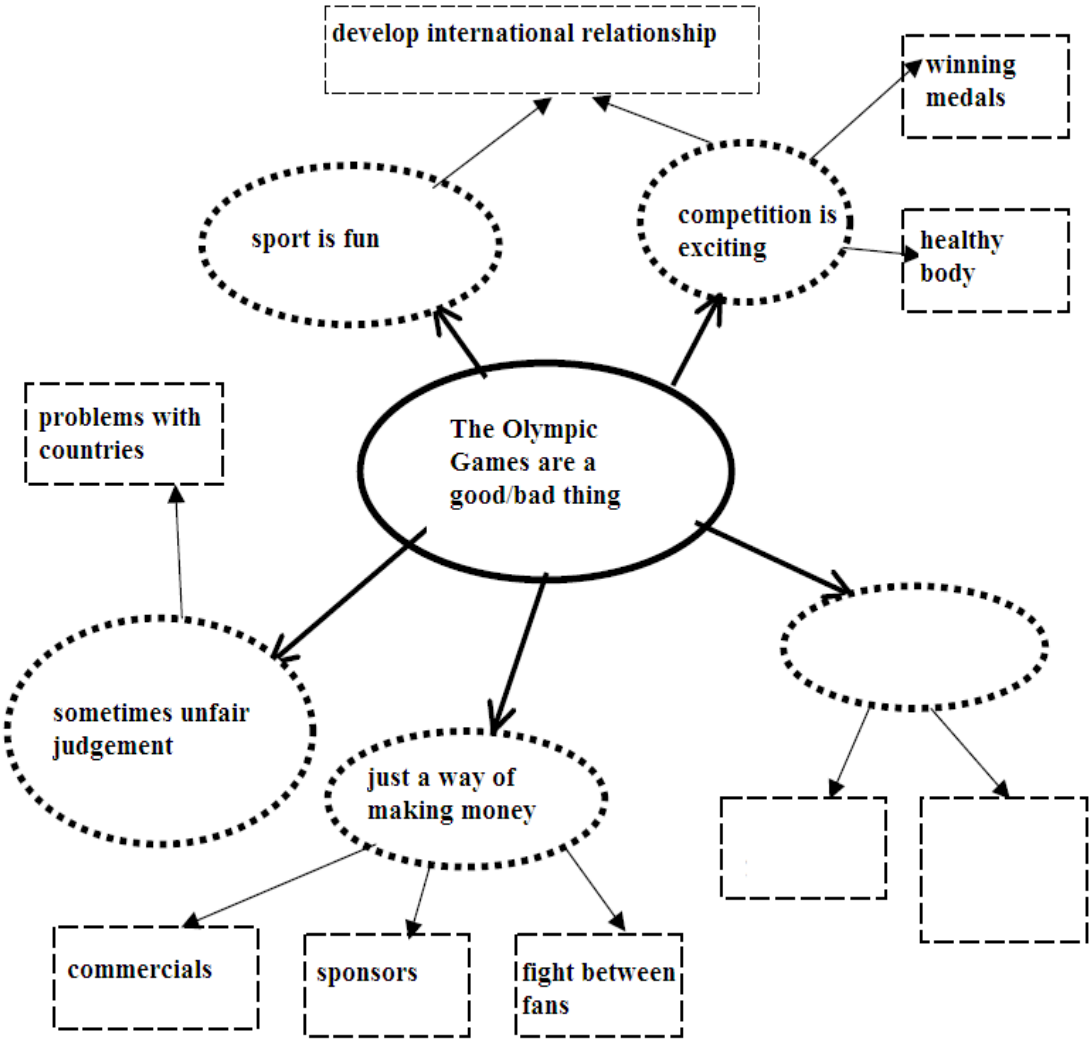
4. Organizing mind maps. In the next stage the students organize their mind maps into a linear format to decide the best way in which to present their points.

The following sample of mind map was made by students.

5. Writing. Students should then begin to write their compositions, working in pairs or individually. In this case we chose working in pairs. After they write, pairs can exchange their writings in order to give feedback to each other.

The following mind map is done by students during the English classes in our school practice. Students enjoyed making mind maps and it was very helpful for them to develop their not only writing skills but also speaking skills. Before writing they could briefly tell their ideas using mind map.

[18] Lutfullo Jurayev, Svetlana Xan. Fly High.English. Tashkent:O’qituvchi.-2011


develop international relationship
winning medals
sport is fun
competition is exciting
healthy body
problems with countries
The Olympic Games are a good/bad thing
sometimes unfair judgement
just a way of making money
commercials
sponsors
fight between fans

Picture -1.

Lesson 3. Customers' rights. "Fly High" 7. p.48

In this lesson there is given a letter of complaint to Customer Rights Officer complaining about a problem with recently bought TV. The writing task is to give advice to the person who has a problem with the purchase. In this case, we remodeled this lesson and prepared a writing activity where students learn to write a letter of appreciation. It is not always when we write such letters. Mostly people write letters of complain and it will be interesting for students to learn to write such letters as well.

Activity: Thank You Mr. Restaurant

Duration: 45 minutes

Description: Letter writing is an important task for students to learn to master. This lesson helps students begin this process.

Goals: To write a letter to a local restaurant.

Objectives:

1. Students will learn the letter writing process.

2. Students will write letters to their favorite restaurant.

Materials: Paper, pens, addresses

Activities:

Stage 1 Students brainstorm their favorite restaurants and record those restaurants on the board.

Stage 2 Show the students how to write a letter including Dear... and Sincerely,

Stage 3 After students have decided on their favorite restaurants, they write down why they like to eat at the restaurant, and what they like to eat.

Stage 4 Using this information they write the letter and thank the manager for their service.

Stage 5 Teacher checks these for errors and have the students edit and rewrite them. Send them off to the restaurants.

Assessment: Check for spelling, grammar, and complete sentence structure.

Another activity is also used to teach creative writing. In order to make students interested in writing a teacher should make the tasks more creative. The following tasks are examples and can be used in teaching writing. We applied them in secondary school English classes and found them very effective. In the book writing task is given in a form of writing suggestions. As we analyzed this textbook, most writing tasks are based on writing suggestions. That's why to change such tasks and be more creative, we chose this task. Students like to speak from different point of view imagining themselves like birds, animals and etc. They like to imagine unreal things which can be very handy for learning too.

Unit 9. Travelling "Fly High" 7. pp72. Lesson 1. Planning a trip[19].

Activity 1. Birds of a Feather

1) Have the students imagine that they are birds.

2) Tell them to write about a trip that they recently took, but from a bird's perspective. For example, if they went to another state, ask them to tell what it looked like from up in the sky and they can describe the places that they "landed" such as on a statue or on someone's head!

3) Another option is to plan their trip to different countries from a bird's perspective.

[19] Lutfullo Jurayev, Svetlana Xan. Fly High.English. Tashkent:O'qituvchi.-2011

4. Birds of a Feather

Have the students imagine that they are birds. Then, tell them to write about a trip that they recently took, but from a bird's perspective. For example, if they went to another state, ask them to tell what it looked like from up in the sky and they can describe the places that they "landed" such as on a statue or on someone's head! Another example would be for them to write about an everyday experience such as going to the store, but from the perspective of a bird in a tree or sitting on a pole.

Picture-2.

Activity 2. Writing stories

This activity can also be used in this unit but here students imagine that during their trip there happened some funny or interesting stories and write imaginative story. The following scheme will help them to organize the events of the story. For younger learners such activities may seem complicated and that's why it is better to use easier tasks for creative writing. To make writing more fun it is better to use writing templates. These templates will help students to give ideas how to write and make writing task more exciting. Moreover, using such writing templates help them to a certain idea where to start and how to write.

NOTE!

This activity works best if a true immersion experience can be created in the classroom. If possible, have the story told in a language that is unknown to most class participants. With the whole class, discuss how well you accomplished your goal.

The lion and the mouse

Who are they?

Where are they?

What happened?

Why didn’t the lion eat the mouse?

Why the mouse helped the lion?

How will this end?

20

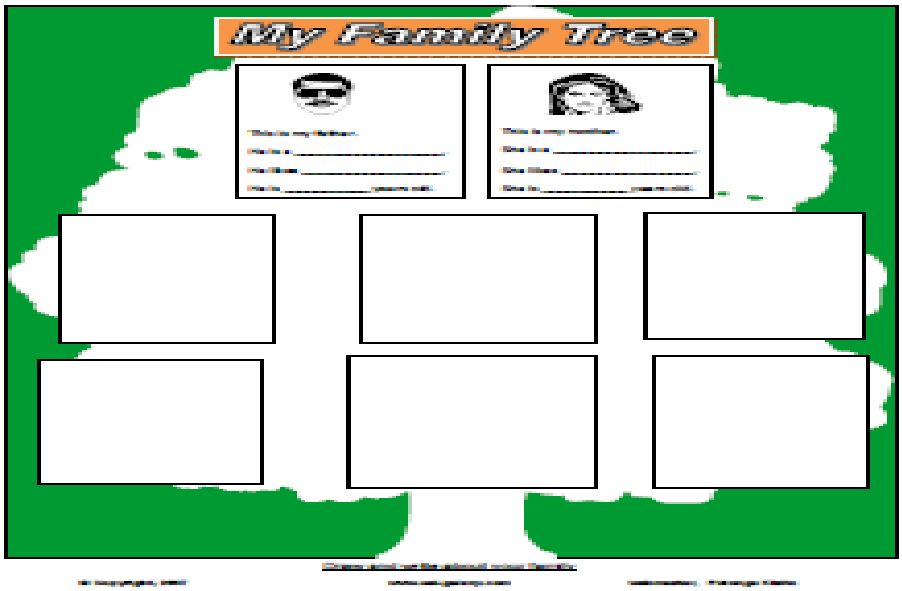
Picture -3.

There is a unit where students learn to speak about their families. In this unit there is no writing task but could be created as we think teaching writing should be started at early age. Taking into consideration our students' age, we designed the following tasks.

Unit 2. Lesson 5. This is my family. P.13

Using family tree template students write about their families. The template already has a sample of writing so that students could use it as an example. After they fill in the template using the information they write a short story about their family.

[20] Harmer, J. The practice of English language teaching. Harlow, England:Longman Group UK Limited. 1993



Picture -4.

Unit 12. Seasons. Lesson 1. My favorite season. P. 113[21]

The main aim of this unit to teach students about seasons and weather in England /Uzbekistan. Writing task is given in the form of writing poems which is also a type of creative writing, but before writing the poem it is better if students work on writing a short story about weather. Using the template, in their stories they can write about the weather and also types of clothing they can wear in those seasons. Before doing this activity, students should be introduced some vocabulary such clothing and weather types.

[21] Lutfullo Jurayev, Svetlana Xan. Fly High.English. Tashkent:O'qituvchi.-2011

Seasons, weather & clothes

Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall
			
When is winter?	When is spring?	When is summer?	When is fall?
What's the weather like in the winter?	What's the weather like in spring?	What's the weather like in summer?	What's the weather like in fall?
What do you wear in the winter?	What do you wear in spring?	What do you wear in summer?	What do you wear in fall?

Writing poem is also very effective activity for students to develop their writing skills. During our research work, we applied an activity for composing poems which is called “Diamond poetry”.

Diamond poetry provides a creative language arts writing center activity that uses alternative assessment to test student knowledge of nouns, verbs, and adjectives. The theme season is the perfect topic to combine writing with revising grammar. Diamond poems are a great way to combine parts of speech, love of language, and an appreciation of nature. Diamond poems also encourage an understanding of relationships since the top and the bottom lines of the poem are dissimilar but related in some way.

Materials: White board, white board markers, a worksheet or poster with

diamond poem guidelines, computer with word processing software, printer, scissors, glue, construction paper.

Group Activity (Modeling):

1) First brainstorm with students possible poetry topics. Write the topics on the board without commenting. (Possible topics: winter, spring, summer, autumn, flowers, sun, colors, etc.)

2) Encourage students to explain how seemingly different topics are related. For instance, students might notice that in spring the weather is very sunny, in winter it is cold, etc.)

3) Next, model the crafting of a seven-line diamond poem .

4) In the first line, students will write a one word concrete noun based on one of the brainstormed topics. For instance, a student might write the word “flower” at the top of his or her page

5) In line two, students should write two adjectives to describe the noun in the first line (Ex: beautiful, nice)

6) In line three, students should think of three verbs that tell what the noun in line one does (Ex: grow, bloom, bend)

7) Now students should skip down to line seven and write a noun that is seemingly different but related in some way to the first noun. (Ex: tree) This seventh line of poetry will end the poem.

8) Now going back to line four, students should write four nouns that are common to or that somehow connect the nouns in lines one and seven (Ex: Water, Mud, Sky, Sun)

9) In line five, students should write three verbs that tell what the bottom word does (Ex: grow, move, break)

10) Finally, in line six, students should write two adjectives to describe the noun in line seven. (Ex. Tall, strong)

Activity. "Poems as Motivators to Write"

In this activity the teacher picks a poem that tells a story or that he/she knows would be of interest to the student population who are being taught. After reading the poem, the students are asked what the poem makes them think about. Teacher encourages different lines of thought and perspective by asking probing questions that are designed to help the children elaborate on their thoughts. Then he/she encourages the students to write some of their thoughts evoked by the poem. Teacher should explain to them that many poems expressive feelings and that poems can stimulate thoughts and emotions in others.

Activity. "Journal Writing"

A good way to reinforce writing is to require that students write in journals. We also did this with all students especially after lessons that require reflections on the topics we covered. It gets students to think about what we talked about and it gets them to unleash their ideas about the topic in a non-threatening way. We checked the journals because we wanted to know how students are approaching the topics we learn about in class. It also gives us insight into how much they have processed and to what extent. Journal writing is a good way to get students to write what they are truly thinking.

Another writing activity is giving students a certain situation where they can create their own ideas according to the given situation. Again, ready made templates are given to students in order to give them an idea to get started. Templates are enclosed. The topics can be changed in accordance with the themes in their textbooks.

This type of activity is good in the stage of proofreading. Peer checking gives more opportunity for students to check each other and learn from each other. At the end of each writing activity students can do proof reading activity and it can

be done in the following way.

Description: This activity gives students an opportunity to move around as they proofread and edit their essays.

Goals: To help students learn the editing process.

Objectives: a) Students will learn the 5 steps of the editing process.

b) Students will learn how to peer edit.

Materials: Construction Paper (6 sheets,) one for each station, pens

Activities: 1. Use each sheet of paper to write the following words for each station. One should be labeled Punctuation Station, the 2nd should say Intro, the 3rd should say Organization, the 4th should be labeled details, and the 5th should be labeled details. The 6th should be labeled rough draft. This is where students who don't ring there rough draft with them will write their rough draft.

2. Give each student a set of five random numbers. Tell students these are the order of the stations they will visit.

3. Have students go to each station for 10-15 minutes examining each other's papers for each of the stations edits. Tell the students it is important to give explain why they have chosen to edit what they have edited.

Assessment: Examine each paper to make sure the complete editing process was understood.

Activity. “Creating Photo Essays”

Photo essays are a special type of writing; they tell stories with a group of photographs that are connected to a theme. One activity using photo essays as a type of writing includes having students pick a topic (in any content area) that they would like to "write" about. Tell them that they have to collect photographs or pictures that represent the topic. Once they have their collections and you gave

them a chance to discuss the relevance of the photos to the topic, ask them to arrange the photos in such a way (sequentially, etc.) that tell a story or relay the message related to the topic they chose. Students love to express their thoughts about topics using this medium. If you have technology to complete this activity, you can have students cut and paste their story using photos or images that they find on the Internet. This is a great activity for group work. This type of activity can be applied in any unit but the topic should be combined with the unit topic.

This activity we applied for the units on the topic “Leisure” (Fly High,7. pp54-56); “Travelling” (the same book, pp 62-74) and “Holidays, holidays” (pp.78-80)

Activity. Script Writing. (Integrating reading, writing and speaking skills)

This activity is very good for students as most of them like soap operas. In “Fly High” 7 there is a lesson about TV programs and this activity can be used to talk about students’ favorite soap operas.

Main part. Brainstorming.

What is soap opera? Do you like soap operas? How often do you watch them?

How many soaps can you name? (Write down as many as you can)

There are 12 questions and 12 short texts for students to read and match. It's time to create their own soap opera now. In small groups they read five steps that explain how to create their soap.

Stepl. Location. Think of a name for the location of the soap you are going to write.

Step2. Characters. Imagine that you are a member of one of the families on the soap opera. Decided what type of character you have and what crisis you're presently living through.

Step3. Script. Look again at the ingredients of a successful soap and write a scene for an episode, making sure you include lots of drama, an educational message, and a cliffhanger.

Step 4. Catchphrase.

Your scene must use three of the catchphrases. A catchphrase is a phrase that a particular character often says. (How about a nice cup of black coffee? You fool! You stupid idiot! It's the truth, I promise. I've got one of my headaches. You never listen when I'm talking to you. I'm going to say this once and once only. Don't you ever talk to me like that again! What exactly are you trying to say? All I want is for you to be happy. Now, what were you saying?)

Step 5. Performance

When your scene is ready, perform it.

Conclusion

Teaching students to produce a successful written text is a complex task which requires simultaneous control over a number of language systems as well as an ability to factor in considerations of the ways the discourse must be shaped for a particular audience and a particular purpose. Teaching students to become successful writers is no less a complex task. But it can be a tremendously rewarding one as well.

In this research work we have presented some of the issues involved in applying writing activities in teaching the writing class. As the ability to write well in English language is no doubt even more difficult to achieve than the ability to read, speak, or understand the language, it is not surprising that many students take several years to achieve even a modicum of success. What must be emphasized to teachers in training is the importance of designing activities and shaping classes with a clear understanding of how the acquisition of written skills can be fostered. Our real goal is to gradually wean our students away from us, providing them with strategies and tools for their continued growth as writers and for the successful fulfillment of future writing tasks they might face once they have completed their last writing course with us. Earlier hopes to find the best method "were based on the faulty assumptions that there was a best method and one just had to find it, that teaching writing was a matter of prescribing a logically ordered set of written tasks and exercises, and that good writing conformed to a predetermined and ideal model" (Zamel, 1987, p. 697). There can be no "best" method when students' learning styles are so different; our hope now is rather to find methodologies which empower students rather than restrict them, and to create courses which arise from principled decisions derived from thorough research investigations.

The growth of composition studies as a discipline with its own independent body of research (apart from, say, literary studies or linguistic studies) has

enormously influenced the formal training of English. For EFL teachers to be able to provide courses which assist their students in learning to produce academic prose, their training should be no less than other skills.

It has been the major aim of our research work to emphasize the fact that teaching writing skills is particularly important at the initial stage of language learning since it helps students establish a good basis in learning other skills such as reading, speaking and listening. We worked out a series of activities for improving students' writing skills and combined them with the tasks given in the textbooks. When we analyzed the textbook activities, we found that most of them teach writing in phrases or sentences. The activities which we applied teach students mostly creative writing and make them be more motivated in writing.

We tried to vary writing tasks, make them more creative and we came to a conclusion that students love writing because of interesting tasks . We both benefit : students because learning to write is enjoyable for them , teachers benefit because they feel the need to improvise , to make writing more attractive to students and think of and look for more creative tasks. In order to be able to select and use appropriate procedures and materials, as well as assess their learners needs and progress, teachers need to be clear regarding the desirable outcomes of a writing programme and the processes involved in good writing.

In order to help EFL learners become more effective writers, we need to make a crucial distinction between language accuracy and writing skills. That is, a learner may be able to write sentences which are satisfactory for his/her level in terms of grammar, syntax and vocabulary and still be unable to produce an effective text. Of course, in most cases learners will have problems in both areas (language and writing skills). Therefore, it is crucial for us to be able to look beneath the layer of language problems to discover writing problems. This leads us to another important distinction, the one between grammar/vocabulary development and writing skills development. We need to remember that language input/practice alone cannot result in the development of writing skills. Special

activities in writing lessons are necessary, in which learners are guided to become aware of all the elements of good writing, supported with information and examples, provided with opportunities for practice, and given focused feedback on their performance. We can also plan lessons which integrate work on language with work on writing skills. In such cases, it is important for us to be clear about the aims/focus of different stages in the lesson. In order to be able to select and use appropriate procedures and materials, as well as assess their learners needs and progress, teachers need to be clear regarding the desirable outcomes of a writing programme and the processes involved in good writing.

In conclusion, if teachers are eager to be more creative and innovative, they can find various activities to improve writing skills but they should take into consideration the following facts:

1) to create tasks in accordance with students level of English and interest
2) to teach writing starting from skill building exercises to process based
3) to get started form pre-writing techniques to proof reading
4) to let students do peer checking
5) to combine reading and writing tasks
6) to use techniques mentioned above

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