

IMPROVING ENGLISH LANGUAGE WRITING SKILLS THROUGH READING ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS TO THE TERTIARY LEVEL

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ABSTRACT

It is amazing that the English language today is a global one and has an enormous impact on thousands of other languages of the world. The effect of globalization has made learning English necessary for people in the world. English language skills among students for academic and professional development. Activity based learning of language is an interesting method for students to keep them active through which the teachers convey the message in an easy way. Various tools can be used in this Activity Based Learning (ABL) like comprehension, picture, magazines, hints, essay, and more but English Newspaper is the effective tool. Using English newspaper will bring a learner-friendly atmosphere in the classroom. Different categories from the newspaper like news articles, editorial, incidents, advertisements, sports, biographies, pictures, letters to the editor, reviews of books and films can be used for activity. It is a diverse instrument where all the subjects like sports, political, science, technology, literature and economics could be seen. In this learning, the teacher is a facilitator, she/he spends more time with students for motivation. The aim of this research paper will spotlight such activities that will focus on impediments of these students in writing through reading and understanding English Newspapers and to develop the learner's vocabulary, grammar, cohesiveness, writing skill, reading skill, discussion oriented skill, drafting skills, and presentation skill.

Keywords: Reading, Writing, English Newspapers, Activities, Classroom.

Introduction:

English, without an iota of doubt, is the global language today. Teaching-learning of English as a second or foreign language has been redefined in the milieu of globalization and the digitized world we live in today. It has consolidated a solid position as one of the world's top ten languages among the 7000 languages used throughout the world. Reading and writing skills are very much linked. Once this is understood by the learner, reading and writing become enjoyable learning skills and with same time both skills will improve. Visual learning of new words and how to compile new vocabulary, helps a writer to engage in using new words in their own work. Different styles of reading material goes hand in hand with different styles of writing styles. It is important to read not only text books but other sources e.g. newspaper articles and high quality magazines with interest. The language style in the news paper exposes the culture of Journalism. When the Activity based learning (ABL) method has a tool that connects with the culture, then it becomes easier for the learner to enhance the language through activities. When it is taken more deeply, the words, beliefs, values, which are associated by the reader. The activities can be regulated according to the person as many of them read the news paper for the different purposes. This activity will include the habit of writing and will make the learners familiar with journalistic jargon. Therefore, English newspapers are the better source to prepare activities than any other source. It is the service of the teacher to prepare best activities that will make students motivating. Cowley mentions in her book that the teacher should give

students inspiration and create an atmosphere for writing. Brainstorming and mind mapping in the background, methods where the students get to take more responsibility in their own writing.

Importance of English writing

In a world where English has emerged as the global language and, therefore, the language of opportunities. It is the responsibility of teachers to teach their students not only to become fluent in English, but also to be elegant and becoming experts in etiquette. So that students can interact confidently worldwide and also appreciate the etiquette of other cultures. The first role change in life happens to a student on graduation wherein the student is scrutinized not only for educational capabilities but also on professional behavior and is deemed to be mature in interacting with the society. It is therefore imperative that a graduate student formally learns about politeness so as to act with confidence and civility. Writing is a most important skill to be practiced by both professional writers and students.

Impediments in English writing for tertiary level students of rural area government degree colleges:

English language teaching in India is mostly a teacher text-book-class affairs. The teaching is adopts more theoretical approach, than pragmatic approach. Lack of simplicity in writing to clarify complex phenomenon is another impediment in writing. The teacher is mostly concerned with paraphrasing the lessons in the text book, dictating modal answers, explaining rules of language, and taking the students through a serious of pattern drills for reinforcement.”(Gangulay and Ganguly 1996p.48). Writing is an essential component in both developing and demonstrating critical-thinking skills, and has been called “the exterior sign of an interior thinking process” (Bean 1996, p20). Elder and Paul (2006, p38) point out the “intimate connection between the ability to write well and the ability to think well.” In developing critical-thinking skills, “teaching thesis-based analytical and argumentative writing means teaching the thinking process that underlies academic inquiry” (Bean 1996, p1).

Literature Review:

Hymes’ theory of communicative competence mainly stresses on writing. This theory mainly advocates about the role of “context” in writing. In principle, the term “context” is conceived to be the aggregate of linguistic, situational, social and cultural variables that surround linguistic units such as the text, discourse, utterances, etc. Context is also similar to what Halliday calls the social aspects of language use which comprises the establishment of familiarity and distance, boundary maintenance, personal interaction and settings of language use. The well-known ‘context theory’ gives impetus to the concept of ‘writing genres’. Since this paper strongly proposes that the ‘genre’ concept provides a solution to the challenges of ‘writing’ at advanced levels in TVTC College of Technology, Now let us recall some of its defining features. Generally speaking, the term “genre” is defined as a social, dynamic and interactive process that emphasizes the nature of language as “a social action” (Mauranen, 1998). Berkenkotter (1995), as cited in Mauranen, 1998, associates “genre” with five defining features. First, it is conceived to be dynamic in that it changes over time in line with its ‘users’ socio cognitive needs’. Writing is an essential component in both developing and demonstrating critical-thinking skills, and has been called “the exterior sign of an interior thinking process” (Bean 1996, p20). Elder and Paul (2006, p38) point out the “intimate connection between the ability to write well and the ability to think well.” In developing critical-thinking skills, “teaching thesis-based analytical and argumentative writing means teaching the thinking process that underlies academic inquiry” (Bean 1996, p1).

Objectives of the study:

1. To find out the impediments of the students in writing .
2. To enhance the language skill through various perspective in writing.

3. To bridge the learner and real world by exploring the potentials of newspapers in the classroom.

Data Collection Method:

Data is collected by giving questionnaire to undergraduate students at the tertiary level in rural area government degree college. Primary data is the source for the research and it is interpreted by the data collected through the given questionnaires.

Research questions:

The objectives were achieved by obtaining answers to the following research questions:

- What are the impediments in writing?
- How can it be rectified by reading based activity.
- Are the students are actually interested in writing skills.
- What kind of learning material will be helpful for enhancing language skills?
- How can the students make use of the available material more effectively both inside and outside of the classroom?

A study has been made at the tertiary level students regarding the performance of newspapers. 106 UG students were given questionnaires. Table-1 shows the daily newspapers they prefer to analytical reading and application of language, jargon, while in writing.

Table 1 : Analytical reading and writing habit of the respondents.

Sl. No	No. Newspaper analytical readers	No of respondents	percentage %
1	Telugu	74	69
2	English	09	8
3	Both Telugu and English	15	14
4	Not interested	10	9

Table – 1 illustrates that many of the students prefer to read newspapers of their mother tongue rather than English. i.e. 69% of the students reading Telugu Newspapers with analytical. Only 8% of the students prefer to read analytically English newspaper and 14% of the students analytically read both Telugu and English. Remaining 9% of the students are not interested to read any newspaper. We inference from this data that students will give preference to newspapers published in their mother tongue read analytically than other languages and utilize the knowledge of reading in their writing skills.

The same set of students was asked about their problem in analytical reading and its contribution to their writing skills. The following is the response.

Table 2 : Problem in writing

Sl.No.	Responses of the students	No. of students	Percentage %
1	I can read analytically but iam unable to present in my written works.	55	51.8
2	I only read not write.	05	4.7
3	I can read analytically, but I am unable to write grammatically.	85	80.1
4	I can read, and that vocabulary is not use properly in writing.	93	87.7
5	I am unable to write which I am acquired knowledge through reading.	50	47.1

The data presented in table -2 reveals that in large percentage of respondents can read newspaper analytically but their vocabulary is not use in their writings. 80.1% respondents stated that they can read analytically, but I am unable to write grammatically. 51.8% students expressed that they are reading analytically but unable to present their writings. Less than 50% of respondents were unable to present acquired knowledge in their writings. A negligible percentage of respondents that is 4.7% only read newspaper and but not present in their writing.

The table 1 and 2 are taken under consideration, it is sure that are ready to write through analytical reading of newspaper when they are properly instructed. The data represents there is a lot of self-consciousness among students when it comes to writing through analytical reading English newspaper pleasantly. The activities shall be based on the curiosity of the learners. Meanwhile, activities focus on article, editorial page, and illustrated stories and business page. Those activities are done, each activity will focus on different language learning skills that will improve the learners writing skills through reading, vocabulary, grammar, sentence construction, chronological writing, critical thinking and presentation skills.

This paper contains through activities which will improve the students writing skills.

Activity 1 : This will guide respondents to approach news editorial in English Newspaper in perfect way and found new lexical words. Students will write paragraph in real life situation, which words he found by reading news paper. It not only enrich knowledge but improve his writing skills.

Activity 2 : This activity will make students learn tenses and also learn sentence construction cohesiveness. The reading of newspaper article analytically will provide grammatical articulation of the sentences while presenting in thoughts in writing of his life educational goal.

Activity 3 : This activity is the acquire how to write essay with systematic. The student write an essay to read an article and identify sequence of events presented in the article in chronological form.

Findings:

The study is highlighted the fact that news papers are less used tool contribute for improve writing skills. If it is not followed by analytical reading. The teachers are more oriented towards text book centered teaching than external knowledge obtains news papers and magazines. The teacher will not motivated the students to study other than reading of textbooks with analytical reading and exhibit in writing. The research was conducted with an aim to explore undergraduate ESL learners' writing problems, factors hampering development of their writing skills and suggestions to improve their writing skills. Hence, considering the problems, factors and suggestions this study has explored, it can be concluded that rural area undergraduate ESL learners face various problems in their writing but their writing skills can be improved by taking into account the reasons of these problems. The findings of the study can be generalized to the ESL learners and English language teachers at tertiary level in Andhra Pradesh; however the small sample size is a limitation of this study. The writing part in an exam paper usually has repeated topics encouraging the learners to memorize the ready-made essays on the recurrent topics. The major language issues in the learners' writing were of grammar and syntax. These errors included incorrect use of prepositions, articles, tenses, singular/plural, verbs, sentence structure, and the use of informal and spoken expressions. Vocabulary also poses a problem for learners as they are not aware of collocational and connotational meanings of the words.

Suggestions :

The study suggest that teachers should encourage students and even themselves to go beyond the knowledge of textbook by reading and reference material related to a particular topic to present in the way of lucid, simplicity and euphony in writing. It also suggests newspaper readers a serious and analytical reading should reflect in their writings, it can only be possible when newspaper reader adopts serious thought in his reading. The students are really interested to improve writing skills, when they are given real life situations which they are acquire knowledge through reading newspaper. The teachers shall encourage students if they are writing mistakes.

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