

classifications are:

- (i) Declarative sentences,
- (ii) Interrogative sentences,
- (iii) Imperative sentences, and
- (iv) Exclamatory sentences.

Each of these sentence types has a typical word order.

(i) **Declarative sentences** make a statement of fact or opinion. Normally, the word order is: Subject+ Verb Phrase + Object or Complement.

For example; *Bill has done the home work. Raju always walks fast.*

Sometimes, the word order of a declarative sentence is inverted for the sake of emphasis.

Its word order is Complement+ Subject+ Verb.

For example; A singer she is and a singer she will always be.

A declarative sentence can also begin with an adverb followed by the verb and then the subject.

For example; Up went the umpire's finger

(ii) **Interrogative sentences** ask questions.

There are two types of interrogative sentences, namely those with a 'Wh' word and Yes- No answer type of questions. *Wh* questions normally begin with a *Wh* word followed by the verb. *Yes-No* answer type questions usually begin with an auxiliary verb followed by the subject. For

example; Wh: Why is he so serious? Where is the psycho now? Who is your uncle?

Yes-No: Aren't you Mr. Alex? Is she the Principal? Is your pen missing?

(iii) **Imperative Sentences** make a request or a command.

The subject 'you' is implied. The sentence begins with the verb. Occasionally the subject is expressed. For example; Bring my book tomorrow. Someone please help me.

(iv) **Exclamatory Sentences** usually express an attitude or a strong emotion. They frequently begin with ‘what’ or ‘how’ and have an inverted word order.

For example; *How beautiful Tajmahal is! What a painting it is!*

All sentences may be either affirmative or negative. An affirmative sentence makes an assertion, while a negative sentence denies the assertion by means of a negative word, such as, not, no, nor, never.

For example, Affirmative: The doors are closed. Negative: The doors are not closed

Sometimes sentence fragments or incomplete sentences are used in speech, especially as answers to questions or as after thoughts to statements.

For example; “*Where were you at seven in the evening yesterday?*” “*In the Office.*”

However, in writing, sentence fragments are normally not acceptable except in writing dialogues to imitate speech.

Most of the sentence fragments consist of the following:

(i) Dependent clauses, (ii) Unfinished clauses (iii) Detached predicates (iv) Modifying phrases, and (v) Explanatory phrases

These fragments belong to the preceding sentences. The incorrect fragments can be corrected by changing the punctuation and the capitalization.

Sentence fragments consisting of dependent clauses must be joined to the preceding sentence.

For example; (1) *Romans were known for their military arts. Which they used to conquer other nations.* (Incorrect)

(1) *Romans were known for their military arts, which, they used, to conquer other nations.* (Correct)

(2) *He does not want to help his brother. At least until he mends his ways.* (Incorrect)

(2) He does not want to help his brother at least until he mends his ways. (Correct)

Sentence fragments consisting of incomplete clauses often occur in sentences with lengthy modifiers, in which case, the main clause is left incomplete.

For example; (i) Whenever Clinton had to answer the telephone, which was equipped with more buttons and red lights than the cockpit of an aero plane. (This fragment contains two dependent clauses and no independent clause, so it is incomplete).

Since the front tyre of the car in which he was driving to the office burst forcing him to abscond from duty. (Incorrect)

Since the front tyre of the car in which he was driving to the office burst, he was forced to abscond from duty. (Correct)

Sentence fragments consisting of a detached compound predicate can be corrected by attaching the second part of the predicate to the sentence in which its subject appears.

For example, (i) *He went to the market to buy vegetables. And returned home without them. (Incorrect)*

He went to the market to buy vegetables and returned home without them. (Correct)

Tom can play cricket. But never won a match. (Incorrect)

(ii) Tom can play cricket but never won a match. (Correct)

Sentence fragments consisting of modifying phrases include prepositional phrases, appositives, participle phrases, and infinitive phrases. These phrases must be attached to the preceding sentence, or the phrase must be rewritten to make a complete sentence.

For example;

(i) Prepositional phrase:

The chief guest came. Before the arrival of the chairman (Incorrect)

The chief guest came before the arrival of the chairman (Correct)

(a) Appositive:

They live in Visakhapatnam. Formerly called Vizag. (Incorrect)

They live in Visakhapatnam, formerly called Vizag. (Correct)

(ii) Infinitive Phrase:

He saw the examination results in the newspaper and was excited. To find his number in the first division. (Incorrect)

He saw the examination results in the newspaper and was excited to find his number in the first division. (Correct)

Sentence fragments consisting of explanatory phrases beginning with, such as, for example, namely, and so on, can be corrected by incorporating the fragments into the preceding sentences.

For example, *(a) Daylight robbers are breaking into houses for costly things. Such as, gold, silver and cash. (Incorrect)*

Daylight robbers are breaking into houses for costly things such as gold, silver and cash. (Correct)

Sentence fragments are sometimes used for stylistic effect, as follows:

He lost everything in the lottery. *Everything.*

Nothing remained. *Nothing*

These are deliberate fragments. Sometimes sentences are started with a coordinating conjunction, 'And'. It is not a serious error but the sentence looks choppy. Therefore, it is

better not to begin a sentence with a coordinating conjunction.

For example;

(a) David is in second class. And Peter is in first class. But the eldest brother is in 8th class.

(Choppy)

David is in second class and Peter is in first class, but the eldest brother is 9th class.

(Acceptable)

Practicing above mentioned techniques can be fruitful to the students of EFL classrooms. Teachers are one of the key factors in delivering instructions that lead to the development of competent learner. From the earliest studies of effective instruction (Bond & Dykstra, 1967) to more recent studies (Alton-Lee, 2003); Darling Hammond, 2000; Hattie, 2002; Teimperley, 2005), teachers have been found to be pivotal influencing students' literacy achievement in writing. Some of these teachers may described as 'exemplary teachers', defined as those teachers who consistently use effective practices and "demonstrate the quality of excellence in every action they perform...both in what they and their students do"(Collins Block & Mangieri, 2003, p.35). Investigations of exemplary teachers have provided detailed pictures of the curricula, instructional practices, classroom interactions, assessment tasks and classroom environments they have used or created.

It is paramount for mainstream educators to be knowledgeable regarding the education of English learners. We face the same problem in numerous times which is obstacle standing in the way of the success of EFL students is writing. Writing is a fundamental component of language. When a child writes, thoughts and knowledge are blended together creating a unique meaning (Jones, Reutzel, & Fargo, 2010). Consequently, students identify the skill of writing, as more difficult than listening and reading (Berman & Cheng, 2010). Furthermore, writing is the skill

that most students are least proficient in when acquiring a new language (Nesamalar, Saratha & Teh, 2001). Even the most advanced students in the ESOL program score lower in writing than in any other domain on the test. Even when students exit the ESOL program and become monitored students, mainstream teachers often show great concern, frequently seeking methods to improve the writing skills of monitored students.

There are numerous reasons for writing to be the last acquired domain of learning English, one being that a more detailed and analyzed knowledge of a language is needed to write it than to understand it (Bialystok & Bryan, 1985). Additionally, ESL students do not come to school with the same background knowledge as native English speakers; therefore, it is more difficult for them to write with meaning. Their vocabulary is often limited, and while they can communicate orally and be understood through gestures and so forth, writing proves to be frustrating for them as they attempt to express their ideas without the luxury of using their hands. Additional work time is also a necessity for students who are processing two or more languages and, all too often, they are not given such opportunities. Furthermore, because of how difficult it is for EFL students to write as well as their native English speaking peers, teachers' responses tend to be negative which can result in them being too familiar with the expectation to fail (Kasper & Petrello, 1998). Fu-Lan (2006) believes this expectation of failure, causes anxiety in writing which can happen due to two scenarios: first, when students are asked to write about a specific topic and second, when students think of writing as a translating activity. Similarly, Elias, Akmaliah, and Mahyuddin (2005) stated that anxiety and frustration in writing may be caused by unnecessary focus on errors in spelling and grammar, instead of content. All of these factors contribute to the ongoing problem of writing successfully

as an EFL student.

As previously stated, writing is the most difficult area of academics for EFL students, which is evident in their test scores and their classroom performances. Living in a text oriented society, all students need to be proficient writers, but achieving this goal is particularly daunting students who are learning English as their second language. Due to this universal area of weakness for ESL students, this research project has been designed to discover and implement effective strategies that will improve the writing skills of EFL students.

Writing has always been seen as an important skill in English language acquisition. This importance is due to the fact that it reinforces grammatical structures and vocabulary that educators strive to teach their students. It is the area in which learners need to be offered adequate time to develop their writing skill, therefore more time should be devoted to it in classrooms containing ELLs so that they will be prepared to effectively communicate in real life as well as academic situations (Ismail, 2007). Exposing them to the writing process itself through various venues is an excellent way to reach this goal. Additionally, writing skills can be developed when the learners' interests are acknowledged and when they are given frequent opportunities to actually practice writing (Ismail, 2007). Because one of the main goals of ESL students is to learn to produce a well-thought-out piece of writing, a specific writing program must be in place in order to meet the needs of these learners. After careful evaluation of the literature, it was found that numerous researchers discovered the need for ESL students to be exposed to a variety of genres, strategies, and methods in order to succeed in the writing of English.

Creating an Environment Conducive for EFL or ESL Writers

Data consistently shows that EFL students on all levels score lower in writing than any other domain. It is the last domain of second language learning to fully develop. Researchers have discovered many reasons for this problem, and a key part of it is how they feel about themselves as writers. Becoming a proficient writer of English is a problem for many ESL students as they believe that they simply cannot write English. This becomes more prominent in the upper grade levels of elementary school and beyond. This feeling of incompetency leads to self-doubt and anxiety in writing and can hinder the process of achieving writing proficiency (Thomas, 1993). Researchers believe that it is not the task of writing that is deemed so intimidating, but more so the feedback and assessment of that writing by instructors and/or peers (Kasper & Petrello, 1998).

Before the 1970's, writing instruction focused on rules of grammar (Pour-Mohammadi, Zainol Abidin, & Cheong Lai, 2012). Today research shows that it is more important to create an environment that encourages students to take risks in their writing which means less concentration on conventional rules of writing and more on expression of ideas (Shaughnessy, 1998). To do so, means being less critical at the beginning of the writing process in terms of errors, be it grammatical or otherwise. By not being focused on the errors of a writing piece, a student feels permitted to express his thoughts more freely. Overlooking the grammatical errors and focusing on the ideas is a skill to be acquired for certain, but a skill that is essential if educators desire a decrease in student frustration and an increased level of actual writing. Furthermore, when creative ideas are not hindered by concerns of using correct form, ESL students are more likely to progress. This shift of focus is what MacGowan-Gilhooly (1991) calls

a *Fluency First Approach*. She believes that only after students have learned to express themselves can they then move toward correction of grammatical errors. With this approach, MacGowan-Gilhooly (1991) saw higher pass rates among her ESL students.

In addition to the *Fluency First Approach*, Kasper and Petrello (1998) also suggest that the type of feedback teachers provide plays a very significant role in decreasing writing anxiety of ESL students. Mary Beaven (1977) found that teachers who used shared experiences, discussed students' thoughts, and requested additional information as feedback were most successful in decreasing students' frustration thus making them feel more confident. Examples of such feedback would be task oriented questions like: Could you give more information? Could you start your writing in a way that relates to your main purpose of the paper? This type of feedback is meant to encourage and provoke more thought regarding ideas rather than correcting conventional errors. This type of student/teacher conferencing should also include opportunities for students to ask questions regarding the writing process or the product itself (Hyland 2000).

Preparing Students to Write

Activating prior knowledge is one method in which teachers can assist ESL students before they even begin writing. Making sure students have the opportunity to think about what they already know before the task begins helps ESL students incorporate new information into existing structures of knowledge which activates long-term memory (Watt-Taffe & Truscott, 2000). Several strategies can be used to accomplish this including graphic organizers, cooperative learning, read-alouds, and group discussions. Graphic organizers can be used as visual tools for students to write or draw what they already know about a subject, for example in the genre of informational or persuasive writing. From this activity, teachers can then evaluate whether further instruction is needed. This is where read-aloud, cooperative learning, and group

discussions come in to play. If needed, a hand-selected text can be utilized in order to provide additional background information, which can lead to group discussions. Cooperative learning is also a great strategy to help students gain more background knowledge especially for ELLs. This strategy requires students to collect information from books, the internet, or each other as they work together with another student or group of students, preferably students who are native to the English language. Through this strategy, ELLs not only gain additional information needed to complete the writing assignment, but it is also a great opportunity for them to develop language skills through peer led conversations.

The next step in preparing ELLs to write is a vocabulary pre-view. Pre-viewing vocabulary is an effective tool when asking an ESL student to attempt any genre of writing. Second language writers have a vastly different linguistic base than native English speakers who can instinctively manipulate the language (Pour-Mohammadi, Zainol Abidin, & Cheong Lai, 2012). Therefore, vocabulary is an enormous obstacle for English learners creating the need for teachers to provide both definitional and contextual information about keywords. Instructors should also allow students to actively elaborate on word meanings (i.e. physically acting out a word), as well as teacher led explanations (Stahl, 1985). Without this preview, most ESL students will not be able to move past the instructions of the writing task. Grammar, punctuation, words, sentence construction and other items are ultimately useful as they contribute to a whole, in an essay or a paper. This is the basic unit of writing courses. Whether a topic is given or chosen, the writer has many options with respect to type of development, details to be included and conclusions to be reached. One should choose a topic out of the areas of one's own experiences. The topic chosen must be interesting, entertaining and informative. As a general rule very broad or highly abstract topics must be avoided. After

choosing the topic, one must narrow down its scope so that one may write only one's specific ideas. Now the problem is, how to approach the topic.

Traditionally, there are four types of approach to a topic.

They are: (i) exposition, (ii) argument and persuasion, (iii) description, and (iv) narration

The purpose of exposition is to explain something. Exposition answers questions, such as, what is it? What does it do? Why is it important? These questions help the reader understand something that he did not understand before.

The purpose of argument and persuasion is to persuade the reader by a logical reasoning process to accept the writer's point of view.

The purpose of description is to convey a sensory impression, especially a visual impression.

Exposition explains what a thing is. Description tells the reader what it looks like, feels like and sounds like.

The purpose of narration is to tell a story, real or imaginary. Narration is concerned with events and actions, usually in the past. It answers the question "What happened".

The four rhetorical types of approach, namely, exposition, argument and persuasion, description and narration, are not completely independent of one another. Most papers contain elements of two or more types of approach. In argument and persuasion there can be an element of exposition, and similarly, in description there can be an element of narration. However, a paper must have a primary approach.

Scaffolding Instruction

Scaffolding is a means to which teachers can build upon a student's strengths. They should be contextual, social, and temporary frameworks used to support successful learning with a specific academic domain such as writing (Vygotsky, 1987). Scaffolding is thought of as using steps in a

process, modeling the steps, and then giving students the opportunity to try it themselves. This strategy should be prepared with the mindset of gradual release after a student has reached a predetermined point in his writing which is, of course, controlled by the instructor. Baradaran, & Sarfarazi, (2011) found that students who had the opportunity to receive scaffolding principles outperformed the ones who did not experience scaffolding thus having a significant impact on the ESL students' academic writing.

Read (2010) suggests the IMSCI (Inquiry, Modeling, Shared, Collaborative, Independent) model for scaffolding and finds it extremely effective for second language learners. The first stage is inquiry, which facilitates background knowledge; the significance of which is as aforementioned. After activating prior knowledge, the instructor then models drafting the type of writing expected. Students and teacher then participate in shared writing where the students have significant input in the topic, sentence usage, etc. They are then given the opportunity to write collaboratively with one or more other students to produce one piece of writing. Having completed the above steps the students are then ready for independent writing, which is the ultimate goal of the scaffolding process.

This scaffolding technique can also be used in a different manner involving students scaffolding amongst themselves leaving the teacher as a less active participant (Gagné, & Parks, 2013). Students are consequently completing writing tasks that are collaborative in nature and facilitate the opportunity for pair or group work. Research has shown that in small groups, learners have more opportunities to use the second language for a range of functions than in teacher-led classroom activities (Storch, 2007). Furthermore, Storch (2007) suggests that pair work allows learners to combine their linguistic resources in

order to collaboratively create new knowledge about language, which leads them to more successful writing experiences. Gagne and Parks (2013) found that using this method of small group scaffolding was, in fact, a successful strategy to produce the language needed to complete a writing task. English language learners as individuals often do not possess the vocabulary base needed to create writing pieces in the mainstream classroom so by scaffolding amongst themselves, students learned how to use one another's strengths, rely less on the instructor, and feel more confident about writing tasks.

Technology

The rise of technology integration has significantly contributed to the change in teaching reading and writing in a second language. Such integration in second language learning teaching demonstrates a shift in educational models from a behavioral to a constructivist learning approach (Kasapaglu-akyol, 2010). These recent developments reveal that rapid changes in literacy have taken place as a result of the arrival of the computer and the development of other new technologies. Consequently, the pressure on teachers to keep up with such developments and to raise standards in their classrooms is ever present (Feiler & Logan, 2007). Not only does it motivate and encourage EFL students to engage in reading and writing, but the various ways it is used proves beneficial in cultivating writing skills among this population of students (Lee, 2012). Using e-journals, much like a composition notebook, gives students a safe venue for expressing their ideas without having to worry about handwriting or spelling mistakes. This technique hones their vocabulary skills and gives them an opportunity to receive written feedback from an instructor, which in turn aids in reading proficiency. Another method, among many, is using online discussion boards. With this approach, students can communicate with one another as well as the teacher, receive peer feedback and practice conversational skills, all the while putting

complete thoughts together in the form of typed sentences. Peer feedback is one of the most influential methods of becoming a proficient writer of English.

This study has shown that some basic techniques can be followed to enhance the writing strategies in EFL classrooms. Ultimately, it is up to the teacher to make up for the weaknesses of the materials they use. By implementing technology to make up for shortcomings in their strategies, teachers will not only be able to improve their instructional materials, they will also develop a competence in utilizing technology in multiple contexts.



REFERENCES

1. A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet. A Practical English Grammar. Oxford University Press 1986.
2. Ashraf Rizvi M, Effective Technical Communication. Tata McGraw –Hill third Reprint 2006
3. Abella, R. (1992). Achievement tests and elementary esol exit criteria: An evaluation. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*. 14, (2). 169-174.
4. Baradaran, A., & Sarfarazi, B. (2011). The impact of scaffolding on the Iranian EFL learners' academic writing. *Australian Journal Of Basic & Applied Sciences*, 5(12), 2265-2273.
5. Betty Schrampher Azar and Stacy A. Hagen. Basic English Grammar. 3rd edition, 2005.
6. Bialystok, E. and Ryan, E. (1985). A metacognitive framework for the development of first and second language skills. *Metacognition, Cognition, and Human Performance* 1, (107-252).
7. Chohan, S. (2011). Any Letter for me? Relationships between an elementary school letter writing program and student attitudes, literacy achievement, and friendship culture. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 39(1), 39.
8. Elias, H., Akmaliah, Z. L. P., & Mahyuddin, R. (2005). Competencies needed by teachers. Implications for best teaching practices. Universiti Putra Malaysia Press. Malaysia. Selangor. Serdang.
9. Evans, S. (2008). Reading reaction journals in EAP courses. *ELT Journal*, 62, 240-247.
10. Gerson, Sheron J and Steven M. Gerson. Technical Writing. 3rd Edition, 2000 Delhi Addison Wesley Longman Pt. Ltd.
11. Gagné, N., & Parks, S. (2013). Cooperative learning tasks in a grade 6 intensive ESL class: Role of scaffolding. *Language Teaching Research*, 17(2), 188-209.
12. Krishnamohan and Meera Benerji. Developing Communication Skills. I st Edition reprint 2000 Macmillan India Ltd.,
13. Hyland, F. (2000). Teacher management of writing workshops: Two case studies. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 57(2), 272.
14. Ismail, S. A. A. (2011). Exploring students' perceptions of ESL writing. *English Language Teaching*, 4(2), 73-83.

15. Ismail, S., Al-Awidi, H., & Almekhlafi, A. (2012). Employing reading and writing computer-based instruction in English as a second language in elementary schools. *International Journal of Business & Social Science*, 3(12), 265-274.
16. Liz Hamp-Lyons and Ben H. Easley. Study Writing- A course in Writing Skills for Academic Purposes. second edition Cambridge University Press 2006
17. Michalej. Albers. Communication of Complex. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc. 2004
18. Michale Mc Carthy and Felicity O' Dell. English Vocabulary in Use. Cambridge University Press, Low price edition, 1996.
19. Nira Konar. Communication Skills for Professionals. Second edition 4th Print, PHI Learning Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, August, 2011
20. Raymond Murphy. Essential Grammar in use. 3rd edition Cambridge University Press 2007.
21. Raymond Murphy. Murphy's English Grammar. 3rd edition, Cambridge University Press, 2004
22. Rodney Huddleston. English grammar An outline. Cambridge University Press, Low price edition, 1996.
23. Shaughnessy, M.P. (1988). Diving in: An introduction to basic writing. In G. Tate & E.P.J. Corbett. *The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook* 297-302. New York: Oxford.
24. SP Dhanavel, English and Soft Skills. Orient Black Swan Pvt. Ltd 2010
25. Sutapa Banarjee. English for Engineering and Management. S. Chand & Company Ltd, 2006
26. Thomas, J. (1993). Countering the 'I can't write English' syndrome. *TESOL Journal*, 2, 12-15.
27. Watts-Taffe, S., & Truscott, D. (2000). Using what we know about language and literacy development for ESL students in the mainstream classroom. *Language Arts* 77(3) 258-264.