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THE ROLE OF TEACHING WRITING IN THE PROCESS OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

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ABSTRACT: This thesis examines the importance of teaching writing in language learning and the methods that are used for improving writing skills. Also, the reasons for teaching writing to learners are highlighted.

KEYWORDS: writing, teaching writing, reinforcement, language development, collaborative writing, learning style.

INTRODUCTION

Writing is a complex activity. Understanding this complexity is the key to effective teaching of writing. Writing is transforming thoughts into language; it means that we need to think about the content of our writing first and then arrange the ideas using appropriate language (e.g. grammar and vocabulary). Consequently, we must learn about organizational skills in writing. Writing involves several sub-skills. Some of these are related to accuracy, i.e. using the correct forms of language. Writing accurately involves spelling correctly, forming letters correctly, writing legibly, punctuating correctly, using correct layouts, choosing the right vocabulary, using grammar correctly, joining sentences correctly and using paragraphs correctly.

In teaching writing, we should guide the student how to write and help them learn to write effectively. Writing taught as a process of discovery implies that revision becomes the main focus of the course and that the teacher, who traditionally provides feedback after the fact, intervenes to guide students through the process. Harmer describes that the reasons for teaching writing to students of English as a foreign language include reinforcement, language development, learning style and, most important, writing as a skill in its own right.

THE MAIN FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Reinforcement: Some students acquire a language in a purely oral/ aural way, but others benefit greatly from seeing the language written down. The visual demonstration of language construction is invaluable for both their understanding of how it all fits together and as an aid to committing the new language shortly after they have studied it. In other words, writing reinforce the grammatical structures, idioms and vocabulary that students have learned.

Language development: The actual process of writing helps students in acquiring a language because the process demands them to think and choose the sentences as well as words that they will use to express the ideas. This mental activity that students go through in order to construct proper written texts is all part of ongoing learning experience. Thus, the relationship between writing and thinking makes writing a valuable part of any language courses.

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Learning style: Some students are good at picking up language just by looking and listening. Others need time to think and to produce a language in a slower way to reflect what they have learned.

Writing as a skill: The most important reason for teaching writing is that it is a basic language skill, just as important as speaking, listening and reading. Students need to know how to write letter, how to put written reports together, they need to know some of writing's special convention such as punctuation, paragraph construction, etc. just as the need to know how to pronounce spoken English appropriately.

In writing, there are several methods of developments that are commonly used to present written materials. When setting writing tasks, teachers need to vary the audience, identify who the readers are to be, and try to make every piece of writing fulfill some kind of communicative purpose, either real or simulated, when students understand the context they are much likely to write effectively.

CONCLUSION

Students need opportunities to practice various forms and functions in writing and within these to develop the different skills involved in producing written texts.

Classroom writing tasks should reflect the ultimate goal of enabling students to write whole texts which form connected, conceptualized, and appropriate pieces of communication.

It will be better if teachers design a task or activities in which we integrate writing with other skills. For example, when we ask students to listen to an English song, we can provide a worksheet in which the students will try to complete the missing words. Teachers need to provide various writing activities from the controlled writing to the guided writing until free writing. Each activity will need different techniques and practice. Collaborative writing in the classroom generates discussions and activities which encourage an effective process of writing.

In teaching writing, we need to explicitly teach the writing processes and the specific strategies to enhance students' writing competence.

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