

## TEACHING WRITING SKILLS IN ENGLISH

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### Key words:

Writing, generating, mind mapping, focusing, structuring.

There are many reasons why you might need or want to improve your writing skills in English. Perhaps you need to reply to emails at work in English or take an English language exam, for example, TOEIC or IELTS. Or maybe you need to write essays in English for university, write letters to English friends or relatives or you might want to start writing a blog in English! Whatever the reason is that you need to improve your English writing skills, you will need to work hard. Having good writing skills in English is not something which is easy to achieve. English writing is thought to be an essential skill for success in the modern global economy. There are certain skills used in process writing as the following [1, 59]: *Generating ideas* is a crucial part of the writing process. Writing is primarily about organizing information and communicating meaning. Generating ideas is particularly as important as well as difficult to initiating process. For this reason, we follow the activities in the initial stages when we are attempting to discover a topic and identify the purpose. Even in later stages, however, idea generating continuously takes place. *Focusing* includes discovering main ideas, considering purpose and so on. In this topic, the focus is given on main idea of the text; purpose of the text is described. *Structuring* information entails various organization processes of grouping ideas together and deciding upon how to sequence them. We rarely know exactly what we are going to write and how we are going to present it until we actually start writing. Although the writer starts with a general organizational scheme, new ideas are constantly generated by the actual process of writing. In order words, organizing oral scheme or new ideas are constantly generated by the actual process of writing. *Drafting* is one of the important steps in writing process. Many of the activities described in earlier section are often classified as 'pre-writing'. The main concern of the writer in writing is that how best to organize an idea for their reader. The writer now has to think of how to attract their audience, how to continue appealing them, and how to lead them through the text to conclusion. *Evaluating* is essential to ensure that the language is well comprehended and reasoning well maintained. It is the assessment of the draft. In general, length of the text, organization of the text, mechanics of writing are the basic features of evaluation [2, 124]. Some tips for improving students' writing skills: **1. Write in English every day:** This is the most important tip to improve your writing skills in English. Start by thinking of a theme, for example, you could start writing a diary of something that happens to you every day, you can write a few lines of a story each day or you could write emails to your friends in English. This might be difficult at first but the more you continue, the easier it will become and you might even end up enjoying it! **2. Improve your vocabulary:** Having a wide range of vocabulary is very important when you're writing in English. An excellent way to improve your vocabulary is to read as much as possible. If you read books, newspapers or magazines in English, you will learn many new words and common English idioms. Remember to write down the new words and expressions you read and their meanings so you can learn them. **3. Ask someone to check your writing:** If you're studying at an English language school, you could ask your teacher to check your writing for you. Otherwise, why not ask a friend or relative who speaks English? I'm sure they'd be happy to help! You might even be able to do a writing language exchange – find an English person who is learning your language and write letters or emails to each other. When you send a reply, you can also send their letter back to them with corrections and they can do the same for you! **4. Use a dictionary:** You might feel that using a dictionary when you write is 'cheating' but think again – it is actually a great way to improve your vocabulary and practice using words and phrases that you've heard but haven't used before. Remember to ask someone to check your writing to make sure you have used the vocabulary

correctly. **5. Write about different topics:** If you write about the same thing every day, you could become very bored and you might end up using the same words and phrases over and over again! It is a good idea to find different topics to write about as this will help to widen your vocabulary and will be much more interesting for you. Writing about something you read in a newspaper or watched on TV is a good starting point [3, 88]. **6. Check your writing carefully:** After you have written something in English, you should always read it again, either straight away or the next day. When you do this, you will probably see a few mistakes that you didn't notice when you were writing it. Remember to check the spelling, grammar and vocabulary – have you used a particular word many times? Can you think of another way to say it? **7. Do your homework:** If you have classes at an English language school, your teacher probably gives you writing homework to do. It is really important that you do all your homework as your teacher knows your level of English and will be able to give you good advice on which parts of writing you need to improve most (e.g. vocabulary, spelling, grammar). **8. Write to your friends:** Do you have friends who speak English (e.g. people you have met in your English classes)? If so, you should definitely practice your writing with them! There are many ways to do this – using social media (Facebook, Twitter etc.), sending emails, writing text messages, chatting on Skype etc. The best thing about writing to people who are also learning English is that you can correct each other's mistakes! **9. Don't be afraid to make mistakes!** It's easy to decide not to do any English writing as you are worried that you will make lots of mistakes. However, the more you write and get your writing corrected, the fewer mistakes you will make!

### The list of used literature

1. Arkle S. Better writers, better thinkers. In A. R. Gere (Ed.), *Roots in the sawdust: Writing to learn across the disciplines* Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English. 1985.
2. Collins J. J. *Developing writing and thinking skills across the curriculum: A practical program for schools*. Andover, MA: The Network. 1992.
3. Crowell S. C. & Kolba, E. D. *The MEAP Coach Grade and Writing*. New York; Educational Design. 1997.