



TEACHING ACADEMIC WRITING TO ESL STUDENTS: TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

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Abstract: Teaching academic writing to ESL (English as a Second Language) students is essential for helping them develop the necessary skills to succeed in higher education or professional environments. This process involves understanding key writing structures, improving language proficiency, and becoming familiar with academic conventions. To support ESL students, educators should focus on teaching the fundamentals of essay structure, from introductions and thesis statements to body paragraphs and conclusions. Additionally, expanding students' academic vocabulary and helping them understand the use of cohesive devices is crucial for clarity and coherence. This article explores various techniques and strategies that can effectively enhance the academic writing skills of ESL students.

Keywords: ESL students, academic writing, writing structure, vocabulary building, thesis statement, essay writing, academic language, teaching strategies, language proficiency.

Introduction:

Teaching academic writing to ESL (English as a Second Language) students is a critical component of their success in academic settings. Academic writing differs significantly from conversational or informal writing, requiring students to master complex structures, vocabulary, and conventions. For ESL students, this transition can be particularly challenging as they must not only learn the mechanics of the English language but also understand the expectations and norms of academic discourse. Academic writing involves presenting ideas clearly and logically, using appropriate tone and style, and following specific formats.

The importance of academic writing skills cannot be overstated. Whether in essays, research papers, or reports, the ability to communicate effectively in writing is essential for students to perform well in university courses, participate in scholarly discussions, and present research. However, many ESL students struggle with issues such as vocabulary limitations, sentence structure, and organization, which can affect the clarity and coherence of their writing.

This article aims to provide teachers with practical tips and techniques for helping ESL students develop strong academic writing skills. By focusing on the fundamental elements of academic writing—such as structure, coherence, and vocabulary—educators can better support students in overcoming the challenges they face and ultimately help them succeed in their academic endeavors.

In writing we use graphic symbols: letters or letter combinations that relate to the sounds we make when we speak. So, on the one hand, writing can be called the act of forming these symbols: making marks on a flat surface of some kind. But, on the other hand, writing is certainly much more than the creation of graphic symbols, just as speech is not only the creation of sounds. Symbols must be arranged in a certain order to form words, and words must be arranged to form a sentence [29, p. 3].

So, writing plays an important role in teaching a foreign language. There are three terms: writing, writing technique, and written speech. Writing is a broader concept, it includes two meanings - writing technique and written speech. Teaching writing technique is the initial stage of teaching writing and includes

mastering the skills of calligraphy, graphics, spelling, and punctuation. Teaching written speech relies on the already formed writing technique. In the practice of teaching writing technique, it is a technological aspect of speech, and written speech is a complex creative activity by which we express our thoughts in writing. That is, writing technique is how we write, and written speech is what we write. These concepts are very closely related to each other. But when they talk about writing as an independent type of speech activity, they mean written speech.

As a type of speech activity, writing is based on the ability to write. E. I. Passov defines the ability to write as a complex phenomenon based on the following skills:

- 1) "drawing (image) of writing signs (letters), i.e. calligraphy;
- 2) correct recoding of speech sounds into adequate writing signs, i.e. spelling;
- 3) construction of a written statement, i.e. composition (for example, construction and design of a letter as one of the categories of a written text);
- 4) lexical and grammatical" [19].

E. I. Passov attributes the skills of the first and second groups to writing technique. The skills of the third and fourth groups will be slightly different, both in composition and quality. They can be attributed to the creative activity of the writer, and therefore to written speech [19].

Writing as a productive type of activity allows you to record speech for its transmission. "Writing is a graphic system (graphics and spelling) of expressing thoughts in graphic form: personal and business letters, biography, resumes, essays, etc." [23, p. 191].

G. V. Rogova characterizes writing with a three-part structure:

- "Motivational-incentive (incentive)". In this part, the motive appears. It implies the need or desire to communicate in order to convey some information in writing. At this stage, the idea of the statement arises.
- "Analytical-synthetic (formative)". Here the statement itself is realized and formed, the selection of words necessary for a specific text takes place, the meaning and purpose of a given letter is determined, the construction of selected sentences according to meaning is organized, i.e. the essence of the written statement is formed.
- "Executive (resulting)". At this stage, one might say the final one, the recording of the product of written speech is realized with the help of graphic means of language - written text [23, p. 190].

I. L. Kolesnikova and O. A. Dolgina divide productive written speech into educational written and communicative written [11, p.6].

Educational written speech is the performance in written form of various linguistic and conventional speech exercises aimed at mastering productive lexical and grammatical skills, speech abilities, including the skills of communicative written speech.

Communicative written speech is an expressive type of speech activity aimed at verbal communication in written form. The purpose of teaching such speech is to develop the ability to create various types or genres of written messages - texts.

Written speech helps, promotes the development of listening and speaking skills and abilities, since it is closely related to them. Many scientists argue that the basis of written speech is oral speech. "When writing, a person embodies in graphic symbols what he says beforehand" [1, p. 49]. Listening, including speaking, is associated with writing by ways of creating statements. Before saying something, we first think, select the necessary language tools, reflect on how to correctly and competently construct a statement, then implement the collected thoughts orally - in speaking and in writing - in writing. In both cases, the result is that the message is understood by the other person. Also, writing is closely related to reading. One graphic system of language underlies them. When writing and when reading, grapheme-phoneme correspondences are established, only they are directed in different directions: when reading from letters to sounds, and vice versa when writing. In other words, when writing, we encode our thoughts with the help of graphic symbols, and when reading, we decipher written thoughts.

Mastering the technique of writing is mastering the skills of graphics, spelling, calligraphy and punctuation. Before a student learns to express his thoughts in writing, he must first master the technique of writing. Therefore, skills in the field of writing technique are formed at the initial stage of training. At advanced stages, they are consolidated and improved as conditions for the development of written speech. Students

often have some difficulties associated with mastering the above skills. Such tasks as learning graphics and calligraphy are mainly solved at the initial stage and then improved at the middle and senior stages. Work on other skills continues throughout the entire period of accumulation of active lexical and grammatical stock. Let's consider the difficulties in mastering each skill and ways to solve them. First of all, at the initial stage of learning a foreign language, a student faces such difficulties as the mismatch of alphabets in the native and foreign languages and the mismatch of sounds and letters in all languages, which characterizes such a skill as calligraphy. For example, the Russian alphabet has 33 letters and 43 sounds, and the English alphabet has 26 letters and 44 sounds. In order to develop calligraphy skills in students, it is necessary to do exercises on underlining the specified graphemes, copying text or sentences, and on the correct spelling of the transcription of a particular word [23, p. 190]. Graphics in linguistics is a set of all the means of a given writing system [22]. Teaching graphics involves mastering sound-letter correspondences, the correct spelling of letters and letter combinations denoting different sounds, establishing connections between different types of printed and capital letters, uppercase and lowercase, establishing connections between forms of writing letters that exist in the native and foreign languages, and mastering synonymous letter designations.

Teaching academic writing to ESL students requires patience, adaptability, and a structured approach. By addressing language barriers, emphasizing essay structure, and providing constructive feedback, educators can guide students toward mastering academic writing. Leveraging technology, fostering critical thinking, and promoting independence further enhance the learning process. Ultimately, the goal is not just to teach students how to write well but to equip them with the confidence and skills they need to succeed in academic and professional settings. With consistent support and targeted strategies, ESL students can overcome challenges and develop as proficient and independent writers.

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