

## MAIN ASPECTS IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES



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**Abstract.** *Learning a foreign language is considered a complex and gradual process and students who want to learn it should work hard to learn different skills in practice. Writing is one of the skills which is usually ignored since most of the time, the main focus is on making the language learners able to be a good communicator of the target language. Therefore, the main goal of this paper is to investigate the problematic areas of writing which are related to coherence and cohesion of an essay, and also to give some solutions to overcome the difficulties. The problems included deficiencies in grammatical knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, word-for-word translation, cohesion errors and content knowledge.*

**Keywords:** *teaching English as a foreign language, grammatical knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, word-for-word translation, cohesion errors and content knowledge.*

Nowadays Teaching English as a Foreign Language plays an important role in many countries around the world. Teaching a language is a complicated process since a language consists of four main skills, including reading, writing, speaking and listening, and some sub- skills, including grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary. Many people around the world consider learning English as an essential activity. Language learners, no matter what kind of course they attend to, should have enough chances in order to develop and increase their learning skills. They must be encouraged to collaborate, to help each other and correct each other. They will do so if they are given the appropriate situations and consistent long-time encouragement. Having appropriate skills can help language learners to become motivated, learners who have got enough capabilities in learning. Writing has always been challenging and difficult; TEFL may also refer to a particular methodology for teaching people whose first language is not English, but who need to learn it for work or choose to learn it for leisure. These students may be adults or children. They may be paying for the courses themselves, or their employers or parents are paying for them. Many of them are highly motivated and literate, and already have an aptitude for languages.

However, many others are not really motivated because they do not really like learning English. They learn English because certain situations force them to learn. In this situation, English teachers need to motivate them by engaging them in joyful learning environment. TEFL methodology is highly developed and the most up-to-date training courses turn out teachers who use a communicative approach and a student-centered style of teaching. In these key respects, TEFL courses are different from the way English is taught in most mainstream compulsory education. To understand TEFL methodology, we should familiarize ourselves with some basic terms, such as, first, second, and foreign language. First language is a language that is firstly learned by children after they are born. First language is often called mother tongue, native tongue or L1. The term mother tongue‘ is used to refer to the language used by the mother of a child which is often firstly learned by the new-born baby. Native tongue‘ is used to refer to the language used by people surrounding by the child. It is assumed that the language that is firstly learned by the baby is the language used by people around the baby. L1 means first language that is the language firstly learned by the child.

Teaching English as a Foreign Language involves working abroad; therefore, working as a TEFL teacher involves living in a foreign country, either temporarily, for the completion of a specific job, or permanently, as a freelancer or contracted employee. TEFL may involve private tutoring or working in language and state schools for larger groups. TEFL does not always require being fluent in another language; however, it is quite typical for foreign employers to request bilingual educators for TESL work. In addition, most educators find that being fluent in another language helps them while living or working abroad. Teaching English as a foreign language involves being able to convey the English language in an articulate and interesting manner. TEFL educators encourage students to improve their English skills through listening, speaking, reading, and writing. TEFL is often facilitated through the use of course books, audio-visual aids, and technology-based materials. In addition to formal instruction, informal exercises, such as role playing and language games are often used. Millard Public Schools. (2009). English language learners: Overview of the program .[Goldenberg C.2008]

Typical activities for TEFL teachers include:

- planning, preparing and delivering lessons
- providing feedback on oral and written work
- administering examinations and other assessments
- Creating and writing materials.

Traveling abroad always involves a certain level of risk, and teaching abroad is no exception. Different cultures, beliefs, and societal norms may all prove challenging for TEFL educators, and threats such as terrorism, civil war, or military disturbances must all be taken into consideration by anyone considering TEFL. Further, TEFL educators should be aware of unscrupulous language schools that exploit inexperienced TEFL teachers and tutors and the economic stability of many developing countries.

TEFL certification courses may be completed online, over the course of a weekend, or on a part-time basis, and many programs are offered through regionally accredited colleges and universities. Teaching English to English Language Learners (ELL) can be a very challenging task especially when dealing with a diversified society. However, teachers are often required to be willing to learn and develop new strategies that can help such students to succeed in the classroom. In addition, it is important to implement these strategies in order to motivate students from non-English speaking countries learn the English language.

Many overseas jobs in TEFL require candidates to possess a degree in education, although it is also common for professionals in areas such as business, math, or science to teach TEFL in business/industry settings. In addition to demonstrating native fluency in English, candidates may be required to show proof of a post-secondary education or specific training and/or experience in TEFL. For many TEFL educators, the excitement of working abroad and exploring new cultures and ways of life outweigh the challenges; however, educators teaching abroad are always best served by thoroughly researching destinations before accepting employment. This is a necessary move as students who are new to the English language can feel unsuccessful, frustrated and demoralized if there is no attempt to motivate them. According to the major challenges faced by ELS students emanate from cultural and linguistic problems. This is contrary to a widely held assumption that English language teachers are the problem. However, there is need for English teachers to determine the root cause of these problems and devise appropriate strategies to assist students. As an ESL teacher, I often look forward to ensuring that my students feel comfortable in the classroom and I am also required to learn new strategies to realize this goal. The paper explores the weaknesses and strengths often realized while exploring various challenges experienced while teaching a multicultural student population and how these challenges can be overcome based on my new learning.

As a Bengali, Hispanic, and Arabic teacher, it is not an easy task teaching the English language. Therefore, new strategies such as questioning the students have to be adopted. Based on the practicum plan information, Socratic questioning is a good

strategy that can enhance the reading, pronunciation, and the understanding capabilities of ESL students. In his research findings, has noted that questioning helps students to move forward, understand meaning and new vocabulary. Thereafter students are able to read fluently. In addition, questions assist students to understand new vocabularies, solve language problems and also assist them to move forward in learning the language.

This is useful in promoting students' understanding, thereby enabling them to make meaning out of different texts. In addition, Socratic questioning activates students' prior knowledge achieved through demonstration of learning. Learning new vocabulary and writing paragraphs also enables ELL and ESL students to improve their proficiency in the English language. To counter this challenge, the teacher should break down sentences into comprehensible sections. In addition, he/she should explain the text material or write down sentences that of the same level as students' level of understanding. Moreover, presentation of academic vocabulary can be carried out at the beginning of each lesson. Information from personal relationships can be used to develop activities and lessons that can assist students to improve their learning abilities.

Engaging ESL and ELL students in oral reading is important as it improves their reading abilities in addition to enabling them master words pronunciation. This shows that merely showing students how to use vocabularies learned is not adequate. Oral reading according, improves the confidence levels of students, develops vocabulary, and pronunciation of words.

Reading is important as it not only improves the reading abilities of a student but also improves their prowess in English language. However, ESL students should not be exposed to limited reading materials. Instead, they have to be exposed to different reading materials. According to exposing children to different reading materials and texts, their prior knowledge is activated, thereby improving their ability to derive meaning. Some of the reading materials and resources as suggested include magazines, books, use of tapes with stories and songs, poems, dual language textbooks, story props, tourist brochures, postcards, newspapers, and catalogues among others. To determine the reading and writing abilities of students, students should be encouraged to take English tests more often. [Harris, P., Turbill, J 2006]

In addition, students should be encouraged to use their native language more often because according to [Miller and Endo,2004], —students who continue to speak their native language have greater success in learning English. Based on my new learning, one major challenge often encountered by ESL students is language shock as they try to adjust to a new culture in their quest to learn the English language.

Assuming that students have been integrated into a community where every student speaks English fluently, language load and shock could prove to be a challenge. Therefore, I must be prepared to assist the students to adjust and avoid mockery by the other English-speaking students. This particular challenge can be handled by motivating the students, evaluating the teaching approaches and strategies used so as to make the students more confident. These strategies enable the teacher to model and guide children, thereby making them English independent readers. Words or English sentence structures that meets the ESL students learning abilities could be adopted to assist students improve their learning, reading, and pronunciation abilities rather than curtailing their success in the English language classroom. According to [Vaughn N.D.2010], a major challenge faced by teachers teaching multicultural students is determining the students' skills and knowledge in first language as well as understanding the level of performance in the student's second language. This can be addressed through assessments, vocabulary and language tests.

In addition, authentic and metacognition maybe applied. In other words, students should not be left to memorize information but be encouraged to understand meaning and be tested to determine their learning abilities and capabilities. Moreover, building personal relationships with the parents can assist in gaining a positive experience and gain trust and improve students' confidence.

One of the main resources that can be used to further my professional development is welcoming student's parents into the classroom. This would create a closer relationship that is ideal for improving the students learning abilities. Another resource is investing in reading with a view to exploring the currently available ESL and ELL teaching approaches and strategies. Moreover, going back to school could be an appropriate resource as it increases the skills and the knowledge on how to appropriately and effectively instruct ELLs. In addition, learning the native language of my students would be important as it enhances better communication skills between me and the students.

By enhancing academic achievement, it becomes easier for English teachers to create an English language-rich classroom. Moreover, by recognizing the sameness and diversity of the students, teachers are better able to integrate the existing curriculum with multicultural literature to boost the students' language learning capabilities. Proper pronunciation of students' names and gathering background information such as the parents level of education, the language they speak back at home, the time they come to the U.S, and whether their parents speak English, would be important.

To sum it up, teachers are faced with numerous challenges when teaching a multicultural student population. Some of these challenges include language shock, determining the performance of second language, understanding the level of second language, and determining the best teaching approaches for each student. In addition, the efforts of the students should not be limited to the use of certain strategies and approaches. Moreover, students can be introduced to literacy centers which comprise of small groups that allow students improve their reading abilities. Various reading strategies such as shared-reading, guided-reading, small group shared-reading and modeled reading may be used.

However, this strategy is challenged by what Pellino refers to as language load‘. While an English teacher lists English words or asks students to write them down, on the other hand, an English learner is faced with language load. Language load means the —number of unfamiliar words encountered as an English learner reads a text or listens to teacher or peer academic talkl.

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