

Challenges of teaching English Writing skills to Primary Level Students

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The internship report submitted is my own original work while completing my degree at BRAC University.
2. The report does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The report does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In Bangladesh, students are required to practice English language as a compulsory subject for around twelve years. The English language has played a significant role as a universal language in the educational world to interact locally and worldwide. Writing is one of the important English language skills and also an influential component for communication. It also helps to produce the language. If students do not have sufficient and essential knowledge on writing skills in English, they can face difficulties in getting good opportunities in the education and job sector. So, at an early age, students should obtain strong English writing skills as an important instrument for learning, communication and express their ideas.

While teaching writing skills to young language learners, some features should be considered by the teachers in teaching. The teachers who have worked with young learners, only they can understand how challenging the work is. I also experienced these challenges through my internship at Academia which is one of the well-known English medium schools situated in Gulshan. The school follows the British Edexcel Curriculum and it was established in 2002, providing excellent academic programmes in English medium leading to IGCSE/O' Level examinations. I had the opportunity to work as a substitute English language teacher of class 2 of this school. My internship phase was started in January, 2020. The internship was for three months so I had worked there till March, 2020. Throughout my internship period, I was allowed to observe several English writing classes as well as took some classes which provided me the opportunity to discover variety of teaching techniques of teachers, how they take preparation for every single lesson, activities and teaching assistants that make the lesson interesting to the students, and the challenges they face while teaching and learning English writing skills in the classroom.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Each language has four basic skills such as reading, writing, speaking and listening. Writing is one of the four language skills which is very important to grasp the target language. It involves mastery in grammar and vocabulary to present the message and also requires knowledge to express the thought practice (Ali, 2016). It is also a physical as well as a mental act. It is a mental work because of creating ideas, thinking about how to express them and organising them into paragraphs that must be clear to a reader (Nunan, 2005).

In this chapter, relevant literature related to teaching English writing skill has been presented. The chapter discusses approaches to writing skills, creative writing, various types of writing skills and teaching techniques for writing class. The challenges in teaching and learning writing skills and teachers' beliefs and skills to teach writing skills are also added in this chapter.

2.1 English writing skills and approaches to writing

Writing is a fundamental skill of successful second language learning. McDonough and Shaw (2004) have defined writing as a vehicle for language practice and additionally said that it attempts to communicate with the writer's ideas and thought. Otherwise, writing is also a combination of process and product (Nunan, 2005). Basically, the process and product based writing are the leading approaches of teaching writing in the ESL classroom over the last 20 years. The product based writing mainly focuses on the construction in the aim and the end product rather than the process of writing itself. On the contrary, process based writing pays attention to the various stages (such as editing, drafting) that any good piece of writing can go through on it.

According to Harmer (2019), there are different approaches to practice writing skills in the classroom, but most of the time teachers have the responsibility to choose appropriate approach for the students and teachers and have to decide whether they want the students to focus on the process based writing more than its product based writing, whether they want them to study different written categories or whether they want to inspire them for independent writing as "Independent writing" and "Creative writing" have been controlling the ESL classrooms for recent few years. Creative writing refers to inventive tasks like writing poems, stories and

plays which sponsors effective learning through self-discovery. On the other hand, Independent writing is a time when children use the knowledge and skills they have developed about text types and write by themselves (Brinkmann, 2018).

Undoubtedly, every language learner has to follow a structured process of writing. When we write something we first combine our ideas and thoughts and then arrange them in the form of sentences and organise the sentences into a consistent text. This mental process of writing develops some sub-skills such as drafting, organising, editing, and revising. By developing the writing skill, young language learners can easily prepare themselves for future studies.

2.1.1 The Product Approach

Product-based writing is mainly concerned with the forms of written products that students compose. According to Vafeidou (2011), a product approach is a traditional method in which students are urged to imitate a model text which is typically offered and examined at a beginning stage. In a typical product oriented classroom, students are provided with a standard sample of text and they are expected to imitate the models to construct a new piece of writing.

Vafeidou (2011) also stated that the product approach emphasizes on linguistic knowledge as well as the appropriate use of vocabulary, syntax and interrelated devices. Product-based approach consists of four stages: familiarisation, controlled writing, guided writing and free writing. First of all, students read a model text and then examine the content by taking a glimpse at the highlights, for example, association of thoughts and utilization of language. In the following two stages, controlled and guided writing, students' practice of the contained highlights and figure out how to arrange a predetermined organisation of thoughts until they are prepared for the free writing part. The free writing stage is the final outcome of the learning phase when students utilize their writing aptitudes, structures and vocabulary that they have learned to create the standard piece of writing. From this stage, students can show that they are as fluent as skilled users of the language.

2.1.2 The Process Approach

The process approach of writing is basically concerned about the process of how ideas are developed and framed in a writing. Harmer (2019) states that a process approach asks learners to think about the methodology from assembling a decent piece of work. In this approach writing primarily deals with linguistic skill, such as brainstorming and drafting rather than

linguistic knowledge, for instance, knowledge about grammar and text organisation. A process-based approach can have any number of stages with different views that writers go through in generating a piece of writing. However, a typical model of writing is identified which contains four stages: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and finally constructing a final version (Nabhan, 2016). The various stages of writing are done in a repetitive way. For example, first learners start writing with a plan in their heads and always have a reader in mind so that they can interconnect a message. Secondly, they think about what they want to say and for whom they are writing. Finally, they make a draft of their own and as they proceed they are continuously reviewing, revising and editing their works.

In short, writing practice in the classroom is often taken up for demonstration, to evaluate that students have learned language structures taught in class and for examination purposes. In this case, the teacher is concerned with the final product of writing such as an essay, a report, an article or story, based on standard models. In fact, these types of writing mostly meet with the Standard English linguistic style which are grammatically correct and organised in a standard manner (Brown, 2015).

2.2 Independent Writing

Independent writing is defined as a time when students attain their own writing by the use of knowledge and skills that have been the centre for previous instruction. Previous instruction is believed to surround demonstrating and guided activity wherever knowledge and skills are required for independent writing are taught through social interaction with the teacher (Brinkmann, 2018).

In early independent writing, teachers usually copyist what their students express about their pictures or self-produced symbols, or about an event, and experience. Consequently, young learners experience the purpose of writing like how meaningful language can be turned into written form with a constant message. As their knowledge develops they are better in representing their message independently (Angelo, 2013).

Students are involved in independent writing at all phases of the writing process. Independent writing is not only 'free choice' of writing but also what the student does with their work as a result of the plain instruction and frameworks offered by the teacher. As a result, it is the

independent phase of the regular release of responsibility (Duke, Pearson, Strachan & Billman, 2011).

2.2.1 Effectiveness of independent writing for learners

Independent writing is an opportunity for children to write explanatory and wonderingly, and they can also discover their voice over writing on things they find generally significant (Wilson, 2006). It provides students the opportunities to work on various skills and approaches like 'personalisation', 'student-centred learning' of learning by the previous teaching practices. Besides, learners think more positively and also get to know about the process and potentials of clear and consistent independent writing. The students develop independent writing skills that helps them in further learning by utilizing their own concepts to form different opinions, solving writing errors and using different approaches in their writing.

In an independent writing situation, teachers also have some key roles to help students to become independent writers by assuring that students are effectively associated with writing. There are a number of strategies that help students in independent writing. Firstly, scaffolding that refers to the strong structure is given by trained others and in this situation the teacher helps students in their writing. The main goal is to transfer responsibility from the teacher to the student gradually and the teacher's response is quite flexible to students' responses rather than following a scheduled teaching technique. Secondly, independent writing provides students the opportunities to self-monitor which relies on the two phases; one is building up goals and another is getting feedback from others and from oneself. Here, teachers insist students self-monitor by helping them to utilize internal and external responses to see whether the structures they are utilizing are effective for achieving writing objectives. Thirdly, the teachers offer help through standard discussions or meetings to individual students and needs-based education as necessary. Fourthly, independent writing creates communication including language that is focused on writing and it helps students to become more conscious of the writing steps and recognise their own learning styles which help both teachers and students to share their thoughts. The teachers provide corrective feedback to every student. Finally independent writing helps to improve students' confidence in working freely and to assist them by building up the reflective feature of independent writing (Meyer, 2008).

2.3 Teaching techniques for writing class

Now-a-days teaching techniques have been spread all over the world which is easy and useful both for teachers and students. When teachers teach English especially writing skills, they attempt to use a variety of techniques and it can also help teachers to practice activity in the classroom.

According to Murugesan (2019), there are several techniques for teaching writing, teachers mainly use brainstorming, mind map, group work, picture and controlled writing. The main purpose of using these techniques is strategy to encourage and make students easily understand material. Such activities help to develop writing skill and knowledge of material.

- Brainstorming

Brainstorming is an important procedure in building up students' thoughts before they really start their writing task (Harmer, 2015). Its strategy is to assist students with utilizing their earlier information in their writing activity and distinguish the abilities and information they have and what they have to know. One of the most significant features of brainstorming is that it does not need any organisation and it can be used at any grade of education and under any situation (Gorjian & Namani, 2018).

There are a number of guidelines that should be considered throughout the brainstorming activity such as ideas won't be criticised, build up on others suggested ideas, odd and remote thoughts are recognised and huge amounts of thoughts are invited. Therefore, different brainstorming techniques are quite reasonable while teaching students in the classroom because they may assist them not only to cultivate their writing skill but also to create different ideas which are necessary in secondary language learning, even though the ideas that are created, can or cannot be directly associated with the topic. In short, brainstorming is the activity where the students need not to be tense and they can simply expose their minds to all that comes into their brain (Behjat, Hashempour & Rostampour, 2015).

- Group work

Composition teachers use group works in writing activities. The teachers basically use this technique to regulate and correct students' writing. First, teachers ask students to work in groups for arranging writing of descriptive paragraphs. This group discussion technique has some variations like exchange of ideas among students for the purpose of expanding students'

thinking, learning, problem solving and understanding. Then, students observe their group members then they discuss what they understand and write the observation result into descriptive text. In discussion, there is a communication between teacher and students, students are more active to answer the frequent questions from the teacher. The expectation of the teachers from the discussion is that every student can improve their understanding about the material that they have discussed (Murugesan, 2019).

- Mind mapping

Mind mapping is one of the inventive teaching techniques that is usually used as a teaching and learning technique. Mind map prominently demonstrates the relationship between concepts and ideas and often represents in circles, concepts are connected through words that explain the association between the ideas. (See figure-02, page-21, and chapter-3) It helps the students to organise and structure their thoughts for further understanding the information and discover new relationships (Bukhari, 2016). Mind map can also help for better learning and compelling accomplishment.

To sum up, the main purpose of using different teaching techniques in writing is a strategy to help students for their easier development in writing skill. Teaching writing skill is not a very easy task to teach the students. Using techniques in writing skill, can improve students' aptitude as well as make them interested in writing English.

2.4 Challenges in teaching and learning writing skills

While teaching, teachers face different types of challenges in the classroom. One of the biggest challenges they have to deal with is writing (Rohayati, 2014). Different studies in Bangladesh and other foreign countries have found that both teachers and students face some problems in teaching and learning writing skills. It is known to the students that they get difficulty in writing, when they practice writing on paper. There are different types of errors that they make. Errors are the things which give the teacher evidence of difficulty that the students have problems with writing. Even though they do not provide him/her with all the possible evidence, nor are they taken to be as the only proof (Rahman & Sarker, 2019).

However, the students' issues in learning writing are to be reviewed by the teachers on a regular basis. The following problems are faced by teachers and students:

2.4.1 Students' Problems in Writing

- Lack of vocabulary

Vocabulary is an important feature of writing and it is a basic component of a successful writing skill all over the world (Gharabally, 2015). Lack of vocabulary is a big problem which often occurs during classroom activity, beside it becomes a crucial problem not only for the teachers but also for the students. Sometimes teachers find it difficult to be handled even if not all the students face this problem, having this type of problem can be a limit for them, especially in writing a paragraph or even a sentence (Rahman & Sarker, 2019).

In Bangladesh context, lack of vocabulary knowledge makes writing a difficult task for second language learners. Considering vocabulary knowledge as an important factor in second language acquisition, it would be worthy to state the kind of language knowledge that learners should know a word completely. Consequently, students who meet difficulties when they write in a second language class, do not have sufficient vocabulary knowledge and that writing quality is judged on the basis of vocabulary features. However, the learners' vocabulary use quality in writing has not been broadly examined in Bangladesh (Hasan & Rahman, 2019). To sum up, very little attention is paid to vocabulary learning by most of the literature on second language acquisition as a general practice in the education system of Bangladesh.

- Lack of Grammatical Knowledge

Grammar is also an essential element for effective language skills. In writing skill, grammar regulates how a paragraph should be built-up and how the ideas can be understood. Teachers often find that their students are lacking in this aspect. Usually in the classroom, students get in trouble with grammatical mistakes and are worried about their ability in choosing and organising words to produce sentences (Yaakob, 2015). These feelings seem to make them demotivated in writing.

Rahman and Sarker (2019) found out that most of the students in Bangladesh make errors in the use of verb collection, agreement between subject and verb, and the use of preposition, the use in pluralisation, use in pronoun, and use of conjunction. Among these, one of the common grammatical errors are made by students that is production of verb groups. The students do not recognise the use of verb groups and sometimes they use the word without understanding the structure of grammar. Another common grammatical error by students is using pronouns

because they cannot understand how to use it well. As a result, it is clear that students' grammatical knowledge is not sufficient to be a good writer (Susanto & Widyaningsih, 2018).

2.4.2 Teachers' Challenges in Teaching Writing

- Different learning styles of students

Nasreen (2014) stated that it is not only the fact that there are many students in a classroom, but also all of them are at so many different ability levels that provides the biggest challenge for the teachers. She also claimed that it can be quite difficult for the teachers to keep the attention of all students in a mixed-ability classroom. In the Bangladesh context, all teachers have to face the challenge of a mixed-group of students. According to Rahman and Sarker (2019), every student has a different level of ability in Bangladesh. Some of the students work faster and do all of the activities with good results because they have higher intelligence. On the other hand, there are many students who cannot even work fast and cannot get good scores because of their lack of ability in English. Most of the Bangladeshi students have excessive fear in writing English in their own words and face difficulties as it is a foreign language. As their motivation level is low and the teachers feel frustrated because he/she does not have enough time to help the weaker students.

In addition, all students have their own way of learning styles and the students who are in low level maybe have more difficulties, working in a noisy environment since they easily get distracted (Sultana & Ahsan, 2013). Even, teacher cannot give tasks to weak students the same as with students who have the higher level because it can be stressful for those students. In this situation, teachers face difficulties to organise the class and to give the suitable activities with their level. This can make the teachers feel inadequate and incapable to cope with the class (Sikder, 2013).

- Error correction and feedback

A teacher must know when and how to correct errors in writing because the role of error correction and feedback depend both on the teacher and therefore the students. Whereas observing at how and when errors are corrected, it is additionally important to determine that students know how they respond to the corrections and feedback. It is because sometimes students may have a negative impact on error correction. Harmer (2019) points out that if teachers do excessive correction, it might have a demotivating impact on the students. He also

suggests that teachers can inform the students that they will correct errors of specific parts of language in their writing. For instance, grammar, spelling, punctuation and organisation of words. From teaching writing to correcting it, the entire procedure is combined which gradually helps to enhance the writing skill of second language learners.

2.5 Teachers' beliefs and skills

Rietdijk, Weijen, Janssen, Bergh, and Rijlaarsdam (2018) stated that most of the time teachers' belief is usually drawn from planning a lesson, the kinds of decision-making, for general classroom practice and the teachers' behaviours to students which are more important than knowledge. However, teachers can modify their behaviours and educational decisions based on learners' competences if they can distinguish learners' abilities. . Furthermore, teachers' can use their beliefs and skills not only for planning educational goals but also for setting standards, and that beliefs and skills help teachers to overlook unnecessary substances and make clear what should be studied and emphasised. In short, teachers' belief and skill play an important role in any incorporation and development that teachers can bring in their everyday teaching.

In addition, teachers also have different beliefs, skills and methods about teaching writing activities. According to Golpour, Ahour, Ahangari, and Lu (2019), in writing teachers mainly focus on new theories that encourage students in meaning-focused writing activities. On the other hand, a number of teachers who do not believe in this method as they focus more on learners' error correction and form of writing. Furthermore, teaching writing to English language learners is one of the most challenging tasks for all the teachers as it takes significant experience and reflection on responding to students' writing. Most of the time, teachers like to depend on their personal experiences as students, understanding the classroom situations by observing students and using their own beliefs and skills to shape their methodology of the teaching profession. In conclusion, it is necessary for all the teachers to know that their understanding and beliefs on writing instruction have an impact on their classroom behaviour and practices (Uddin, 2014).

Chapter-3

Putting Theories into Practice

For my internship I was asked to teach in Academia School where I got to work as an English language substitute teacher of class two. I also got a chance to observe the other English language classes of class one, class two, class three and class four. The students' age levels were mostly between 8-10years old and they all knew how to read, write and speak in target language. The main skills addressed in the class were reading, writing and speaking.

Every week the students had four English language classes and one writing class. Each class was 40 minutes. The teachers used to teach three different English language elements to the students every week such as the first two days (Sunday and Monday) the teacher taught grammar, the next two days (Tuesday and Wednesday) she taught comprehension and the fifth day (Thursday)of the week was for improving creative writing skill of the learners.

As I observed several language classes during my internship so I also got the opportunity to observe different types of teaching techniques of writing skills to the primary level students by the individual language teachers. Consequently, this particular chapter is divided into three sections where I am going to describe the teachers who were appointed as the English language teacher for class one, two and three, how they used teaching techniques for writing skills as well as grammar in the classroom. Secondly, I will talk about my personal experience of teaching writing, how I used different teaching techniques to the primary level students of class two. In the very last part of the chapter, I will describe the challenges which I faced while teaching writing skills to the students of class two. Therefore, in this section, I am going to focus on different phases of my teaching experience in the light of the different theories that are mentioned in the literature review chapter.

3.1) Classroom Observation

In this part, I will describe teaching techniques for writing skills used by the English language teachers who were appointed to teach the primary level students of class one, two and three. I had observed several English creative writing classes and all of them were using the same techniques for teaching writing skills to the students.

Here, all of the students knew how to read, write and speak in English. The main skills addressed in the class were reading, writing and speaking in English. Both teachers and students interacted with each other in the target language. Speaking in L1 was not allowed in the class. All the students were at the beginning level of the language learning process and they only knew the basic rules of the second language and they still lacked grammatical knowledge

- Class-1 (Creative writing)

In class one there were ten students in total. The teacher of this class started the class by exchanging greetings with the students. After the greeting session, the teacher introduced the topic of the lesson to the students and the class was on ‘creative writing’. Students were asked to write a paragraph on the topic “My school” where they had to write seven sentences within 20 minutes. They were also asked to maintain proper writing style, sentence structure and grammar in their writing. As a result, students have got the chance to show their creativity through writing. Creative writing is mainly a self-discovery which encourages effective learning (Harmer, 2019). Before starting to write the paragraph, the teacher gave them some hints and instructions about the topic such as accurate spelling of Academia, 8 branches of the school and about the school environment. However, the teacher worked as a resource because students needed their teacher as a source of different types of information (Brown, 2015). For instance, they asked the teacher how to write something. Even in some cases, they asked the meaning and spelling of a word.

At the beginning of their writing, I thought that they would not be able to finish their writing within 20 minutes. Surprisingly, they were capable of finishing and submitted it to the teacher on time. And the teacher checked their class works one by one and returned the notebooks to the students. All of them received written corrective feedback in their notebooks. Actually, it was the correction of grammatical mistakes and the purpose of this feedback was to improve students’ ability to write correctly (Sahmadan, 2019).

In this particular creative writing class, the teacher followed the product approach for teaching writing skill which mentioned in the first part of the literature review chapter where the teacher provided specific guidelines of free writing and the students followed them accordingly by using their writing skills, structures and vocabulary (Vafeidou, 2011). The way, the teacher was conducted the class it was clear that she had proper lesson plan in her mind and followed the lesson plan appropriately. Here, she used the brainstorming activity mentioned in the second part of the literature review because this activity helped the student not only to cultivate writing

but also to create ideas before starting their writing task. For instance, at first, the teacher introduced the topic of the paragraph to the students, then she instructed some basic advice about writing. After that she asked the students to think about what they knew about “my school” and wrote it in bullet points and the teacher also assisted them by giving some general information about the school. In that way the teacher used the brainstorming activity in the class. However, the teacher also followed a process approach of writing where the teacher was expected from the students to generate a good piece of writing because it emphasises more on linguistic skill rather than linguistic knowledge (Harmer, 2019). The approach that the teacher used, only helped the learners to improve their grammatical skills in writing and they did not get the chance to progress in language content properly.

- Class-2

I was also allowed to observe English creative writing class of class two. The teacher of this class was very free with the students. On that day, the teacher wore a yellow and orange contrast beautiful saree. After seeing the teacher in saree, students became very happy and gave compliments to her. Later, the teacher and the students exchanged greetings with each other by saying ‘good morning’.

After the greeting session the teacher usually introduced the topic of the lesson, but here the teacher first talked about the activity ‘group work’ to the students, in which they had to do their classwork in pairs. Then, the teacher introduced the topic of the lesson to the students. The teacher designed the task for this creative writing class containing ‘picture description’, also known as ‘independent writing’ for learners mentioned in the literature review chapter. Through this task, learners had got the chance to use their knowledge and language skill to form a good piece of writing (Brinkmann, 2018). The teacher gave each pair a piece of paper that contained six sequenced pictures. She asked the students to describe the pictures in eight to ten sentences in a way so that it could become a story. Additionally, some words related to the pictures were given by the teacher so that students had got some help. For example, field, gun, hunt, hunter, meadow, animal, birds, mice and morning.

While I was observing this class, I found out that the instruction was not clear to the students. Even the teacher did not check the students whether they understood the instruction or not. Instead of asking for any help, some students sat behind and started talking with each other. Very few students were able to write properly, got feedback and the teacher appreciated their

performance. For other students, she did not get enough time to guide them individually as the class time was very short. Finally, the teacher ended the class by giving homework to the students and checked every student's diary to make sure that they wrote everything properly.

For this class, I think that the communication between the teacher and the students should be more strong and the teacher should monitor the whole class properly. As many students did not participate in the activity because of lack of understanding the instruction so the teacher could make the activity more interesting for the students by using some modern elements and techniques like colourful posters, showing interesting videos and different fun activities. Using modern techniques in teaching helps learners to increase their motivation and concentration for writing activity (Murugesan, 2019).

- Class-3

Lastly, in this part I will share my experience of observing English creative writing class of class three. Here, the teacher started the class by asking some frequent questions to the students, such as 'how were they?', 'how did they spend their weekend?' Students got very excited to tell how they spent their weekend to the teacher and she was also enjoying listening to listen to their stories. This was mainly a warm up session for the students before beginning the exercise.

Then the teacher introduced the topic of the lesson to the students. The lesson was on 'application writing' where the teacher first gave instruction on proper format of application letter by using an example, "An application for transfer certificate". Later, the teacher wrote a sample format of application letter on the board and the students followed the teacher. An example is given below:

Sample Application Format

To,
The Principal
Academia English Medium School
Gulshan, Dhaka

Subject: Application for transfer certificate.

Dear sir/ma'am,

Yours obediently,

Name:
Class:
Roll no:
Date:

Figure 01: Application Format Used in Class

Basically, this was the product approach and also called the traditional method of teaching writing where the teacher instigated all the discussion alone in the classroom and the students only followed the teacher's instruction (Vafeidou, 2011). Besides, students were provided a sample text and expected to memorise the model to produce a new piece of writing. In this kind of learning environment, students did not get any chance to participate in classroom discussion or activity. Later, the teacher ended the class by giving the homework to the students on the topic 'Write an application to perform a play at your school' and asked to bring it to the next class.

3.2 Techniques applied while teaching writing

A teacher is the model of the content and the school because how a teacher represents herself makes an impression on administrators, colleagues and students. When a teacher can show her enthusiasm and competence for a content area and it may help to transfer those feelings to the students. In this section of this chapter, I am going to share my own teaching experience of teaching English writing skill to the primary level students. I will also describe how I followed my lesson plan, what activity and techniques I had used, how I controlled and managed the students in the classroom.

Consequently, when I got the opportunity to teach English writing skills to the students through this internship, I tried hard to make my teaching and learning process very operative. Though I did not get that much chance to take many classes due to an unavoidable circumstance in our country, still I had taken very few classes with maximum sincerity from my side. Therefore, I tried to implement all the knowledge on my teaching that I have gained from the major courses on ELT. I tried to keep a friendly relationship with the students because it is important and it makes the job of a teacher easier. If the bonding is good then the students will listen to their teacher fast.

First, I entered the classroom and exchanged greetings with the students. In class two, there were 16 students in total. As the students already saw me observing their classes before but that day they were pretty much interested in listening to my words as their English language teacher. As a part of the ice breaking session, I assigned a warm-up task. For example, I asked the students frequent questions about “Falgun” such as what did they do on falgun? Which colour dress did you wear on that day? The students enjoyed the session as they got a chance to express their ideas about different things. Gradually, I entered the lesson by taking ideas from the question answer session. For example, I drew a ‘mind map’ on the board and wrote those ideas about ‘Falgun’ in bullet points in the map that students shared with me and also told them to draw the ‘mind map’ in their notebook as well. That is how, I introduced my students to ‘mind map’ which represents in circles and concepts are connected through words that explain the relationship between the ideas (Bukhari, 2016). For example,

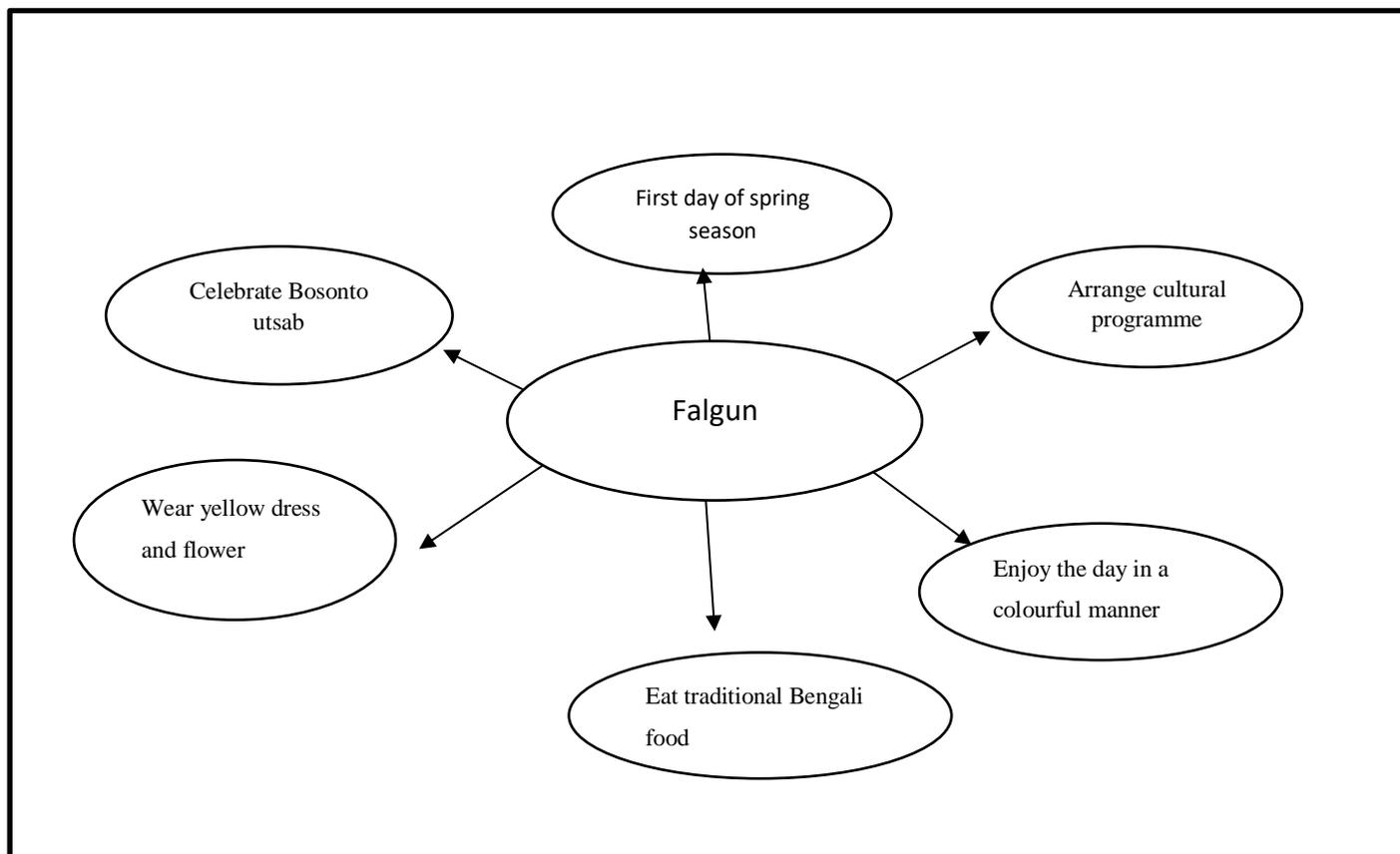


Figure no 02: Sample Mind Map

After this task, I asked the students, if they did not understand anything then tell me to explain more in detail. Some students had questions and I solved them for the students.

Later, I began the main topic of the lesson which was paragraph writing on the topic of 'International mother language day'. Then I did brainstorming to get the ideas from the students and also asked them to come up with more ideas and knowledge whatever they knew and thought about language day. Besides, I asked the students to draw a 'mind map' again on 'mother language day' and put these ideas on the map. Meanwhile, the whole class was engaged in the task. An example from a student's copy is given below:

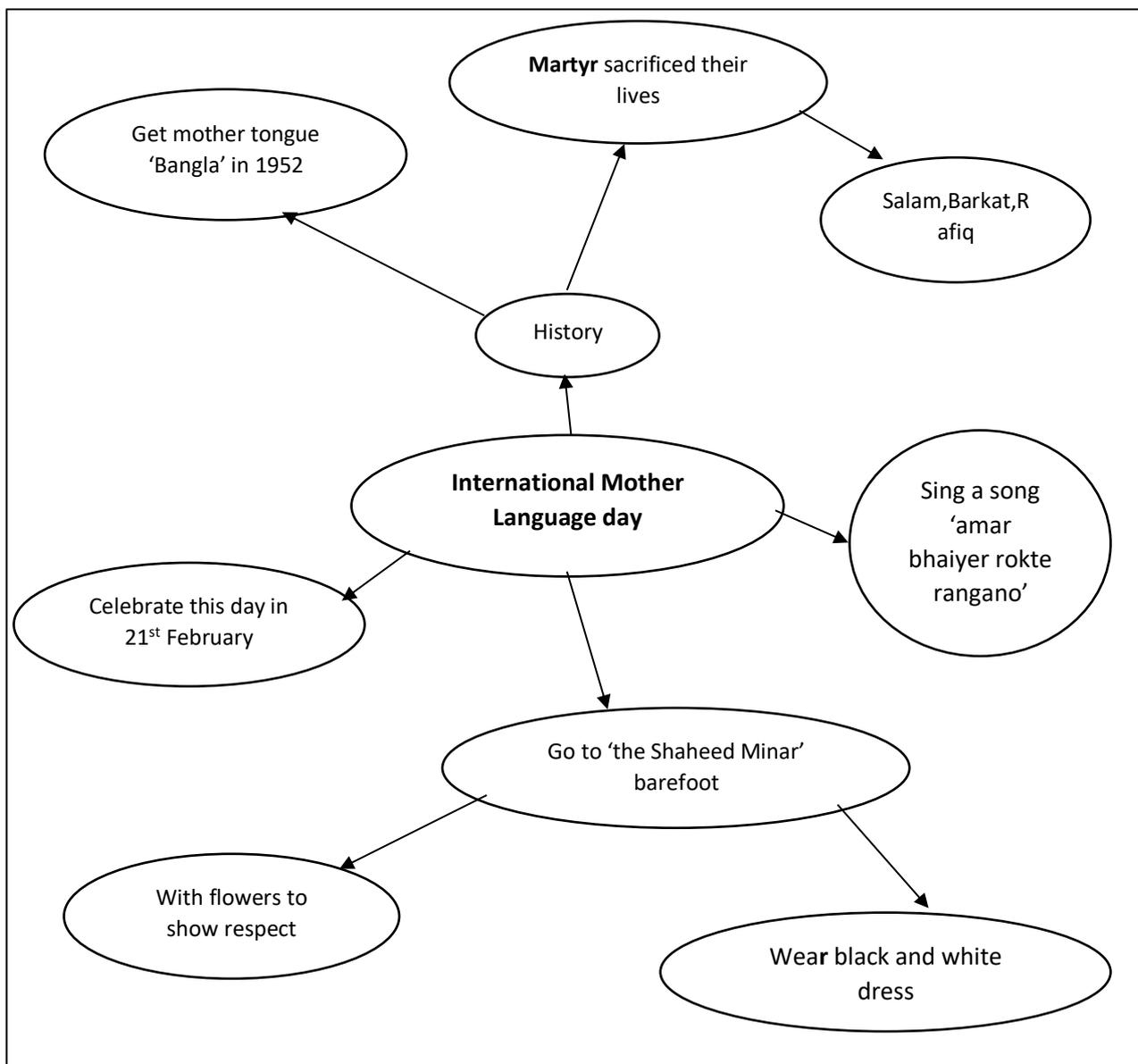


Figure no 03: Mind map (Student's sample)

At that moment I got the opportunity to build up a strong rapport with the students. Moreover, while students were doing the task they were assigned to, I went to them as an active monitor to see if they were facing any problem (Scrivener, 2011). In addition, to motivate students I used both positive and negative reinforcements. For example, I did not hesitate to appreciate the students saying “Well done”, “Very good” etc. On the other hand, when they were talking among themselves, I also tried to monitor them and found that they were making errors in spelling and vocabulary. For example, one student wrote wrong spelling ‘**martyre**’ instead of ‘martyr’ and another student used capital letter in the middle of a verb like ‘**weaR**’. Primary level students’ are often made spelling mistakes because sometimes the correlation between

the sound of a word and the manner in which the word is spelt is not always same. A single sound can have several different spellings, then again a similar spelling can have various sounds (Harmer, 2019).

Here, I concentrated especially on process based writing where students had to use their brain to write about anything. Process based writing basically permits learners to develop their writing ability (Nabhan, 2016).

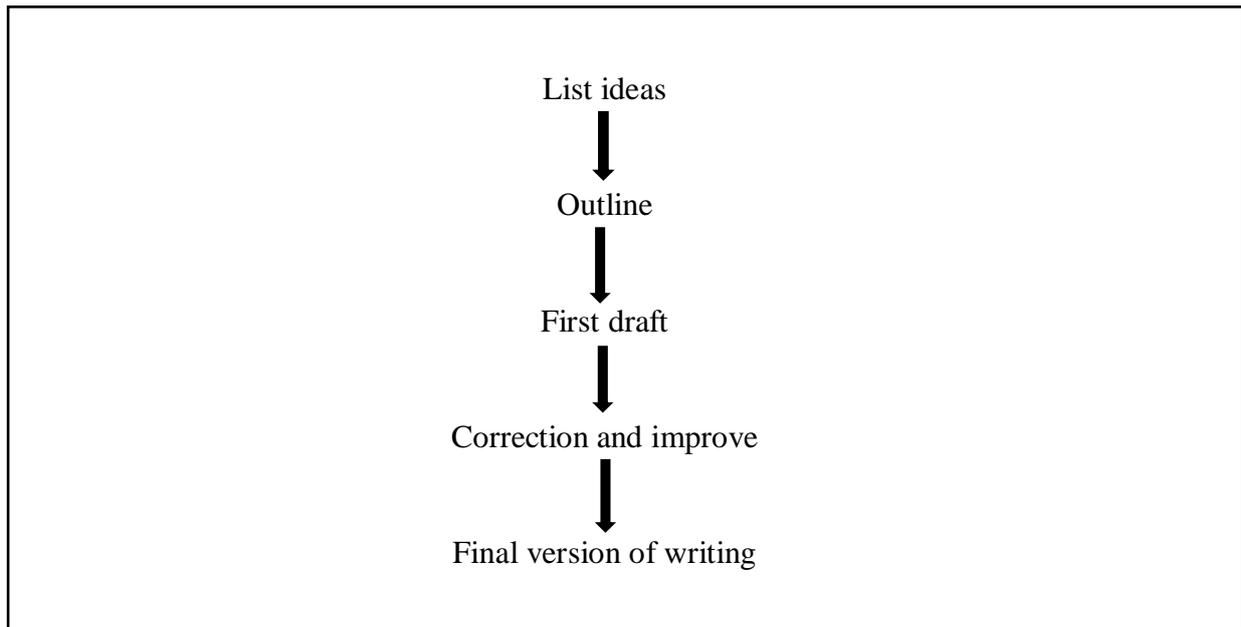


Figure no 04: Diagram of Process Writing

Finally, I finished the class by giving them homework to write a paragraph on ‘International Mother Language day’. In the paragraph, they had to use the ideas that they put in the mind map in the classwork copy and the word limitation was 100words.

3.3 Challenges faced during teaching and learning writing skill

There were some challenges which I had to go through during my internship. After starting my internship, I had taken several grammar classes at the primary level and it was quite easy to me. Later, when I first started teaching creative writing in class two, I found out that it remained challenging all the way. It was also an evidence that students were not so motivated in writing class though it was the primary requirement to learn any language skill. For instance, in English language class, most of the students were very enthusiastic to participate in any class activities to maintain their own self-respect. Whereas, in creative writing class they behaved in

a different way. Their motivation and confidence level became low here, paralleled with other classes. There were several reasons that is why students did not like the writing process; (a) they had a hard time to get started and overcome by the task, (b) they faced difficulty to organise and use methods of writing, (c) they were slow and ineffective to discover the right word to express an idea (Richards, 1999).

Secondly, I had found some common mistakes made by students while checking their scripts. For example, they wrote ‘they **said** their car’ instead of ‘they **sold** the car’. They often face difficulties in choosing vocabulary when they write something in English. Another example is ‘International Mother Language day’, students also made lots of spelling mistakes as well, even though they had learnt it in the grammar class. According to Brown (2015), mistakes are infrequent and unpredictable slips. Teachers’ notice that mistakes are done suddenly by the students. It was referred to a performance error, which was made by the students while creating a known structure inaccurately. I had also pointed out that there were some other frequent mistakes which the students made such as they hardly use s/es with the verb. Most of the students lacked other grammatical knowledge like tense, they did not add ‘ed’ with the verb in the simple past sentence but sometimes added ‘ed’ or ‘ing’ with the verb when it is not necessary to add. Sometimes students overgeneralise the rules like they used to add ‘ed’ for past form for all words such as eat – eated (Harmer, 2019). Then they often used words without understanding the proper sentence structure. For instance, ‘I therefore hope and pray honour this leave of absence’ but the sentence should be ‘I there pray and hope that **your honour would be kind enough to grant** this leave of absence’. All these things were taught by the teachers in the grammar class, still it occurred because students did not practice independent writing at home. Additionally, all these grammar elements were taught in the deductive approach where students only practiced the work sheets which provided the grammar rules and examples and they were asked to apply the rules to other examples but they got confused when they had to use it in writing (Nunan, 2015).

Thirdly, while teaching writing skills, I also faced some difficulties because of a mixed group of students, their lack of interest in writing and inadequate teaching and learning resources. Most of the time other teachers did not use any learner centred activities such as role play, mind mapping and group discussion to develop students’ writing skills. When I had used activities like mind mapping and brainstorming in the writing class, students were facing problems to understand, gather ideas and to write in bullet points because it was very new to them. Consequently, it was a very challenging task for me to make them understand the whole

procedure because there were different types of students in the class, such as some students had understood and worked very fast .On the other hand, there were some weak students who could not work faster because of excessive fear in writing English so I had to monitor the students individually.

Finally, I would like to mention about short class duration. As the students were at primary level, and they were too small to understand everything about language, so it took time to make them understood each and every instruction that the teacher provided them .Besides it also takes time to make students prepared mentally and physically so that they can gather ideas on a topic and practice writing individually in the classroom. So, it is very difficult for a teacher to conduct a whole class properly within 40minute.Not only teachers but also learners did not get enough time to practice writing in the classroom and to get proper corrective feedback from the teacher which is very important to improve their writing skills.

Chapter 4

Recommendations

During my internship, I pointed out some ideas that can help the teachers to deal with the challenges while teaching writing skill to the primary level students:

Firstly, teachers need to motivate the students through rewards and punishments in teaching and learning writing skills. Rewards and punishments should be in a positive framework to give a positive effect on students. At the same time, it has some psychological effects on students (Nunan, 2015). When students will do well in their task, they will be rewarded. Teachers can hope that the students will get motivation to do the best for the next assignment if rewards are given to them. On the other hand, the student who won't do their task, punishments will be given to them. It has a resolution to motivate the students to do the best.

Secondly, in the language classroom, there should be availability of modern technology like projector, computer and sound box so that teachers can use different teaching techniques and also guide the students effectively and wisely .By using technology, teachers can attract the students to participate in classroom activities and students can also explore more ideas in writing task.

Thirdly, teachers should divide the students into groups in which each group should contain different levels of students' aptitude, from high level to low level students.

Fourthly, teachers should make the students more responsive to their errors. The teachers can assign one class with each alternating week for error correction and feedback along with classroom discussion between the teacher and the students which will be effective for students. Teachers can also involve students in peer feedback. This method will help the students to be responsible to check their own work. On the other hand, this practice will make the students capable of evaluating the written work and also make them independent writers (Nabhan, 2016).

Lastly, the class timing should be increased to more than 40minutes so that the teacher can interact with all the students equally in the classroom. To sum up, I would like to say that the teachers' enthusiasm and sincerity towards their work can only ensure successful teaching of writing for primary level students by implementing the suggested solutions.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to say that three months of internship experience was great and enjoyable to me. I got to know how respectful the profession is. I saw how students respect their teacher and how nice it felt to receive it from students. I had also learned how to interact with the primary level students in the classroom and how to deal with them as well. The main purpose of this internship was to get an idea of how the teachers of this generation teach English writing skills to the primary level students, which techniques they follow in the classroom, what are the challenges they face while teaching and how they deal with them. After observing all of these aspects closely in the classroom, I had tried to evaluate them with the relevant theories. I have also suggested some recommendations to develop the writing skill of the young students which can be easily applicable in the Bangladeshi classroom. Second language learning remains incomplete without writing skill so teachers' need to make sure that it must be learned by the students from an early age.

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