

Effective techniques to improve students' writing proficiency in the field of nautical science

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Abstract

This article focused on research-based strategies for enhancing the writing skills of students studying for a B.Sc. in Nautical Science as a Degree course. Many students in the course of nautical science are proficient in speaking English but fail to write meaningful sentences. For these students, writing is quite challenging. Writing is one of the most essential skills to acquire if you want to succeed in a text-based society. Because of this change, both mainstream and ESL teachers are searching for methods to assist their students in improving their writing skills. The results of this study helped students improve their writing skills by showing them how to do it well.

Keywords: *Strategies, Writing Skills, Nautical Science Students*

Introduction

Countries with a high percentage of non-native English speakers have always included English as second language instruction in their educational set-ups. During colonial times, the most widely spoken language was English. The decision was made that English would become a common language for everyone. In twenty years, demographic data indicated that one-fourth of students in the world are considered ESL speakers. There is a dearth of research on successful mainstream teaching strategies for educating second language learners in their mother tongue. As the number of educationists grew, research into the best ways to teach all four skills, especially writing, was more important to many researchers.

Mainstream educators must know how to implement ESL instruction in the classroom. ESL students have a huge academic problem with writing. Writing is fundamental to English language teaching and learning. Bialystok and Bryan (1985) discussed how when a child writes, his or her thoughts and knowledge come together to produce a new meaning. Writing is much more difficult for youngsters than listening or reading. While learning a second language, the majority of students also struggle with writing. Writing is the final English skill taught. This is because writing a language requires a deeper, more analytical understanding than reading it. Aside from this, ESL students lack background information for writing meaningful English sentences. Even if students are able to understand the message by vocal and nonverbal clues, their writing may not be understood by expression and nonverbal clues. Many students anticipate failure when asked to write on a certain topic or when writing is seen as a translation task. Some students' too much attention to spelling and grammar instead of writing may lead to anxiety and despair when writing. All of these issues contribute to the inability of ESL students to effectively communicate in writing. In a text-based environment, all students must be exceptional writers, yet evidence suggests that second-language English learners struggle the most. Test scores and classroom performance indicate that writing is the most difficult academic subject for ESL students. The goal of the study is to find and use good ways to improve the writing skills of nautical science students.

Literature Review

According to specialists, one of the fundamental reasons for this problem is how individuals see themselves as writers. Thomas (1993) mentions that despite their greatest efforts, many ESL students fail to become proficient English writers. This becomes evident beginning in elementary school. It causes self-doubt and dreads while writing, which may halt the learning process and slow growth. Kasper and Petrello (1998) stated that academics consider getting criticism and critique of their work from instructors or peers to be more terrifying than the process of writing itself. Prior to the 1970s, writing instruction focused mostly on grammatical rules. Shaughnessy (1998) pointed out that creating an environment that encourages learners to take risks in their writing is more important than focusing on established writing standards. To

decrease student unhappiness while increasing writing productivity, educators must learn to tolerate grammatical errors and focus on ideas. Kasper and Petrello (1998) noted that teachers' feedback is effective in reducing writing anxiety among ESL students. Mary Beaven (1977) observed that teacher remarks that incorporated shared experiences, addressed students' points of view, and requested further information were the most successful at reducing students' annoyance and boosting their confidence. Hyland (2000) suggested that during practise sessions, students should feel free to ask any questions they have about the writing process or the final product.

Hypotheses

This research marks the following question:

What is the impact of using effective strategies to enrich the writing proficiency of Nautical Science students?

With this research question, the possible hypotheses are:

- In the ELT classroom, students of nautical science are not unable to write English sentences that make sense.
- Nautical Science students have not learnt grammar rules for writing good English sentences.
- Nautical Science students are incapable of recognising mistakes in their written sentences.
- Students in Nautical Science are never given the chance to learn English in order to improve their writing skills.

Methodology

The research involved experimental methodologies. In true-experimental research, statistical analysis is used to confirm or refute a hypothesis. It is often considered the most accurate kind of study. A cause-and-effect connection inside a group can only be determined by true experimental research. The study aims to enhance students' writing skills by including effective strategies in their experiments. The research involved 12 students from the Department

of Nautical Science. A pre-and post-test was taken to evaluate their writing improvement. The test results show that the researchers found out if effective strategies helped students improve their writing skills or not.

Participants

Students pursuing a first-year B.Sc in Nautical Science at AMET, deemed to be a university in Chennai, India, were given a topic for writing an essay in the usual ELT classroom. After analysing the written work of 40 students, the teacher found that 12 students were unable to write meaningful sentences in English. Those 12 students were taken for an experiment. Surprisingly, all 12 of the students are from rural areas. They studied and practised English but did not write good English sentences. If they need to enhance their writing proficiency, they must obtain effective strategies. Accordingly, in this study, the researcher implemented effective strategies for enhancing students' writing proficiency.

Pre-test

Each of the 12 students in Nautical Science who participated in the study was assigned a pre-test by the researcher. The researcher gave a pre-test topic. It took 60 minutes to finish the test. The researcher assessed the students' written tests. For getting test results, 40 marks have been set aside and some factors have been employed. Each factor gets 10 points. The researcher created four factors for getting the test result, which is listed below:

- Factor 1: Students have to read and understand their written sentences. If they could understand their sentences, their sentences would be considered wrong.
- Factor 2: Students need to recognise their sentences' grammatical errors.
- Factor 3: Students must rewrite mistaken sentences found by them.
- Factor 4: Students need to arrange all sentences coherently.
- The researcher examined all the factors, and he gave marks accordingly.

The pre-test results are shown in Table 1:

S.No	Students Number (SN-1)	Pre-test				
		Written Test Score (40)	Total factors score (40)			
			Factors- 1 10marks	Factors- 2 10marks	Factors- 3 10marks	Factors- 4 10marks
1	SN-1	18	5	6	4	3
2	SN-1	18	6	4	5	3
3	SN-1	17	5	5	4	3
4	SN-1	18	5	6	4	3
5	SN-1	18	6	4	5	3
6	SN-1	17	5	5	4	3
7	SN-1	17	5	6	4	2
8	SN-1	17	4	7	3	3
9	SN-1	16	5	5	3	3
10	SN-1	8	3	3	2	1
11	SN-1	8	2	2	1	1
12	SN-1	8	3	2	1	1

Due to their lack of experience, the 12 students in Table 1 had difficulty writing effectively. From SN1 to SN9, students were able to read and analyse written sentences. They have trouble, among other things, recognising grammatical errors in their own writing. They were unable to rewrite the inaccurate sentences they had written. They were unable to produce coherent statements. Students from SN 9 to SN 12 were distinct entities. They were incapable of reading or understanding their written sentences. Unfortunately, they were never instructed in basic English grammar. So, they could not recognise the grammar mistakes in their sentences. The overall performance of the students on the test score was below average. Their written communications were insufficient. In any of these factors, their performance was below average.

Evaluation Methods

The researcher relies on practical experience to do the study. On practise day, the research evaluates the written essay of each student. The study provided the following suggestions for students to properly use each strategy:

- All levels of students must read, interpret, and evaluate one another's written sentences. They must choose the wrong checkboxes if they do not understand the written sentences.
- If students recognise grammatical errors, they will explain them among themselves to better comprehend the grammar ideas.
- Students need to rewrite their mistaken sentences.
- Finally, students must arrange their sentences logically.

Students may raise their doubts to the researcher, and the researcher would explain through a board in which he points out any grammatical mistakes and gives grammar instruction on the same day. He also explains it to everyone, even after he has corrected every one of the written sentences.

Strategy-1

Based on the findings of the pre-test, the researcher proposed novel methods for enhancing Nautical Science students' writing skills. Throughout the inquiry, the researcher used effective methods for analysing students. This strategy would help students develop their individuality and inventiveness in writing sentences. The researcher devised the following methods, which are explained below:

Each student was allocated a topic and taught to generate sentences based on their understanding of the topic. After completing their assigned tasks, the students have to read in pairs to confirm their comprehension. If one did not grasp the meaning of another's statements, it was essential to identify any mistakes. Students marked grammatical errors on their papers. Following these two paths afforded each student the chance to hear another student comment on their own shortcomings. Everyone then recognised their mistakes and rewrote the erroneous text. The sentences were finally organised sensibly. The teacher corrected each sentence and clarified each modification. Five sessions with the same strategy and instructions yielded the same results. The topic was different for each session. Each session lasted around 90 minutes. Every session, the researcher paired new students.

Strategy-2

Strategy-2 commenced with five days of another week. The same 90-minute session was carried out. Each pair of students was given a short moral story to read and understand. After comprehending the story, students were required to write an essay on the same topic. After students had written their essays, they followed the four proposed evaluation methods. So, the researcher went through their writing and pointed out where they were making mistakes and how to fix them. Likewise, another 4 days of sessions were given with different moral short stories and the same evaluation producers were used for improving the students' writing skills.

Strategy-3

Another five days of 90-minute sessions were conducted using this strategy. Students were given different pictures to write descriptive essays. Before writing an essay on a picture, students should consult with a researcher in order to get a clear understanding of the picture's theme. After students wrote their essays, they proposed four evaluation methods. Consequently, the researcher personally examined their writing and clarified their sentences' mistakes for them to write appropriately. Similarly, another 4 days of sessions were given with dissimilar pictures and identical evaluation producers were occupied with refining the students' writing skills.

Strategy-4

In addition, strategy-4 also continued with another 5 days of 90-minute sessions. Paired students were instructed to write an essay based on hints on developing a topic. After completing an essay, students used the same correction procedures. The researcher corrected their written sentences in person. Another 4 days of sessions were given with unrelated hints on developing topics and, as usual, the assessment producers were engaged in enhancing the students' writing skills.

Post-test

After 13 students practised four strategies, the researcher conducted a post-test on them. The researcher used the identical pre-test question for the post-test. The same pre-test time duration was followed. For evaluating the post-test, the same pre-test 40 marks were fixed and

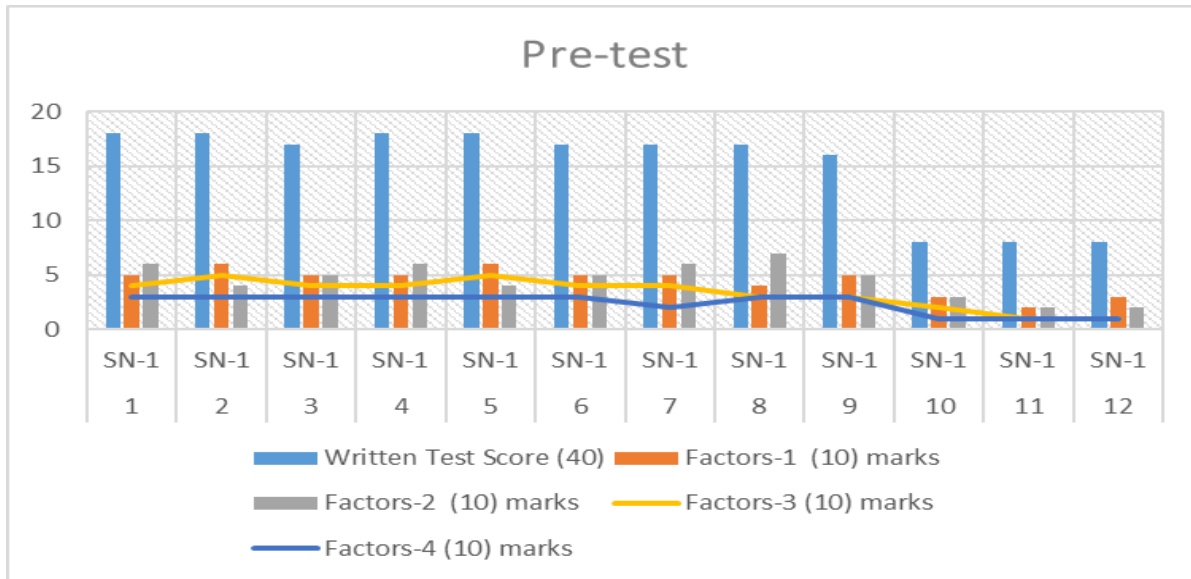
the same four factors were applied to get the post-test marks and result. The post-test marks are detailed in the table:

S.No	Students Number (SN-1)	Post-test				
		Written Test Score (40)	Total factors score (40)			
			Factors- 1 10marks	Factors-2 10marks	Factors-3 10marks	Factors-4 10marks
1	SN-1	32	9	8	8	7
2	SN-1	32	9	8	7	8
3	SN-1	30	8	7	8	7
4	SN-1	31	9	7	8	7
5	SN-1	29	7	7	7	8
6	SN-1	29	7	8	7	7
7	SN-1	30	7	7	8	8
8	SN-1	29	8	6	7	8
9	SN-1	27	5	6	8	8
10	SN-1	24	5	5	7	7
11	SN-1	23	6	5	6	6
12	SN-1	24	6	5	6	7

Table 2 demonstrates that the 13 students were expected to use English writing strategies. Students from SN 1 to SN 8 were able to read and understand their written sentences. They may detect grammatical errors in their written sentences after the researcher has explained their mistakes. They may rephrase their erroneous statements. They were able to form sentences with proper structure. Notably, from SNs 9 to 12, students also improved in their writing. After the practise, they were able to read and comprehend their own writing. They were taught English grammar rules by the researcher. The overall performance of the students on the tests was below average. Typically, their writing is better. If they practise daily, they can write meaningful sentences.

Results and Analysis

Graph-1



Graph-2

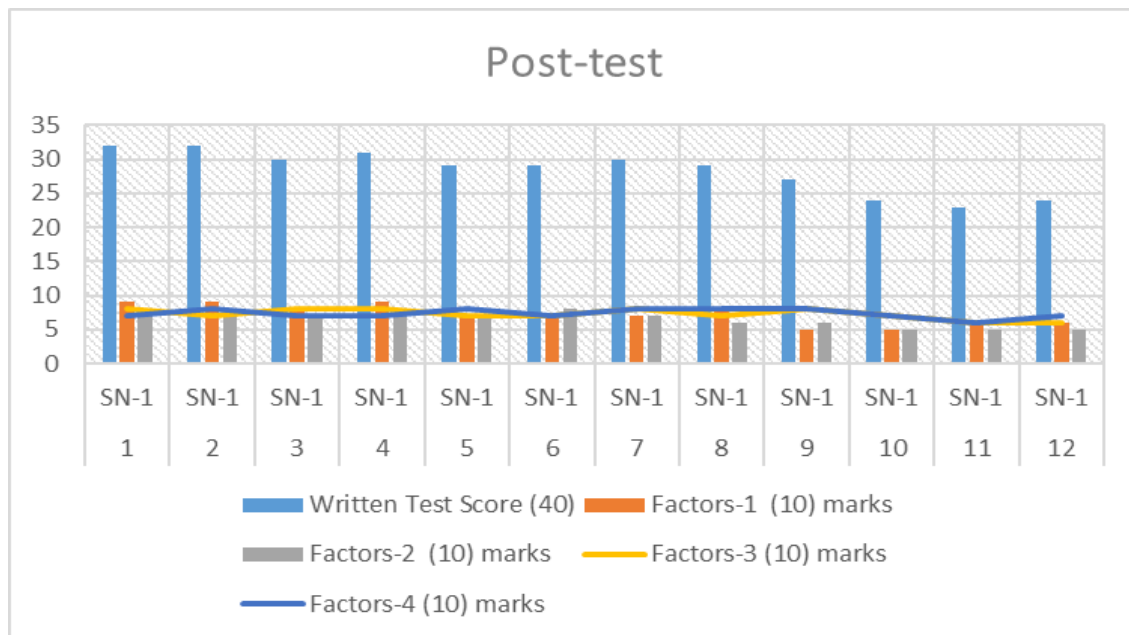


Chart 1 disclosed that students were incapable of scoring the estimated level from the pre-test. Each student scored 50% or below 50% on the test. An unpredictable result can be

found in Chart 2. Many students scored 50% or above 50% on the post-test. Simultaneously, some students scored more than 70% on the post-test. It was necessary for everybody to write in English to a greater extent. The writing was dissimilar when speaking. Despite the fact that, when speaking, the speaker might be effective in communicating, and despite the fact that, when writing, the authors might request to use the rules and regulations, With the help of effective strategies, the students obtained positive results in the post-test. The exploration of the study discovered that if learners desire to progress their writing skills in English, they must frequently practise using appropriate methods. This means that effective strategies are efficient techniques. If students practise writing with good methods, they will improve their writing skills in a useful way.

Following the results and analysis of the research, the following issues are discussed:

- Students who need to learn more about the language in order to write in English can improve their writing skills by using effective strategies.
- Regardless of experience, the projected effective strategies improved the English writing of ESL students.
- Students in Nautical Science were able to talk and write in English well because they used good strategies.

Conclusion

This research examined successful strategies for enhancing students' writing skills. Instructions and strategies were accurate and exact to develop the writing skills of nautical science students. These unique instructions and strategies may help students build a goal-oriented mindset. The results of the pre-test and post-test indicated that the experiment conducted by the researcher achieved good results. Recognizing students' interests and providing them with several chances to write may also assist in the development of their writing skills. Consequently, the research uncovered that proposed effective strategies were very useful to enhance the writing proficiency of Nautical Science students.

The study results lead to the following recommendations:

- Teachers may most effectively aid their students' writing proficiency by using innovative writing strategies.
- Successful writing tactics should inspire students to write well.
- Effective writing skills should be emphasised in the English curriculum.

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