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The Difficulties Encountered by English Professors when Attempting to Teach Writing Skills to Freshman Engineering Students

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Abstract: ***The aim of this study, which the researcher hopes to complete, is to investigate the difficulty faced by English professors when attempting to teach English writing skills to first-year engineering students. Participants of the study are 20 Assistant Professors, Male-7 and Female -13, from Department of English, in Vel Tech Rangarajan Dr. Sagunthala R&D Institute of Science and Technology, Avadi, Chennai. Problem Statement of the study is that the problems confronted by a language teacher in imparting writing skills, and possible solutions. It would be challenging to practise speaking and writing in a foreign language. It would be challenging for a class teacher to keep track of the students' progress and provide feedback. The provision of individualized learning might provide challenges. Returning corrected assignments. Challenges with maintaining discipline. Having trouble attending to every student during class. Finding pupils' names is difficult. It is impossible to build a strong rapport with students. Inability to give underprivileged students additional attention. Objective of the study to learn what challenges a language instructor faces when teaching writing. To recommend the best classroom size for teaching English writing skills. Research Questions of the study is 1. What challenges do language teachers in large classrooms face? 2. What is the appropriate class size for imparting second-language writing skills? The researcher employed two tools in the study to get the data. The types of tools and their intended uses are listed below: a questionnaire for teachers. The following justifies why the teacher was given the questionnaire: to comprehend the profile of the teacher. To learn the instructor's thoughts on the size of the classroom and how it affects the instruction of second languages.***

Keywords: ***Brainstorming, Peer-Correction, Writing Skills, Large Class Rooms.***

1. INTRODUCTION

Today, there is a high demand for English because it is a global language. The most extensively used language in the world is by far English. But learning to write in English has always been difficult for students learning it as a second language. Today, one of the biggest

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issues facing English professors in most engineering universities is helping students improve their writing skills. However, writing has always been a significant challenge for students learning English, particularly for first-year engineering students. Additionally, teachers in engineering colleges encounter particular difficulties while attempting to teach writing skills to their pupils. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the Challenges English Professors Face When Trying to Teach Writing Skills to Freshman Engineering Students.

What causes students' poor writing?

- According to the educators, the following claims should be considered as the reasons:
- Insufficient serious training at the lower primary school level.
- A lack of desire and enthusiasm in writing in English.
- Not enough books are read by students.

Writing assignments in college can help students' handwriting in a variety of ways. Students are allowed to switch between writing processes at once. There are several ways to teach writing, including pre-writing, writing warm-ups, writing in groups, employing sentence starters, and guided writing. Since each writing strategy may have a different teaching goal, none of them may be taught at the same time. The pupils' English writing abilities will increase as a result of the use of diverse instructional methods when teaching writing. The learning process will proceed as intended as long as the pupils show interest and take an active role in it. Additionally, employing varied writing techniques will encourage kids to think imaginatively.

Writing Skills

Everyone agrees that writing is the most complicated and challenging talent since it takes a lot of practice. Like any learning issues, difficulty writing well can have a catastrophic impact on a learner's education, self-esteem, self-confidence, and desire to write. Writing is an essential ability that will help pupils throughout their life. In colleges, writing is introduced and practiced using fun activities that could boost students' confidence and make them fall in love with writing over time. For engineering students to continue studying in all academic areas, including communication and self-expression, writing abilities are essential right away. Even though mastering writing is a highly difficult endeavor for pupils, it is regarded as a very vital ability in language development. Additionally, it's a necessary skill for students to achieve academic success. When used improperly, illogical sentence constructions, and grammatical errors are made in writing, these factors reflect adversely on the language proficiency of learners. Later on in their work lives, this causes problems as well. Professors of English have been concerned about how to address these issues at the collegiate level.

Problem Statement

The Difficulties Encountered by English Professors when Attempting to Teach Writing Skills to Freshman Engineering Students.Teacher’s today struggle to inspire their students. Not because the children are misbehaving, but rather because they lack enthusiasm in writing instruction. Since their parents have given them so much freedom, the younger generation believes that they can do whatever they want. Students that choose to show resistance to learning are lacking in motivation. Another difficulty professor’s encounter when teaching writing is dealing with students of various skill levels in the classroom. Students of all levels

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are seated in the same classroom in many engineering college classrooms. It will be challenging for teachers to concurrently accommodate everyone's level due to the different levels of students. The teachers will need to use various strategies depending on the students' degrees of writing proficiency. The teachers thus find it challenging to organize their courses and create suitable activities for the children. Another difficulty is indifferent parents. Lack of parental support will make it difficult for teachers to assist the pupils. Lack of warmth and affection from parents will prevent their children from achieving in their academic endeavors. This is a result of their parents' insufficient support, drive, and guidance. In addition, English professors encounter additional challenge in the form of a lack of professional experience. Lack of professional expertise will make teaching engineering students stressful and tense, especially for new professors. Another difficulty for teachers is their many responsibilities. The level of the professors' prior schooling and experience determines their level of expertise. It will take some time for new professors to really get to know their pupils. Only when professors are well-informed about the interests and skill levels of their students can they plan activities that will be effective. Additionally, more time is required for instructors to create fresh lesson plans, relevant exercises, and new teaching materials, as well as to write comments or reflections. The students' lack of interest is yet another issue. Though it can be difficult, learning to write is always a fascinating process. Some pupils lose focus, particularly when writing. Because it takes a lot of knowledge to write well, students feel they lack enthusiasm in the process. For them to produce quality writing, the pupils must possess knowledge of punctuation, grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and sentence structure.
Instead than emphasizing how to write professionally, writing courses tend to focus on popular culture or personal expression. Writing classes are taught by inexperienced, underpaid, adjunct, or non-tenure-track faculty, many of whom may have little to no teaching experience. Outside of the English department, teachers are not prepared or qualified to teach writing. Instructors don't want to devote time on writing instruction at the expense of discipline-specific material. Teachers are unable or unwilling to assess students' writing work.

Objective of the Study

The teaching of writing skills in India's English language classrooms continues to be the biggest obstacle. It is truly astonishing that students still struggle to effectively communicate in writing after studying English for 12–15 years. Despite being highlighted in red, the errors are seldom thoroughly discussed with the students, or if they are, the teacher frequently provides the correct responses without explanation due to the pressures of a large class size and limited time. Without offering sufficient instruction first, students are given subjects for letter writing, report writing, precis writing, and paraphrase and urged to write. The format is the only instruction they receive. The teacher neglects to emphasize the process approach's elements of reader awareness and intent.

Hypothesis

Brainstorming approaches is used in this study to teach the writing skills of the students in an easy manner.

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2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Devi (2016) conducted a study titled "Problems Faced by the Teachers of a Large Class in Imparting Writing Skills at the Tertiary Level". The teaching of language skills continues to be the biggest problem for English language teaching in India. It is truly astonishing that students still struggle to effectively communicate in writing after studying English for 12–15 years. This essay explores the importance of class size in teaching second languages, the challenges faced by language teachers while teaching writing skills, and potential remedies.
Nurhardiyanti Adam, Abid Abid, and Yusna Bantulu, "Challenges in teaching English writing skills: Lessons learnt from Indonesian high school English language teachers". Among the four goal language abilities, the ability to write is one that language learners must master. Therefore, educators should make an effort to assist students in writing appropriately while teaching this ability. However, teachers frequently encounter difficulties when teaching English in Indonesia, notably the writing skill. The study detailed in this article aims to pinpoint the difficulties faced by a number of Indonesian English language instructors when attempting to teach English writing at Gorontalo, Indonesia's VHS, a vocational high school.
Teaching students how to write in English while also fostering their language and communicative skills is regarded as a difficult task. Therefore, EFL teachers in general and Indonesian teachers in particular have numerous issues when teaching writing (i.e. difficulties). The goal of this study is to identify the difficulties faced by Indonesian teachers while attempting to teach English writing skills and to discuss potential fixes to eliminate or at least lessen those difficulties. Ten English teachers who work in either private or public junior- and senior-high schools in East Java, Indonesia, and hail from various regions of the island were interviewed for the study. A structured interview was the tool that was employed. The information gathered from the interview was then examined in a descriptive manner.

3. METHODOLOGY

A) Participants
Nineteen (19) English Professors, Department of English, from the Vel Tech Rangarajan Dr. Sagunthala R & D Institute of Science and Technology, Avadi, Chennai.

B) Sampling Method – simple random sampling method

C) Sample size
Nineteen (20) English Professors, Male-7 and Female -13

D) Technique
Peer-correction techniques employed in this study. Students can work on their first draughts while receiving input from their peers on the subject, language, and organization. They then revise and turn in the finished product to the teacher.

E) Classroom
The setting for formal teaching and learning is the classroom. Since learning a second language necessitates more "comprehensible input error treatment, and linguistic interaction," it is crucial in ESL (English as a Second Language). The first thing that comes to mind when the word "classroom" is uttered is the size and capacity of the classroom, or more

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specifically, "how many pupils are in the class?" This is due to the fact that learning a second language is a skill topic, requiring the learner to actively practise language skills in order for them to be mastered and used successfully. He must make sure the students understand what they are expected to do, sometimes even providing the linguistic materials required for various exercises. He can keep an eye on the kids' abilities and shortcomings as they are participating in a variety of communication activities. This allows him to identify the area of their weakness that has to be addressed.

F) Approaches - Brainstorming

Brainstorming blends lateral thinking with a loose, informal approach to issue solving. It inspires people to have ideas and thoughts that may initially appear a little strange. Some of these concepts can be developed into novel, inventive responses to issues, while others can generate even more concepts. By "jolting" individuals from their regular modes of thought, this aids in breaking people out of their ruts. Avoid awarding or critiquing ideas during brainstorming sessions. You're attempting to expand the range of alternatives and dispel false notions about the boundaries of the issue. At this point, judgement and analysis stifle creativity and hamper idea generation. Brainstorming is a technique for problem-solving that draws on the varied experiences of the team members. You can frequently come up with better answers to the issues you face because it broadens the range of possibilities that are investigated. Because they were involved in generating the answer, team members are more inclined to support it, which can help you gain their support for the decision. Additionally, because brainstorming is enjoyable, it strengthens team bonds as members work together to find solutions to issues in a stimulating setting. The key to successful brainstorming is to approach it with an open mind and a spirit of non-judgment. People "clam up," the quantity and calibre of ideas decline, and morale may suffer if you don't do this.

How to Use the Tool

Combining individual and group brainstorming, as we discuss below, and organising the process in accordance with the "rules" below are frequently the greatest ways to achieve the best outcomes. By doing this, you may encourage uninterrupted attention on the problem, increase the amount of ideas you can come up with, and experience the wonderful sense of team camaraderie that comes with a well-run brainstorming session!

Step 1: Prepare the Group

How much background knowledge or planning is required for your team to generate problem-solving ideas? It's vital to keep in mind that preparation is necessary, but too much of it might hinder or even ruin a brainstorming session.

First, pick a suitable and welcoming meeting location. This may take place virtually or in the office. Think on what will benefit your team the most. You can utilise online brainstorming tools like Miro or LucidSpark, and you'll need pencils and Post-It notes for an in-person session, so make sure you have the necessary supplies before you begin.

Now think about who will be present at the meeting. Try to include people from a wide range of fields and include people who have a variety of different thinking styles because a brainstorming session with only like-minded individuals won't produce as many innovative ideas as one with a diverse group.

Once everyone is present, designate one person to take notes on the suggestions made during the session. It's difficult to record and contribute at the same time, thus this individual

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shouldn't necessarily be the team manager. Use a computer with a data projector, flip charts, or whiteboards to post notes where everyone can see them.

Step 2: Present the Problem
Lay up any requirements that must be met as well as the problem that you are trying to solve. Make it crystal clear that the goal of the meeting is to create as many ideas as you can. Allow everyone plenty of quiet time to come up with as many original ideas as they can at the beginning of the session. Ask them to share or present their thoughts after that, while ensuring that everyone has an equal chance to contribute.

Step 3: Guide the Discussion
Start a group conversation once everyone has given their views a chance to be heard in order to develop existing ideas and generate new ones. One of the most beneficial features of group brainstorming is building on others' ideas. Encourage everyone—even the most reserved individuals—to participate and develop ideas, and forbid anybody from critiquing others' ideas.
If you have any ideas, you should share them as the group facilitator, but otherwise focus your time and efforts on helping your team and facilitating the conversation. Maintain one discourse at a time, and if anyone veers off topic, bring the group back on track.
Even if you're leading the conversation, keep in mind that brainstorming should be enjoyable for everyone. Encourage your staff to generate as many ideas as possible, whether or not they are practical, and to embrace innovation. For some unexpected thoughts, try thinking exercises like Provocation or Random Input. Don't spend too much time thinking along the same lines. Make sure to come up with lots of different ideas and thoroughly examine each one. Give a team member the flexibility to pursue an idea alone if they need to "tune out" for it. Additionally, if the brainstorming session lasts a while, give everyone lots of breaks so they can keep their attention.

Individual Brainstorming
Several studies have demonstrated that individual brainstorming creates more - and frequently better - ideas than group brainstorming, even if group brainstorming is frequently more effective at producing ideas than typical group problem resolution. This might happen when poor habits seep into brainstorming sessions since groups aren't always diligent about adhering to the standards. However, most of the time this occurs as a result of people listening to others so intently that they fail to come up with any original thoughts of their own or lose track of them while they wait their turn to speak. We refer to this as "blocking."When you brainstorm alone, you are freer and more creative since you aren't concerned with other people's egos or opinions.

G) Questionnaire
Online Google form survey was conducted for English Professors from department of English, Vel Tech Rangarajan Dr. Sagunthala R & D Institute of Science and Technology, Avadi, Chennai. The questionnaire is as follows.

Questionnaire for Professors

Title: The Difficulties Encountered by English Professors when Attempting to Teach Writing Skills to Freshman Engineering Students.

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Dear Faculties,

I'm **M.D. Thamarai Selvi** full-time Research Scholar from Vel Tech Rangarajan Dr. Sagunthala R & D Institute of Science and Technology in Avadi, doing research under the guidance of **Dr. P. Saranya**. I'm conducting research on the difficulties professors encounter when attempting to teach writing skills to first-year engineering students. It takes only 5 minutes of your time to answer the questions. Put a tick mark in the appropriate box/boxes, wherever needed.

All information and data gathered will be kept confidential. Thank you very much in advance!

Part A: Personal details of the Respondent

1. Name: ----------
2. Age: ----------
3. Gender ----------
4. Qualification: ----------
5. Experience: ----------

Part B: Teaching Method

1. What approach do you frequently employ when instructing writing?

a) The lecture method (explanation is given)
b) The product approach (students are given a model to copy)
c) The process approach (questions are posed, concepts are debated, and arguments are created)
d) The audio-visual method (using audio-visual aids such as a PPT, Videos, computer, etc.

2. When instructing writing, you focus more on the following:

a) Grammar
b) Word choice
c) Word order
d) Writing mechanics

3. How frequently do you give writing practice to students?

a) Everyday
b) 3 to 5 times per week
c) Twice per week
d) Once per week

4. What kind of testing preparation do you offer students?

a) They are asked to prepare their own essays
b) They are made to write essays in the class
c) Notes are given by the teacher
d) They are made to learn essays through guides

5. How frequently do you encourage students to compose original works?

a) Usually
b) Occasional
c) Rarely
d) Never

6. How would you categorize your students' overall writing abilities?

a) Very good
b) Good

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c) Adequate
d) Inadequate

7. Which aspect of writing do you believe the students are most interested in?

a) Grammar
b) Word choice
c) Word order
d) Mechanics

8. Which writing skill do you believe students need to work on the most?

a) Grammar
b) Word choice
c) Word order
d) Mechanics

9. Have you ever peer and /or self-corrected your teaching methodology in writing? If so, did it help you to improve your students writing skills?

a) Frequently
b) Rarely
c) Sometimes
d) Always

10. What did you find most challenging in teaching writing skills?

a) Large Classes
b) Insufficient Hours
c) Medium of Instructions
d) Mother tongue Influence

Part C. Challenges Faced by the Teachers in Teaching Writing Skills

1. The difficulties the teachers had in instructing writing were

a) Inappropriateness of curriculum and syllabus
b) Time constraint of teaching
c) Lack of learning media
d) Lack of teaching strategy
e) Inappropriateness of teacher's qualification
f) Students' attitude problem

2. How often do you ask your students to write the following? Please mark the appropriate box.

		Never or hardly ever	A few times a year	Once or twice a month	At least once a week
1	Informational essays				
2	Letters				
3	Speeches				
4	Personal essays				
5	Stories				
6	Poems				
7	Journal entries				
8	Book reviews				

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9	Multi-step instructions				

3. How did you find the tasks of peer and self-correction? Did you find them useful? Why / Why not? What did you learn from them?

a) The tasks were useful because it allowed them to spot and correct their mistakes.
b) The tasks were useful because they became more aware of their strengths and weaknesses.
c) The tasks of peer and self-correction were useful because it made the students more responsible and autonomous.
d) None of the above

4. How would you say your own experience of teaching to write at college impacts how you teach writing now?

a) Good
b) Very Good
c) Best
d) Not bad

5. What in your view are the core reasons for writing with and for students?

a) Widening students understanding of genre, literary, linguistic and grammatical features
b) Providing example texts for students to learn from
c) Participating in class writing projects with the students as part of a writing community
d) To be a role-model on how to live the writer's life.

6. In your opinion difficulty in writing might be caused by the lack of knowledge about

a) Ideas to write
b) The purpose of writing
c) The way of expressing ideas
d) Good sentence structure
f) Appropriate vocabulary
g) All the above
h) None of the above

Part D Task Based Teaching Writing Skills

1. **In teaching writing, used a simple word game like**
   a) Guessing a picture story
   b) Arranging the jumbled paragraph
   c) Making a text of procedure
   d) None of the above
2. **Don't care about the techniques in teaching writing so far because the lesson hours that you have is very limited since then you focus on the way how finish all the material during per semester quickly.**
   a) Strongly Agree
   b) Agree
   c) Neutral
   d) Disagree
   e) Strongly disagree
3. **How often do you use word game in the classroom?**

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a) Often
b) Frequently
c) Rarely
d) Sometimes
e) Never

4. Do you ever use pictures in the classroom to give some elaboration about the use of nouns and adjectives in the sentences in a paragraph?

a) Yes
b) No

5. The difficult things in applying word games to teach writing

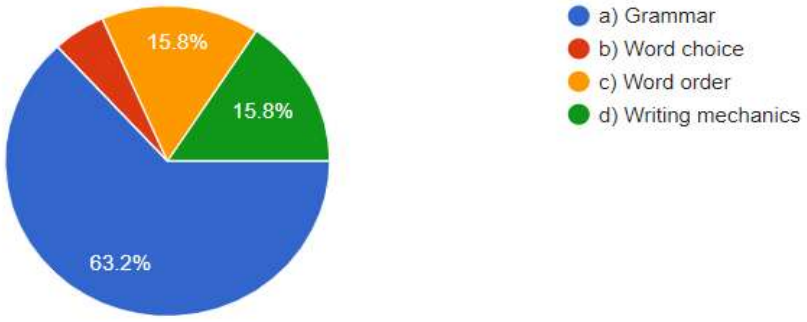
a) The composition of the group is not proper as the instructions
b) The pictures media are not well provided
c) Only the active students will be more active
d) Teachers feel tired due to going around to maintain the game.
e) All the above

Data Analysis and Interpretation

1. What approach do you frequently employ when instructing writing?



2. Which aspect do you focus more, when instructing writing?



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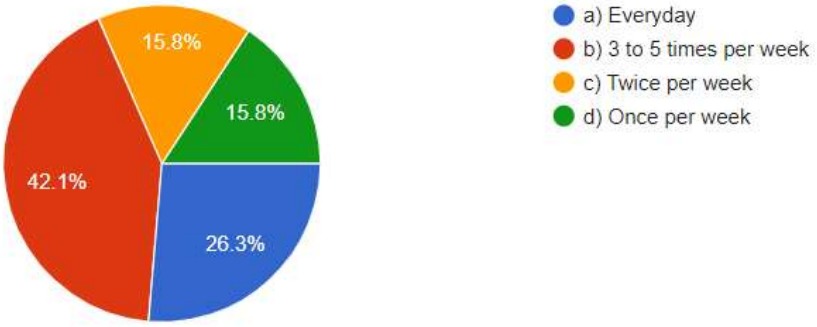
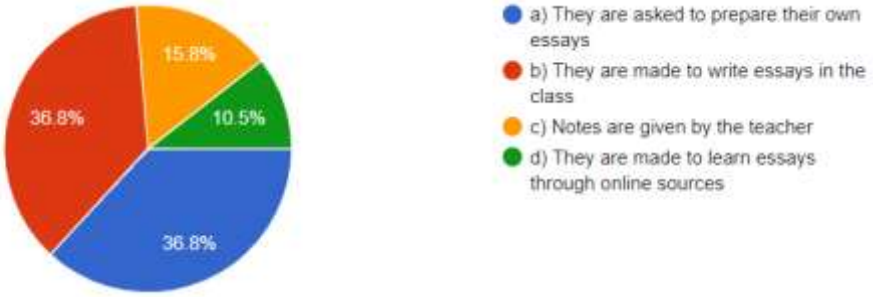
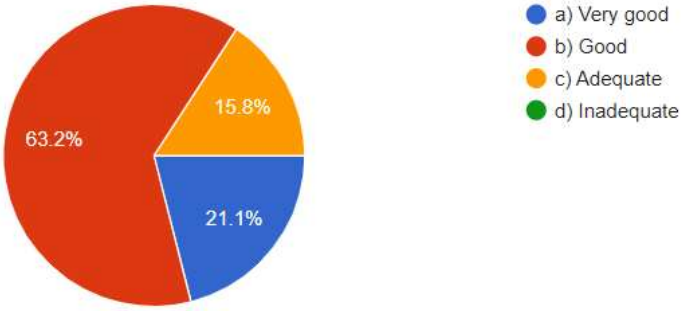
3. How frequently do you give writing practice to students?



4. What kind of test preparation do you offer students?



6. How would you categorize your students' overall writing abilities?



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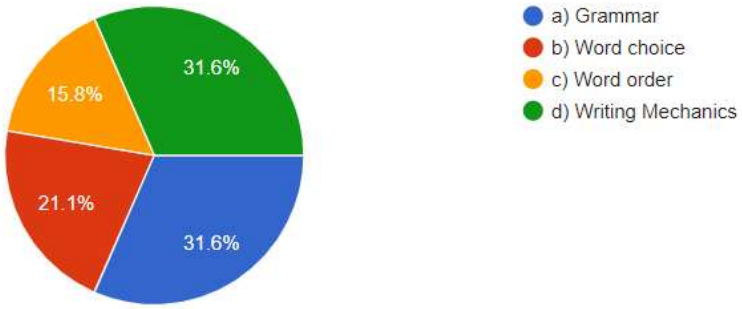
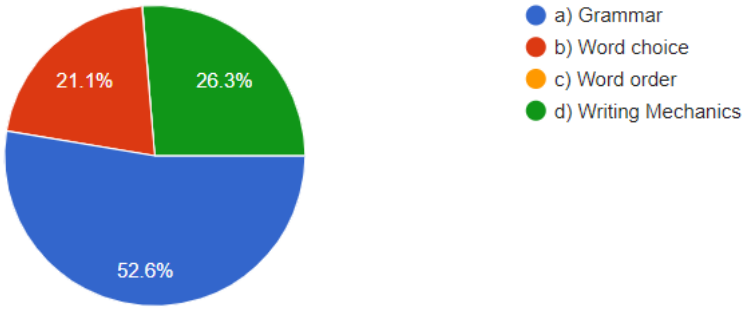
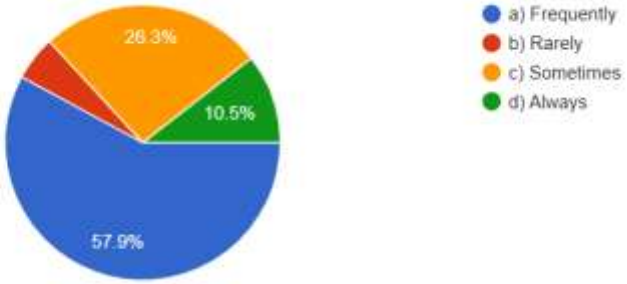
7. Which aspect of writing do you believe the students are most interested in?



8. Which writing skill do you believe students need to work on the most?



9. Have you ever peer and /or self-corrected your teaching methodology in writing? If so, did it help you to improve your students' writing skills?



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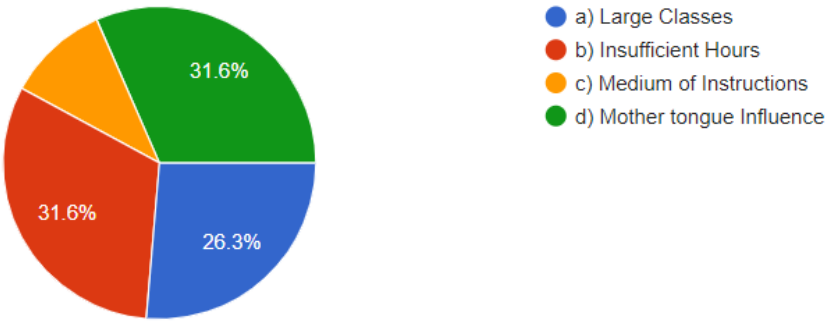
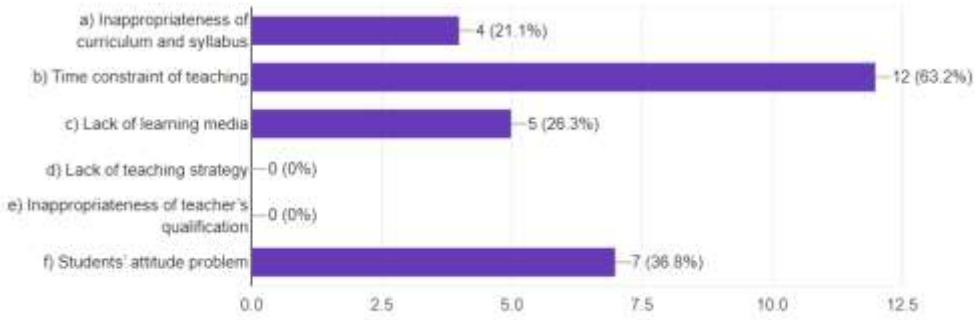
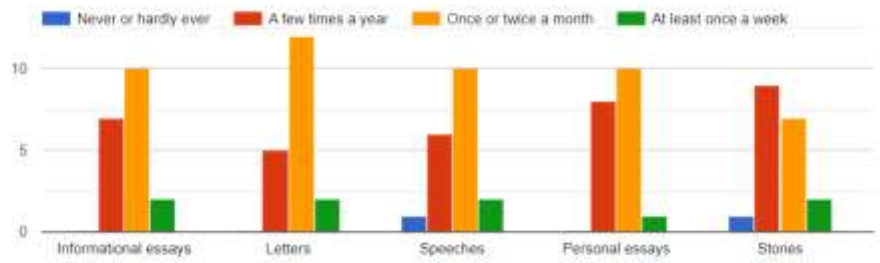
10. What did you find most challenging in teaching writing skills?



1. The difficulties that the teachers had in instructing writing were



2. How often do you ask your students to write the following? Please mark the appropriate box.



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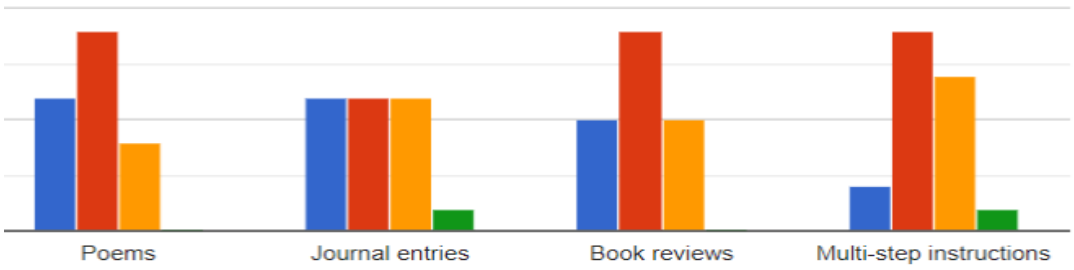
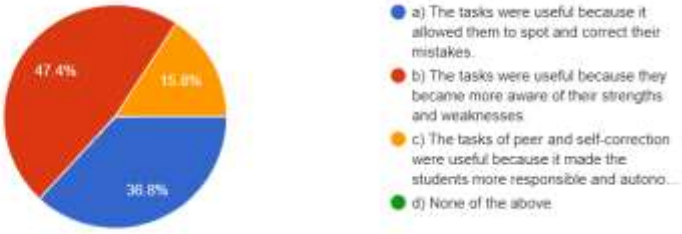


3. How did you find the tasks of peer and self-correction? Did you find them useful? Why / Why not? What did you learn from them?



4. How would you rate your own experience of teaching to write during college days impacts how you teach writing now?



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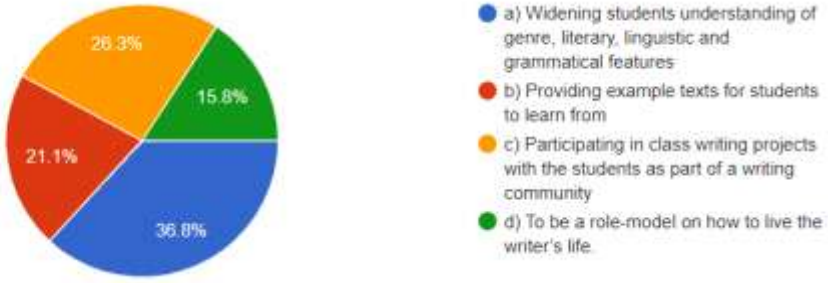
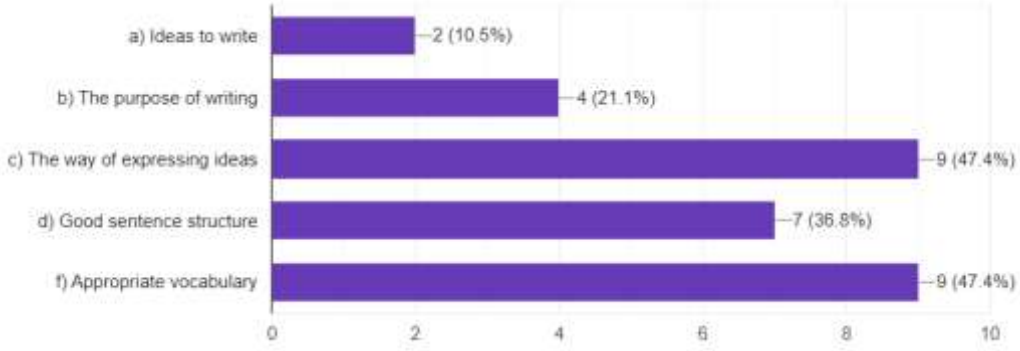
5. What in your view are the core reasons for writing with and for students?



6. In your opinion, difficulty in writing might be caused by the lack of knowledge about _____



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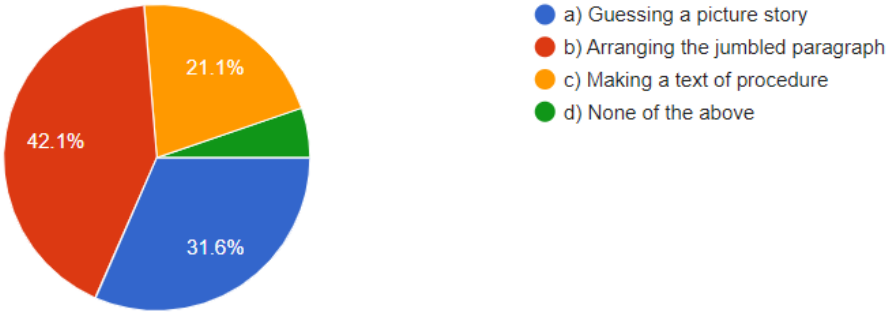
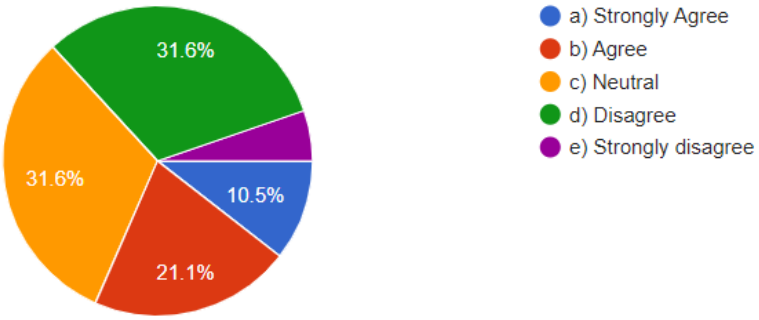
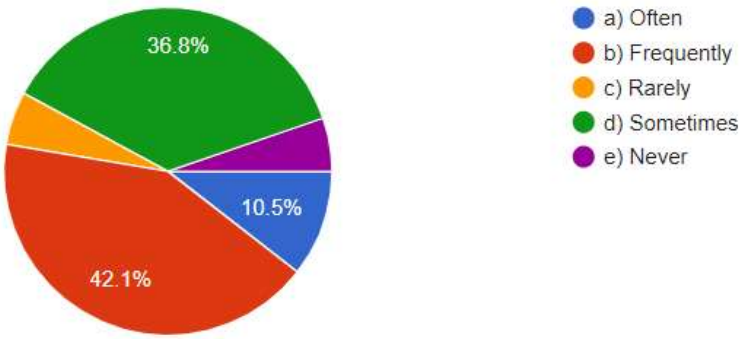
1. **When teaching writing, I used a simple word game like _____**



2. **I don't care about the techniques in teaching writing so far, because, the lesson hours is very limited since then I focus on how to finish all the topics quickly.**



3. **How often do you use word game in the classroom?**



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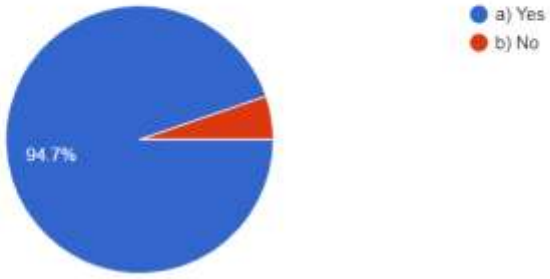
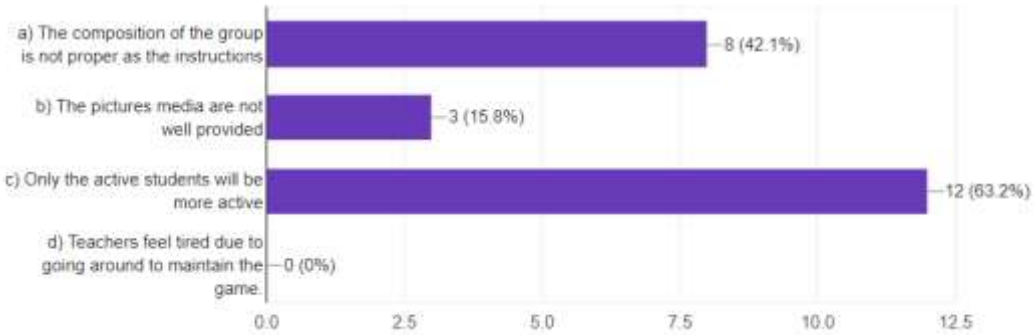
4. Do you ever use pictures in the classroom to give some elaboration about the use of nouns and adjectives in the sentences in a paragraph?



5. The difficult things in applying word games to teach writing are



Findings

While conducting the study, the researcher acknowledged that it was undoubtedly true that learning skills presents a number of challenges to students because they are challenging to master. In addition, teachers also face significant difficulties when attempting to teach writing skills because students occasionally find it confusing and challenging to understand or fail to produce effective writing in English. Therefore, writing is more than just putting pen to paper or recording ideas; it's also about how those ideas are properly communicated or articulated.

The researcher acknowledged that while the majority of pupils were eager to learn English, their lacklustre writing abilities had caused that enthusiasm to wane. It was distressing to see that several pupils put the blame for their poor writing abilities on their English teachers. Teachers should work to establish a positive attitude toward mastering writing skills in order to destroy this mind-set.

Additionally, the study claims that fewer writing assignments are completed in English classes and those students' writing abilities are not adequately honed. Without adequate writing abilities from the primary level, students will quickly run into issues when pursuing higher education. Writing skills are essential for lifetime learning.

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4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a variety of factors play a role in pupils' weak writing abilities. Therefore, if one wants to increase students' writing abilities, one must address the issues that have an impact on the quality of student writing. After doing this investigation, the researcher concluded that the subject was unquestionably intriguing and worthy of future investigation. Many teachers and students do not understand the value of learning and writing abilities; in fact, parents should be aware of this and assist in fostering these talents in their children.

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