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Challenges of Teaching and Promoting Saudi EFL University Learners' Written Texts in an Online Classroom Context: Teachers' Perspectives

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Abstract

The primary objectives of this research study are to explore EFL university teachers' perspectives on teaching and promotion of the written texts of Saudi EFL university students in an online classroom context during the second semester of the academic year 2022/2023. Moreover, the study aims at identifying the challenges that teachers face and shedding light on the impact of these challenges on teaching and promoting writing skills. To collect data, a structured interview is conducted with 16 EFL university teachers in both the College of Science and Arts for male students and the College of Science and Arts for female students at King Khalid University in Tanumah, Saudi Arabia. The findings indicate that there are many challenges experienced by EFL university teachers in teaching and promoting EFL Saudi university learners' written texts in an online classroom context. These challenges include, for example, giving direct feedback on the student's written assignment, as well as difficulties in planning an online writing class, problems in assessment, the difficulty of observing the online writing process, learners' insufficient practice of writing at home, learners' plagiarism, learners' lack of seriousness and interaction in online classes besides difficulties in maintaining the motivation of EFL learners in addition to the low language proficiency of some learners, which is considered a big challenge that impedes teaching and promotion of writing skills online. The study also discusses the findings' implications and makes some recommendations for teachers.

Keywords: EFL learners; Online classroom; Promoting; Teachers' Perspectives; Teaching writing

1. Introduction

According to Harmer (2004:03), English language writing is an essential skill for foreign language students. Furthermore, writing can provide more opportunities for English learning. Moreover, Andrew (1996:90) states that writing can provide students with numerous opportunities to expand their vocabulary, improve their grammar knowledge, and enhance their comprehension of how things are most effectively communicated and how efficiently their message is recognized. According to Richards and Renandya (2002), the most complicated skill for second-language learners to acquire is writing. Not only it is difficult to generate and organize ideas, but it is also difficult to translate these ideas into readable text. Writing requires a very complex set of skills. Second language learners must concentrate on advanced skills such as organization and planning in addition to relatively low skills like pronunciation, spelling, and word choice.

For Hyland (2003), one of the most difficult parts of learning a foreign language is learning how to write. This may come as no surprise given that effective writing requires substantial and specific teaching, even for English native speakers. However, EFL university students have

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difficulty with academic English writing because it requires grammar competency, a thorough understanding of writing mechanics, vocabulary, and adequate knowledge of writing elements and styles. As a result, the development of such a skill draws significant interest to its teaching and learning from the beginning of English language teaching.

Hyland (2003) thinks that writing instruction has taken a far more pivotal place in second and foreign language teaching than it was a few decades ago. This could be the outcome of two causes. On the one hand, mastery of proficient writing abilities is becoming more and more important for preparing students for success in the 21st century. The ability to convey thoughts and information clearly and efficiently via the global digital network is critically dependent on excellent writing proficiency. Writing has indeed been recognised as one of the most important and indispensable abilities in a world that are powered by text and quantitative information more than ever. The extensive knowledge of the structure of written texts as well as writing skill processes created by academics in areas including second language writing, composition studies, contrastive rhetoric, and genre theory, has further strengthened the status of writing within applied linguistics. Recent conceptual methods to investigate written texts in addition to methods for teaching writing in foreign languages that consider the most recent theory and research findings are therefore actively pursued today. Thus, for Depdiknas (2006), as cited in Adam and Bantulu (2021), the purpose of teaching English writing should be to provide students with the abilities necessary to communicate effectively in interpersonal and transactional discourse using a variety of genres such as recounts, narratives, procedures, descriptive pieces, news articles, reports, analytical expositions, spoof, explanations, discussion, and review in the context of daily life. However, teachers face Challenges in teaching and promoting learners written performance, particularly when teaching this skill in an online classroom context. Teaching writing in an online classroom setting is a difficult language skill that requires a lot of practice and effort from students, as well as systematic teaching.

Exploring teachers' difficulties in the online teaching of writing skills becomes essential in determining the present and future requirements for effective writing abilities. Therefore, the purpose of this research study is to determine the challenges experienced by EFL university teachers in teaching and promoting Saudi EFL university learners' written texts in an online classroom context at King Khalid University.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Writing is a fundamental language ability that can benefit EFL learners in a variety of ways, from enhancing vocabulary to improving English language proficiency. The process of teaching students to write in English entails improving their linguistic and communication skills. However, when teaching and promoting EFL learners' written texts in an online classroom context, EFL university teachers experience many challenges. The objective of this research, therefore, is to identify these challenges and determine the extent to which they affect the teaching and promotion of learners' written texts.

1.2 Questions of the Study

The study poses the following questions:

- a. What perspectives do EFL university teachers hold towards teaching and promoting Saudi EFL university learners' written texts in an online classroom context?
- b. What challenges do EFL university teachers face in teaching and promoting Saudi EFL

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university learners' written texts in an online classroom context?

- c. To what extent do such challenges influence the promotion of EFL learners' written texts?
- d. How do EFL university teachers address such sorts of challenges?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study aims at achieving the following:

- a. Investigating EFL university teachers' perspectives on teaching and promoting Saudi EFL university learners' written texts in an online classroom context.
- b. Identifying the challenges that are encountered by teachers in teaching and promoting Saudi EFL university learners' written texts in an online classroom context.
- c. Shedding light on the influence of such challenges on teaching and promoting Saudi EFL university learners' written texts in an online classroom context.
- d. Addressing practically the challenges of the teaching and promotion of Saudi EFL university learners' written texts in an online classroom context.

1.4 Limits of the study

The current study is primarily restricted to investigating EFL university teachers' perspectives on teaching and promoting Saudi EFL university learners' written texts in an online classroom context. This study targets all English language teaching staff at both the College of Science & Arts for male students and the College of Science & Arts for female students in Tanumah, King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia in the second semester of the academic year 2022/2023. A structured interview is employed to collect data.

2. Literature Review

For Gechere (2020) writing is an important skill in communicative activities. Its importance, as demonstrated by Mansoor (2005) and Megaia (2014), grows when it comes to writing in English, which is broadly employed for worldwide knowledge mediation. For Afrin (2016), writing is also the most used ability in assessing learners' achievement at nearly all stages of learning. According to Hartfiel, et al. (1985:89), as cited in Hidayati (2018), effective writing must consider vocabulary, grammar, organization content, and mechanics. Thus, teaching and developing English writing skills whether in an online classroom setting or in face-to-face learning contexts is so challenging to EFL teachers.

2.1 Challenges of Teaching Writing Skills Online

The reasons for teaching writing to EFL students, according to Harmer (2004), include language development, reinforcement, learning styles, and—most importantly—the development of writing as a skill. Developing these aspects by EFL teachers is so challenging, particularly in an online environment. As a result, many EFL teachers were finding it challenging to teach writing. For Bilal (2018), teaching English writing skills is challenging because it requires enhancing the student's communicative and linguistic abilities. According to Hidayati (2018), both external and internal variables contribute to teachers' difficulties in English writing skills teaching. Internal factors consist of students' motivation, reading habits, and linguistic knowledge, while external factors include the classroom's situation and the teacher's assistance.

According to Ngoc (2021), teachers face numerous challenges that make teaching writing skills ineffective. Some textbook contents, for example, are not appealing enough to entice students to participate. Furthermore, due to students' limited vocabulary and grammar, teachers must spend a significant amount of time trying to explain how to employ the required grammatical structures in accordance with the requirements of the lessons. Ngoc (2021) sees that the difficulties in teaching writing in EFL classrooms stemmed from the fact that learners had writing difficulties due to a lack of vocabulary, bad grammar, and poor writing skills.

Previous Studies

Online teaching and learning English language writing skills have been a big challenge for both university teachers and learners. Most of the research conducted in this domain shows that EFL university teachers face challenges in teaching and improving EFL university learners' writing skills in an online environment. Few studies have been conducted regarding the challenges of teaching English language writing online. For example, Nasihah and Senta (2022) investigate lecturers' challenges in addition to practical techniques for teaching writing online. To gain a thorough understanding of the study's objective, a qualitative research methodology was used. The data was gathered through documentation and interviews. The research results showed that among the difficulties teachers encounter in online teaching writing skills are "the challenge of maintaining the students' writing process and the learners' difficulties with internet access". Since it was challenging for the teachers to verify the originality of learners' written assignments, they were not able to evaluate the writing skills of the actual students. The paper also discusses the main conclusions' implications and offers some suggestions for the teachers and other interested parties.

Tarrayo, et al. (2022) investigate the challenges of online writing teaching experienced by 13 Filipino university EFL teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results show that there are three main obstacles to teaching writing online: issues with technology and equity, schools' ambiguous response to remote teaching in an emergency, and issues with assessment. Three key coping mechanisms for dealing with these challenges were found: initiatives for professional development; flexibility in interacting with learners and accepting their concerns; and receiving support from students and colleagues. Despite the difficulties of teaching writing online, two possibilities for improvement were noted: enhancing the utilization of online-teaching platforms and resources as well as improving one's reflective practice. The paper discusses the implications for online writing teaching, as well as online learning and teacher education in general.

Abdur rouf & Rashid (2021) examine the difficulties that Bangladeshi secondary school EFL teachers encountered when teaching online during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the research, the major difficulties of teaching online entail: a lack of gadgets, waning interest, students' low attendance, less communication in class, absence of training and technological skills, economic hardship, unstable network connectivity, a lack of language practice opportunities, a lack of online testing possibilities, negative physical and mental effects, and a general perception that online English language classes were ineffective. The paper also discusses the main conclusions' implications and offers some suggestions for teachers and other interested individuals.

Hamad, et al. (2021) investigate the perspectives of EFL teachers at King Khalid University's Tehama Campus about the difficulties of teaching English online during the

COVID-19 period. A questionnaire is used to collect data. The descriptive-analytical methodology was employed by the researchers. SPSS was employed for data analysis. The results of this research revealed several difficulties for instructors when teaching online, including the difficulty of reflecting desired learning outcomes due to multiple attempts and student cheating, which results in high test scores in exam grades, issues with student interaction, the burden of multiple tasks on instructors, in addition to many other difficulties that affect EFL teaching.

3. Methodology

3.1 Method

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive research approach. It attempts to understand in-depth and investigate EFL university teachers' perspectives on challenges and remedies of teaching and promoting Saudi EFL university learners' written texts in an online context. To enable the researcher to closely investigate EFL university teachers' perspectives on this issue, a case study is used as a research design for this study. Since this current research paper employs a case study as its research design, the findings of this study article are not meant to be generally applicable to a broader range.

3.2 Subjects

The subjects of this research include 16 EFL university teachers at both the College of Science and Arts for male students and the College of Science and Arts for female students in Tanumah at King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia during the second semester of the academic year 2022/2023.

3.3 Data Collection

For data collection, the study employs a structured interview (See Appendix 1). This structured interview targets EFL teaching staff in the two colleges mentioned above. It is composed of two sections. The first section sheds light on the demographic information of the subjects in terms of gender, qualifications, designation, college of graduation, and years of experience. The second section investigates EFL university teachers' perspectives on teaching and promoting Saudi EFL university learners' written texts in an online classroom context in terms of challenges the EFL university teachers face. The interviewees are also asked to explain to what extent these challenges influence the teaching and promotion of EFL learners' written texts. Finally, the interview explores EFL university teachers' recommendations and strategies for promoting EFL university learners' written texts in an online classroom context. After the data from the structured interview is gathered, it is analyzed and described based on the posed questions of the interview. To maintain anonymity, the participant codes, such as Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 3, and so on, are used to identify the qualitative responses.

Demographic Statistics of Subjects

This section gives detailed background about the participants' demographic statistics in terms of gender, qualifications, designation, college of graduation, and years of teaching experience. Look at the following table:

Table 3.1: Demographic Statistics of Subjects.

	Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Participants
Gender	Male	08	50%	16
	Female	08	50%	
Qualifications	Bachelor	02	12.5%	16
	Master	06	37.5%	
	Doctorate	08	50%	
Designation	Teaching Assistant	02	12.5%	16
	Lecturer	06	37.5%	
	Assistant Professor	05	31.25	
	Associate Professor	02	12.5%	
	Professor	01	6.25%	
college of graduation	Education	10	62.5%	16
	Arts	06	37.5%	
	Others	0	0%	
Years of experience	1-5 years	02	12.5%	16
	6-10 years	03	18.75%	
	11-15 years	08	50. %	
	Above 15 years	03	18.75%	

Table 3.1 shows that the number of both male teachers and female teachers is equal. There are 8 (50%) male teachers and 8 (50%) female teachers. In terms of qualifications, 8 (50%) of the participants hold a doctorate degree while 6 (37.5%) of them hold a master's degree and 2 (12.5%) hold a bachelor's degree. In terms of designation, it is observable that 6 (37.5%) of the participants are lecturers, 5 (31.25 %) of the participants are assistant professors, 2 (12.5%) are associate professors, 2 (12.5%) are teaching assistants and 1 (6.25%) is a professor. Concerning the colleges of graduation, there are 10 (62.25 %) of the participants graduated from colleges of education while 6 (37.5%) of them graduated from colleges of arts. In terms of teaching experience, it is clear that 8 (50%) of the participants have taught the English language for 11-15 years, 3 (18.75) % of the participants have above 15 years of experience in teaching the English language, 3 (18.75) % of the participants have 6-10 years experience and only 2 (12.5%) of them have 1-5 years experience.

4. Data Analysis, Findings, and Discussion

This section deals with the analysis of data and the discussion of the findings of the structured interview. It sheds light on the participants' responses to the interview questions. The interview questions are formed according to the research questions. The data obtained from the interview are then descriptively analyzed. These questions are analyzed and described as follows:

Question (1) Have you experienced any challenges in teaching and promoting EFL learners' written texts in an online classroom context?

Most of the participants answered with 'Yes'. However, only two participants answered with 'No'

Question (2) What challenges have you faced in teaching and promoting EFL learners' written texts in an online classroom context?

According to the interview responses, the researchers discovered that most EFL teachers encountered numerous challenges when teaching and promoting writing skills in an online classroom setting. These challenges are listed and summarized as follows:

- (a) Some EFL learners have language difficulties such as lack of vocabulary, limited grammatical knowledge, poor spelling, poor punctuation, lack of coherence and use of cohesive devices, etc. These problems impede teachers from promoting students' writing proficiency. Participant 1 expresses this by saying that "most of my students find it difficult to express themselves and to give a coherently written text due to lack of ideas, poor content organization, incorrect writing mechanism, insufficient vocabulary, grammatical difficulties, and poor spelling." The development of EFL learners' writing abilities is hampered by a lack of vocabulary. Participant 16 says: "One of the most serious challenges that EFL learners face in developing writing abilities is a lack of vocabulary," Participant 6 believes that some of his students are not knowledgeable enough to write about any topic due to a lack of vocabulary. According to participant 12, some students do not understand the lecture properly due to their low proficiency. For participant 7, the students struggle to find the right words quickly and effectively to convey their ideas. They have trouble managing their ideas while online.
- (b) Maintaining the motivation of EFL learners in an online classroom context is a big challenge for teachers. Because of these language difficulties mentioned above, EFL learners lack motivation and interest. If a learner is demotivated and uninterested, it will be so challenging for the teacher to promote his/her writing abilities. This can be noted in what participant 4 expresses that online teaching of writing skills is ineffective, "When learning online, learners appear inactive and unmotivated." Motivation is an essential element in promoting EFL learners' writing skills.
- (c) Students' lack of seriousness and interaction in online classes: Participant 6 mentions that "only a few students interact and participate in the classroom activities. Participant 16 says "The classroom is dominated by proficient and competent students". Participant 14 mentions that "Because of the students' interaction and engagement in face-to-face teaching, teaching writing skills in a face-to-face environment is more efficient and fruitful than online teaching of writing skills".
- (d) Difficulties in planning an online writing class: For participant 10, it is sometimes difficult to plan an online writing lesson due to the students' different levels of writing abilities.
- (e) Problems in assessment: Participant 12 mentions that he faces some difficulties in assessment. For this participant, it can be difficult for teachers to decide which written work is authentic and which is not because some of the learners' written assignments are extremely similar. Participant 8 thinks that teaching writing in an online classroom setting encourages the students to depend on the websites to get more ideas and insights to use in their written tasks. The students can also communicate with their colleagues to find out what they wrote. As a result, it became more difficult for teachers to assess students' writing skills because they were unable to observe the writing process when it took place online.
- (f) The allotted time for teaching writing is insufficient, it sometimes does not enable teachers to give feedback and assess learners' written activities. The time allotted does not allow students to complete their writing assignments. Participant 3 explains the importance of sufficient time in promoting English writing proficiency by saying "When requesting a written topic from students to hand it in either at the time of the lecture or outside it, there is difficulty in first making sure that the student is the one who did the writing tasks. Also,

did he write manually, which is important for the lecturer during the evaluation? Participant 11 expresses dissatisfaction by saying, "Learners need more time to complete their writing assignment". Similarly, Participant 9 says "Due to the learners' limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge, teachers must spend a great deal of time demonstrating how to use the appropriate grammar structures and words. Teachers need more time to give feedback on the student's written work."

- (g) Learners' insufficient practice of writing at home: For Participant 9 One of the biggest challenges that EFL teachers face in developing learners' writing abilities is a lack of writing practice. Participant 8 adds that "It is our duties as teachers to assign more writing homework and assignments to the students." Inadequate writing practice can lead to a lack of writing skills, resulting in a high number of errors in learners' written language. Their lack of writing assignments and activities is the main cause of their poor writing abilities.
- (h) Difficulties in providing feedback and correcting learners' errors: Participant 2 expresses "I find it difficult to follow the learners' work step by step". Similarly, Participant 15 finds it so challenging in giving online feedback on the learners' writing because it is more time-consuming". Participant 16 mentions that: "Because it requires more time, providing immediate online feedback on the learners' written work is less beneficial and meaningful".
- (i) Difficulty in online classroom control and management: For Participant 7, online classes are sometimes out of control because you can't control and manage them as you can in traditional classes, so it is difficult to help your students develop writing skills online. Participant 14 asserts that teaching writing skills online is not as effective as teaching writing skills in person. Instead of using only online learning to teach writing, he proposes using blended learning. However, Participant 13 sees that teaching writing skill in an online classroom setting has improved some students' learning experiences and improved their ability to participate in classes. He adds that teaching writing skills online is effective, but it has some challenges, so it is important to consider and implement appropriate measures to overcome these challenges. Online teaching of writing skills will become more effective and fruitful as technology advances, but it will not replace traditional face-to-face teaching. Participant 3 thinks that the success of teaching writing online depends to a large extent on the teaching strategies used by the teachers. Similarly, Participant 8 recommends that teachers should be careful and creative in employing interesting writing teaching strategies that encourage learners to write and improve their writing abilities.

Question (3) To what extent do these challenges influence the teaching and promotion of EFL learners' written texts in an online classroom context?

Most of the participants think that these challenges influence the promotion of EFL learners' written texts to a large extent. For instance, participant 11 said "These challenges make the teaching of writing skills ineffective". The influence of these challenges on the promotion of EFL students' written texts can be summarized as follows:

- (a) Hindering learners' development, reducing their learning motivation, and affecting their online writing performance in general. Participant 3 notes "I think that the student in the writing lectures will face difficulties that will affect him or her in the future. First, the student needs to write during the lecture and share their work with the lecturer. This will be difficult for the lecturer during the lecture time, depending on the time of the lecture and the number of students. Secondly, in most cases, students do writing work, either using electronic devices or websites, and this weakens their skills in grammar, spelling, and handwriting development." Similarly, participant 5 adds "These challenges hinder the

progress of EFL learners to learn language accurately and properly.

- (b) Encouraging plagiarism: During the writing process, the learners depend on other sources of information like websites and their colleagues to compose their writing activities. Relying on these sources of information as Participant 4 thinks will encourage students to commit plagiarism and consequently destroy students' creativity in writing topics and there will be no significant improvement in writing skills and abilities.

Question (4) What would you like to recommend for overcoming these challenges of teaching and promoting writing skills in an online classroom context?

To answer this question, the participants recommend the following remedies to overcome the challenges they encounter in teaching and promoting writing skills in an online classroom context:

- (a) Enriching EFL learners' vocabulary through extensive practice of reading activities and homework assigned by teachers. Through these activities, learners can also develop their grammatical abilities and spelling knowledge. Participant 8 mentions that: "I encourage my students to use technology, such as watching YouTube videos and news programs, to increase their vocabulary and to improve their writing abilities in general".
- (b) Grammatical knowledge is an important factor to consider when enhancing academic writing abilities. For Participant 5 teaching grammatical rules in isolation is the main cause of learners' grammatical difficulties. Grammatical rules should be taught in a context and vocabulary should be taught consciously.
- (c) Giving immediate, effective, and appropriate feedback on learners' written work or activities plays an effective role in promoting their writing skills. As participant 10 sees, without sufficient feedback on learners' errors, the learners' writing proficiency will not be improved. As mentioned above, giving effective feedback on the learners' written performance is so challenging. To solve this problem, teachers can utilize chat groups on social media platforms like Telegram and WhatsApp, and Google Classroom, as web-based learning media to provide writing feedback to their students. Another viable solution to this issue may be peer review for students. After the students have finished their written assignments, teachers pair them up in groups via WhatsApp to review each other's written tasks. The evaluation can cover their grammatical mistakes, written text layout, cohesion, and coherence. Giving online feedback through making use of social media can enhance learners' interest and confidence in their written performance.
- (d) Encouraging learners to practice writing skills at home by assigning homework or exercises. According to Participant 10 giving learners opportunities to practice writing at home as homework or assignment, represents one of the most significant factors in enhancing their writing abilities. Participant 6 notes: "I assign model written texts for my students to follow in order to encourage them to practice writing at home, and they then exchange their written assignments with their classmates for feedback." Participant 8 believes that the more writing practice students get, the better their writing skills will become. Learners should be motivated to do as many homework assignments as possible.
- (e) Adopting and implementing various teaching pedagogies and strategies to create appropriate writing assignments that consider students' various levels of writing proficiency.
- (f) Shifting from online classes into blended classes: Participant 14 states that " I recommend the teaching of writing skill should be shifted from online classes into

blended classes in which the teacher can meet the learners and give them feedback and follow-up. ”

- (g) Using specific applications that prohibit copying, auto-completing, and grammar correction or detect sentences that weren't written by the student himself/herself. Employing such software will motivate students to rely on their own creativity in coming up with ideas and will consequently enhance their writing abilities.
- (h) Teachers should motivate their students and encourage them to practice writing. Teachers can employ a number of effective teaching techniques, like the use of pictures to help students learn more about written assignments by fostering their imagination. There is no doubt that this will energize the students, make the classroom engaging and enjoyable, and prevent boredom.
- (i) Students should be encouraged to avoid plagiarism. Participant 1 mentions that: "I believe that plagiarism is a serious issue that restricts students' ability to write creatively. Teachers should take plagiarism seriously to help students promote writing skills. Participant 7 thinks teachers can use plagiarism detection software such as iThenticate and Turnitin to encourage students to rely on themselves and, as a result, develop their writing creativity."
- (j) Enhancing the discussion abilities of students: To develop students' discussion skills, Participant 13 recommends using discussion in the online classroom as a means to promote interaction in the online classroom and as a teaching technique to encourage learners to share their thoughts about the writing task as a first step before writing about it. The teachers divide the students into small discussion groups so that they can discuss a specific topic proposed by the teachers as a writing task. Here, the teacher serves as a facilitator and provides feedback at the conclusion of the discussion. Through this discussion group, students can share their opinions on the writing task, learn new vocabulary and its usage, develop their ideas about the subject, and write about it effectively.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The fundamental objectives of this research paper are to investigate EFL university teachers' perspectives on teaching and promoting Saudi EFL university learners' written texts in an online classroom context. As well as to identify the challenges that are encountered by the teachers and to shed light on the influence of these challenges on the teaching and the promotion of writing skills. In fact, the study reveals that teachers experience many challenges such as giving direct feedback on the student's written assignments, as well as difficulties in planning an online writing class, problems in assessment, learners' insufficient practice of writing at home, students' lack of seriousness and interaction in online classes besides difficulties in maintaining the motivation of EFL learners, in addition to the EFL learners' language difficulties which is considered a big challenge that impedes teaching and promotion of writing skills online. Moreover, the study reveals that teachers face some difficulties in assessment. Teachers find it difficult to assess learners' writing skills because of the difficulties of observing the online writing process. Additionally, because some of the learners' written assignments are similar, it can be challenging for teachers to determine which written assignment is authentic and which is not. This finding is in line with Nasihah & Senta's (2022) results in which they find that participants encounter difficulties with online writing assessments.

Most of the teachers believe that these challenges impact the teaching and promotion of writing

skills to a large extent, for instance, hindering learners' development, reducing their learning motivation, encouraging plagiarism, and affecting their online writing performance in general.

To alleviate these challenges, the researchers recommend that teachers should develop students' grammatical knowledge and enrich their vocabulary through extensive practice of reading activities. Teachers should encourage learners to practice writing skills at home by assigning more writing activities besides giving direct and efficient feedback on learners' written performance through using chat groups on social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram. Furthermore, the study recommends using software that prevents copying, auto-completion, and grammar correction. Using such software will encourage students to rely on their own creativity when coming up with ideas, which will improve their writing abilities. Moreover, plagiarism should be discouraged among students. Teachers can use plagiarism detection software like iThenticate and Turnitin to encourage students to depend largely on themselves and thus develop their writing creativity. In addition to that, using discussion as a teaching technique in the online classroom can foster interaction and encourage learners to share their ideas about the writing task as a first step before writing about it.

Generally, a key implication of this study is that investigating EFL university teachers' perspectives on teaching and promoting writing skills is an essential step to promote students' writing performance. Moreover, addressing the challenges that EFL university teachers face in teaching and promoting writing skills is an important step toward ensuring effective teaching in the online classroom setting. Furthermore, promoting EFL writing performance depends mainly on many factors including, for example, giving immediate feedback on the learners' assignment, teachers' teaching techniques, student's motivation, and interaction, the allotted time for completing the written assignment, and the teachers' role in encouraging and motivating students.

The research is intended to make a contribution to the field of online writing teaching and promotion. The findings of this study will no doubt help both EFL university teachers and learners recognise the challenges of teaching and promoting writing skills and find strategies to overcome them in an online learning and teaching process. The findings of this research article will undoubtedly aid EFL university instructors and students in identifying the challenges associated with teaching and promoting writing skills and developing strategies to overcome them in an online teaching and learning process.

There are some limitations to this study. The researchers believe that the small sample size and structured interview used in this study are insufficient to provide comprehensive perspectives and fruitful insights into the research topic. Based on this fact, the researchers propose that a future study use a variety of research tools with a large sample size that includes both teachers and students to delve deeper into the topic of the current research paper. Furthermore, a future research paper should investigate EFL university students' perspectives on the difficulties they face when developing their writing skills in an online classroom setting.

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