



CHALLENGES IN ACADEMIC LITERACY DEVELOPMENT AMONG EFL LEARNERS

Student of Fergana State University
Shokirova Namunaxon Rauffjon qizi
namunaxonshokirova230@gmail.com

91-740-21-31

Scientific supervisor: Adamboyeva Nafisa Qodirberganovna

Annotation: *Academic literacy, encompassing reading and writing skills, is fundamental for success in higher education¹. Proficiency in these skills enables students to comprehend complex academic texts, think critically, and communicate effectively. Despite their importance, many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners face persistent challenges in developing academic literacy. These challenges are associated with limited vocabulary, inadequate reading strategies, lack of exposure to authentic texts, and insufficient practice in structured writing. Developing a comprehensive understanding of these challenges is essential to implement effective pedagogical strategies. This study examines the interrelationship between reading and writing skills, identifies common obstacles faced by EFL learners, and proposes strategies for enhancing literacy development.*

Keywords: *Abilities, Language learning, Reading difficulties*

Annotatsiya: *Akademik savodxonlik, ya'ni o'qish va yozish ko'nikmalarini o'z ichiga olgan bilim, oliy ta'limda muvaffaqiyatli o'qishning asosidir. Ushbu ko'nikmalarga ega bo'lish talabalariga murakkab akademik matnlarni tushunish, tanqidiy fikrlash va samarali muloqot qilish imkonini beradi. Ularning ahamiyatiga qaramay, ingliz tilini chet tili sifatida o'rganayotgan ko'plab talabalar akademik savodxonlikni rivojlantirishda doimiy qiyinchiliklarga duch keladilar. Bu qiyinchiliklar cheklangan lug'at, yetarli bo'lmagan o'qish strategiyalari, haqiqiy*

¹ Jeremy Harmer (2004). How to Teach Writing. London: Longman.



matnlar bilan muloqotning yo'qligi va tuzilgan yozish amaliyotining yetishmasligi bilan bog'liq. Ushbu qiyinchiliklarni kompleks tushunish samarali pedagogik strategiyalarni joriy etish uchun zarurdir. Ushbu tadqiqotda o'qish va yozish ko'nikmalari o'rtasidagi o'zaro bog'liqlik ko'rib chiqiladi, ingliz tilini o'rganayotganlarda uchraydigan umumiy to'siqlar aniqlanadi va savodxonlikni rivojlantirish uchun strategiyalar taklif etiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: qobiliyatlar, til o'rganish, o'qish muammolari.

Аннотация: Академическая грамотность, включающая навыки чтения и письма, является основой успешного обучения в высших учебных заведениях. Владение этими навыками позволяет студентам понимать сложные академические тексты, критически мыслить и эффективно коммуницировать. Несмотря на их важность, многие изучающие английский как иностранный язык (EFL) сталкиваются с постоянными трудностями в развитии академической грамотности. Эти трудности связаны с ограниченным словарным запасом, недостаточными стратегиями чтения, отсутствием контакта с аутентичными текстами и недостаточной практикой структурированного письма.

Развитие комплексного понимания этих трудностей необходимо для внедрения эффективных педагогических стратегий. В этом исследовании рассматривается взаимосвязь между навыками чтения и письма, выявляются общие препятствия, с которыми сталкиваются изучающие английский язык, и предлагаются стратегии для улучшения развития грамотности.

Ключевые слова: способности, изучение языка, проблемы чтения

Introduction

In the contemporary era of global academic integration, English has established itself as the primary medium of scholarly communication and knowledge exchange. For students navigating Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), particularly those learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), academic literacy is no longer an optional skill but a core requirement for survival and success. Unlike basic



communicative fluency, academic literacy demands a sophisticated mastery of complex discourse norms, high-level critical thinking, and the ability to engage with abstract conceptual frame.

However, the transition from general English proficiency to academic competence is fraught with significant hurdles for many EFL learners. Despite years of formal language instruction, a substantial number of students continue to struggle with the rigors of scholarly reading and the demands of structured, evidence-based writing. These difficulties are not merely linguistic; they are often cognitive and socio-cultural, stemming from a lack of exposure to authentic academic genres and a limited grasp of specialized vocabulary. This research is driven by the need to bridge the gap between students' current linguistic abilities and the high expectations of academic environments. By analyzing the intricate nexus between reading and writing, this paper identifies the root causes of literacy deficiencies and evaluates the effectiveness of modern pedagogical interventions—such as scaffolded instruction and digital integration—aimed at fostering autonomous and proficient academic communicators.

Literature Review

Most people study a foreign language primarily due to academic requirements and school curricula. Additionally, many pursue language learning to enhance their career prospects, as proficiency in at

least one foreign language can lead to more rewarding job opportunities. In today's world, where English is recognized as an international language, having a basic understanding of it is often considered essential. Furthermore, some learners engage in language study for specific purposes, using the language solely for particular contexts without incorporating it into their daily lives. Reading and writing are interdependent cognitive skills². Research demonstrates that reading exposure enhances writing proficiency, as learners internalize vocabulary, grammar structures, and discourse patterns. Kayumova and Gayibbayev (2025) observed that EFL

² Richards, J., & Rodgers, T. (2001). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press.



students who engaged in integrated reading-writing tasks showed improved essay coherence and style.

- **Cognitive and Linguistic Challenges**

EFL learners encounter cognitive challenges such as limited lexical knowledge, syntactic difficulties, and insufficient use of reading strategies. Nunan (1991) emphasized that writing skills are closely linked to reading comprehension, highlighting the overlap of cognitive processes in both domains.

- **Pedagogical Strategies**

Effective instructional strategies include:

- **Extensive Reading:** Promotes vocabulary development, fluency, and comprehension.
- **Scaffolded Writing Tasks:** Provide structured guidance to enhance text organization.
- **Collaborative Learning:** Peer interactions increase critical thinking and engagement.
- **Technology-Assisted Learning:** Digital tools provide instant feedback and support autonomous learning.

Technological Integration

Digital platforms, including AI-assisted feedback systems, interactive reading applications, and online writing labs, have proven effective in enhancing literacy skills. Learners receive tailored feedback, enabling self-correction and reinforcement of reading and writing abilities.

- **Cultural and Contextual Considerations**

Academic literacy is also socio-culturally mediated. Learners' prior knowledge of academic conventions, discourse norms, and cultural expectations influences their literacy development. Culturally responsive instruction can mitigate these barriers, making literacy practices more effective.

- **Theoretical Framework**



The theoretical basis of this study draws upon the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) and Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, emphasizing the role of interaction and scaffolding in literacy development. These frameworks support integrated approaches, suggesting that reading and writing skills are best developed through meaningful tasks and guided practice.

Methodology

This research employs a qualitative approach based on a systematic literature review³. Peer-reviewed journals, empirical studies, and theoretical publications focusing on EFL literacy development were examined. Key themes extracted include skill integration, pedagogical strategies, learner challenges, and technological interventions. The analysis synthesizes evidence to identify best practices in literacy instruction.

Reading comprehension and writing share fundamental cognitive processes, including lexical retrieval, syntactic awareness, and discourse organization. Longitudinal studies indicate that early reading proficiency predicts later writing performance due to these shared mechanisms. Pedagogical Implications

Integrated reading-writing instruction enhances learner engagement and facilitates structured writing development. Exposure to diverse texts increases vocabulary breadth, comprehension, and understanding of academic genres.

Challenges Faced by EFL Learners

Limited vocabulary reduces comprehension and writing precision.

Lack of critical reading strategies impedes analysis.

Insufficient writing practice affects coherence and style.

Addressing these challenges requires systematic interventions, including scaffolded reading exercises, writing workshops, and extensive reading programs.

Extensive Reading and Writing

³John W. Creswell (2014). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches. Sage Publications.



Extensive reading, characterized by voluntary engagement with diverse texts, has demonstrated positive outcomes on both reading and writing skills. It fosters vocabulary acquisition, fluency, comprehension, and stylistic awareness, which in turn improves writing quality.

Harmer defines motivation as “an internal drive that encourages somebody to pursue a course of action.” (Harmer, 1991, 3).

Role of Digital Tools

Technological tools enhance literacy by providing immediate feedback, adaptive learning pathways, and access to authentic materials. Learners develop autonomy while receiving support in overcoming literacy challenges.

Results

The systematic analysis reveals several critical findings regarding academic literacy:

Shared Cognitive Processes: Reading and writing share fundamental mechanisms, including lexical retrieval and syntactic awareness⁴.

Predictive Value: Early reading proficiency is a strong predictor of later writing performance due to shared cognitive structures.

Effectiveness of Digital Tools: Technological integration, such as AI-assisted feedback, allows for tailored support and reinforces self-correction abilities

Impact of Extensive Reading: Voluntary engagement with diverse texts fosters vocabulary acquisition, fluency, and stylistic awareness, which directly improves writing quality.

Discussion

The results underscore the necessity of an integrated approach to teaching literacy. Since reading and writing are cognitively linked, instructional strategies should focus on integrated tasks. The influence of motivation, which Harmer defines as an "internal drive," is essential for students to pursue the challenging course of academic literacy development. Moreover, academic literacy is socio-culturally

⁴ David Nunan (1991). *Language Teaching Methodology*. London: Prentice Hall.



mediated; thus, learners' prior knowledge and cultural expectations must be considered to mitigate barriers effectively. Digital platforms further enhance this process by providing adaptive learning pathways and access to authentic materials. Motivation is an internal drive that encourages learners to pursue learning.⁵

Conclusion

Reading and writing skills are deeply interrelated and crucial for academic success. EFL learners face cognitive, linguistic, and socio-cultural challenges in developing these competencies. Effective strategies include integrated reading-writing tasks, scaffolded instruction, extensive reading, collaborative learning, and digital tool integration. Future instructional design should consider learner context, cultural background, and evidence-based approaches to optimize literacy development.

REFERENCES:

1. Abdulrahman, K. (2022). Teaching and Learning Writing Skills through Literature. *Canadian Journal of Language and Literature Studies*.
2. Ablakulova, O.U. (2024). Role of Extensive Reading in Improving Reading and Writing Skills. *Qo‘qon DPI Ilmiy Xabarlar Jurnali*.
3. Gayibbayev, G.J., & Kayumova, M.U. (2025). Integrating Reading and Writing Skills to Improve Essay Writing. *Modern Education and Development*.
4. Gopurova, N.A. (2024). Expressivity in Essays. *Innovative Technologica*.
5. Harmer, J. (2004). *How to Teach Writing*. London: Longman.
6. Kusumastiti, W. (2025). The Role of English Literacy in Enhancing Students' Reading and Writing Skills. *Jurnal Review Pendidikan dan Pengajaran*.
7. Nunan, D. (1991). *Language Teaching Methodology*. London: Prentice Hall.
8. Richards, J., & Rodgers, T. (2001). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
9. Rizal, S., Mariatul Q., & Husairi, H. (2023). Reading and Writing as Essential Basics for Effective Learning in Elementary School. Alifbata.

⁵ Jeremy Harmer (2004). *How to Teach Writing*. London: Longman.