Original research article / Originalus mokslinis straipsnis
Vol. 1 No. 4 (2025): Birželis

Teaching Generative Skills in the EFL Classroom: Approaches to Writing and Speaking Development

[1] Ilaha Ashrafova

Accepted: 05.25.2025
Published: 06.01.2025
https://doi.org/10.69760/portuni.0104018

Abstract: Writing and speaking are central *generative* (productive) skills in EFL education, yet they present persistent challenges due to their cognitive complexity and classroom constraints. This review surveys theory and practice to identify effective strategies for developing L2 writing and speaking. We first outline theoretical foundations, including communicative competence models, cognitive processing of output, and sociocultural perspectives. Next we examine pedagogical approaches to writing (e.g. process-genre instruction, task/project-based writing, peer review, digital tools) and to speaking (e.g. communicative tasks, fluency-building exercises, scaffolded dialogues). Classroom strategies are then discussed, covering feedback techniques, scaffolding, formative assessment, learner autonomy, and the use of collaborative and technological supports. Recent classroom-research case studies are reviewed: for instance, process-genre writing tasks with regular feedback have significantly improved Thai university learners' written performance, and concept-mapping and 4/3/2 repetition tasks have enhanced Iranian EFL learners' spoken fluency. Likewise, project-based writing raised Indonesian students' writing scores (grammar, vocabulary, organization) and motivation, while scaffolded speaking instruction produced significant gains in accuracy and fluency. We note that peer correction often boosts both fluency and accuracy more than teacher-led correction. Finally, we address practical challenges (large classes, exam pressures, uneven proficiency, tech limitations) and offer evidence-based recommendations: integrate communicative task-based activities with explicit scaffolding, encourage autonomy (e.g. self-selected tasks), and leverage digital tools judiciously (e.g. writing-assistance software, AI feedback). The synthesis highlights that **task-based and communicative approaches** – combined with formative, learner-centered methods – best support generative skills development in varied EFL contexts.

Keywords: *generative skills; EFL writing instruction; EFL speaking instruction; communicative approaches; task-based learning; learner autonomy; scaffolding*

INTRODUCTION

Productive language use – the ability to **generate** English through writing and speaking – is a core goal of EFL instruction, yet it is often underdeveloped in practice. Both writing and speaking require learners to compose and organize ideas using complex grammar and vocabulary in real time (Flower & Hayes, 1981; Levelt, 1989). In many foreign-language classrooms, limited class time and an emphasis on grammar can constrain productive practice, making writing and speaking challenging to master (Brown, 2007). Nonetheless, strong generative skills are critical for academic and professional success.

[1] **Ashrafova, I.** Lecturer, Nakhchivan State University. Email: ilahaashrafova@ndu.edu.az. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-0000-2127-3487

Writing enables EFL learners to clarify thinking, engage in academic tasks, and communicate across contexts; **speaking** is essential for interaction and confidence in real-world contexts. Given their importance, instructors need effective approaches to foster fluency (ease of production) and accuracy in both modalities.

This article synthesizes recent research (2015–2025) and pedagogical theory to examine how writing and speaking skills can be taught as *generative* skills in the EFL classroom. We begin by reviewing key theoretical foundations (e.g. communicative competence, cognitive processing, sociocultural theory). We then explore specific teaching approaches for writing (e.g. process writing, genre-based tasks, task/project-based pedagogy, feedback practices) and for speaking (e.g. communicative drills, task-supported discussion, fluency-focused activities). A separate section discusses classroom strategies and digital tools, including scaffolding techniques, formative assessment practices, and technology supports (writing software, online collaboration, language-learning apps). We then present findings from recent classroom-based studies: for example, process-genre writing instruction with blended feedback has significantly raised students' writing quality, and specific fluency-building exercises (e.g. concept mapping plus 4/3/2 repetition) have produced large gains in oral fluency. The discussion highlights how integrating communicative, cognitive, and learner-centered methods can balance fluency and accuracy, and we consider practical challenges (e.g. large classes, student anxiety, limited resources) and how to address them. In conclusion, we offer recommendations – grounded in empirical evidence – for EFL teachers, curriculum designers, and researchers interested in strengthening writing and speaking through task-based, scaffolded, and autonomy-supportive pedagogy.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Understanding how to teach generative skills is grounded in several established theories of language learning and production. **Communicative competence frameworks** (Canale & Swain, 1980; Bachman, 1990) emphasize that successful speaking and writing involve not only grammatical accuracy but also sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic knowledge. This perspective implies that instruction should develop meaningful communication and functional use of language, not just form. Consistent with this, **communicative language teaching (CLT)** posits that interaction and authentic tasks (e.g. discussions, role-plays, writing for real audiences) drive acquisition and fluency (Littlewood, 2013; Celce-Murcia, 2001).

Task-based and cognitive theories further underline the role of purposeful output. For instance, Swain's *Output Hypothesis* (Swain, 1985, 1995) argues that producing language compels learners to notice gaps in their knowledge and to experiment with new forms. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) operationalizes this by having students perform communicative tasks (e.g. problem-solving, information-gap activities) that require spontaneous speaking or writing. Researchers (Ellis, 2003; Willis, 1996) suggest that well-structured tasks can improve both fluency and accuracy, although cognitive load must be managed – overly complex tasks may cause learners to prioritize one aspect (fluency) at the expense of another (accuracy). Concept mapping and other planning strategies are one cognitive approach; studies show that preparing ideas visually before speaking helps learners organize content and increases fluency.

Sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf, 2000) contributes another perspective: language development occurs through social interaction and mediated learning. In this view, teacher and peer scaffolding – such as modeling, prompting questions, and collaborative writing – facilitate learners' zone of proximal development. For example, one study found that scaffolded writing tasks (where instructors gradually release support) led to significant improvements in EFL students' written output. Similarly, applying guided practice and contextual prompts in speaking activities yields measurable gains: an experimental EFL group receiving scaffolded speaking lessons outperformed a control group in post-test speaking measures.

Learner autonomy and motivation theories also inform generative skills instruction. Autonomous learning (e.g. students setting goals, self-monitoring) is linked to deeper engagement and persistence in writing and speaking. Recent research has found that integrating autonomous activities in writing classes (such as choice of topics or peer-led tasks) boosts intrinsic motivation and leads to better writing performance. A related body of work shows that affective factors – such as learners' emotional intelligence, creativity, and enthusiasm – correlate strongly with speaking proficiency; in one study, higher levels of emotional intelligence and academic enthusiasm were associated with significantly better speaking fluency and accuracy. Taken together, these theoretical perspectives suggest that effective generative-skill instruction should engage learners communicatively and cognitively, provide social support and feedback, and foster student initiative and motivation.

Approaches to Teaching Writing

A wide range of pedagogical approaches addresses writing as a generative skill. Traditional *product-oriented* methods (focused on replicating correct models) have largely given way to more *process- and task-oriented* frameworks, often combined with genre or text-based awareness. In **process approaches**, instructors guide students through stages of writing (brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing), emphasizing the drafting and revision processes over immediate accuracy. This approach encourages writers to view writing as iterative and supports fluency and idea development (Badger & White, 2000). For example, when teachers introduce graphic organizers and collaborative brainstorming before drafting, students can produce more ideas and better-structured texts. Research confirms that such scaffolding techniques significantly improve writing outcomes: for instance, Thai EFL learners who received guided support during writing (step-by-step lesson plans and rubrics) showed significant gains in writing quality. In the *product approach*, teachers often focus on text model analysis and imitation; while useful for raising awareness of conventions, it may not sufficiently develop creative expression.

A **genre-based approach** explicitly teaches the conventions of particular text types (reports, essays, emails). By studying exemplar texts and identifying genre-specific features (structure, discourse markers, style), students learn to reproduce appropriate frameworks. Many instructors combine process and genre methods: students might draft a narrative and then examine its genre features in revision. Empirical studies suggest that this hybrid (process-genre) approach, supported by continuous feedback, yields strong results. In one quasi-experiment, applying a process-genre curriculum (with peer and teacher feedback and online platforms) led Thai university students to significantly improve their task response and vocabulary use. The authors concluded that *"the findings emphasize the importance of a process-genre approach, constant feedback, and technology"* in advancing writing skills.

Communicative and task-based writing activities emphasize real-world purpose. These might include project-based assignments (e.g. creating a class newsletter, blog posts, or research projects) where learners write to communicate information. For example, project-based learning (PjBL) has been shown to markedly improve EFL learners' writing. In an Indonesian study, tertiary students' writing improved significantly on content, grammar, organization, and vocabulary after a series of writing projects. Participants also reported gains in critical thinking and motivation, as the project tasks demanded independent inquiry and iterative revision. Similarly, using collaborative writing platforms (wikis, Google Docs) can turn writing into a social task. Findings indicate that collaborative writing – where peers jointly plan, write, and edit – enhances idea generation and learner engagement. One study comparing solo and pair writing found that paired argument-writing improved text quality and complexity, highlighting the benefits of interaction.

Feedback and revision are crucial in the writing classroom. Formative feedback (written or oral) helps learners notice errors and refine their output. Teachers often use rubrics and provide margin comments to guide revisions, while peer feedback sessions encourage students to critique each other's drafts. Research confirms that combining multiple feedback sources accelerates writing development. For instance, a study integrating both teacher and peer feedback (including oral conferences) observed that students in the experimental group significantly outperformed controls on post-writing assessments. Written teacher feedback in particular was strongly associated with higher scores on aspects like task fulfillment and vocabulary. At the same time, involving students in self-assessment and reflection (using checklists or portfolios) promotes autonomy: learners become more aware of their writing processes and errors.

Digital tools for writing have become increasingly accessible. Word processors (Google Docs, Microsoft Word) allow easy drafting and collaborative editing. Many classes now use online editing tools (Grammarly, ProWritingAid) that offer immediate feedback on grammar, vocabulary, and style. In one Thai university study, students who used digital writing programs (Paragraph Punch and ProWritingAid) showed significant improvement on a writing test after one semester. Participants attributed their gains to the real-time, targeted feedback these tools provided. However, learners also noted potential drawbacks: over-reliance on automated suggestions and the need for complementary teacher guidance. Teachers are advised to integrate technology as a supplement, not a replacement for pedagogy – for example, by setting tasks where students first use an AI assistant to draft ideas, then revise under teacher supervision. Emerging AI-based tutors (like ChatGPT) are likewise being explored: recent research found that ChatGPT-4 can reliably score student essays and generate substantive feedback on content and organization, often matching or exceeding human raters in consistency. While still experimental in classrooms, such tools point to future possibilities for personalized, immediate writing support.

Finally, **learner proficiency level** should shape writing tasks and scaffolding. Lower-level students often benefit from highly guided exercises: sentence-combining activities, fill-in-the-gap texts, or writing frames that model basic paragraphs. Middle-level writers can tackle shorter free-writing and guided journal prompts, gradually expanding to full essays. Advanced learners (B2–C1 CEFR) can be given authentic tasks (reports, research summaries) and peer-teaching roles. Throughout, teachers should calibrate expectations: accuracy demands may be relaxed in early drafts to encourage risk-taking, then addressed systematically in revision. In all contexts, an iterative cycle of drafting and

feedback – whether in-class or as homework portfolios – helps balance fluency (the ability to generate ideas) with accuracy (correct language use).

APPROACHES TO TEACHING SPEAKING

Teaching speaking as a generative skill likewise calls for communicative, scaffolded, and task-oriented approaches. A traditional *audio-lingual* style (drills and repetition) can build confidence in basic patterns, but alone it is insufficient for real communication. Instead, modern pedagogy emphasizes **Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)**: students engage in information gaps, role-plays, interviews, and debates that require spontaneous speech. For example, instructors often use role-play dialogues (e.g. ordering food, asking for directions) to simulate real-life situations. These activities focus on meaning and negotiation, encouraging learners to use phrases and vocabulary actively rather than merely recalling scripted lines. Research supports CLT's effectiveness: in one quasi-experimental study, Egyptian secondary students who followed a CLT-based speaking curriculum made significant gains on oral exams and on sub-skills like pronunciation and fluency. In that study, gains in fluency were especially large, suggesting that communicative practice increased students' willingness to speak. Fluency-oriented activities (e.g. free discussion circles, storytelling) help learners think on their feet; accuracy can be refined later through recasts or separate grammar drills.

Task-based speaking activities are another key component. Tasks are designed with a clear outcome, such as solving a puzzle in English, interviewing classmates, or collaboratively planning a project. One effective technique is the "4/3/2" repetition task: pairs of students take turns describing a picture or event (4 minutes for student A; 3 minutes for student B), then swap. Ghasemi and Mozaheb (2021) found that combining concept mapping (pre-task planning) with 4/3/2 repetition led to significantly improved fluency for Iranian EFL learners. The rationale is that planning (mapping ideas) primes vocabulary, and repeating the task in shorter intervals pushes students toward speed and coherence. Similarly, narrative or decision-making tasks (e.g. planning a trip together) engage learners in extended speaking. Studies of such tasks show that even simple devices (picture prompts, guiding questions) can stimulate talk and help lower-level students produce more elaborate speech.

Scaffolding and modeling play important roles in speaking instruction. Instructors may pre-teach useful phrases or question structures before a task, provide language frames (e.g. "I think that… because…"), or model exemplar dialogues. During activities, teachers or more proficient peers can prompt with cues, rephrase student errors as questions, or signal students to expand their answers. Structured rehearsal (practice with a partner) before a performance can build confidence. Recent empirical work demonstrates the benefit of such scaffolding: Iranian EFL learners who received flexible guided speaking practice (using contextualized dialogues and question prompts) outperformed a control group in an oral proficiency test. According to Sarmiento-Campos et al. (2022), this scaffolded group showed a statistically significant advantage ($p<.05$) in post-test speaking scores, underscoring the effectiveness of mediated instruction.

Fluency vs. accuracy tasks: As with writing, teachers often distinguish between fluency-building and accuracy-focused activities. Fluency tasks are usually open-ended and time-constrained (e.g. "talk for two minutes on any topic") and encourage smooth, uninterrupted speech with minimal concern for errors. Accuracy tasks, by contrast, might include pronunciation drills or structured practice targeting grammar or vocabulary. In practice, an effective speaking syllabus blends both. For example,

initial practice of a grammatical form might occur in a controlled drill, followed by a communicative role-play requiring students to use that form in context. Balance is key: too much accuracy focus can inhibit talk (students become too self-conscious), whereas too much fluency practice without feedback can reinforce errors. Teachers can alternate focus each lesson or split class time.

Feedback on speaking should be carefully handled. Immediate correction can discourage learners, so a common technique is *recasting*: subtly reformulating a student's error as part of a reply (e.g., Student: "He go to school." Teacher: "Oh, he **goes** to school every day?"). More explicit feedback might come after a speaking activity, either from the teacher or from peers. A recent study found that peer feedback can be more motivating and effective than teacher correction: Chinese EFL students who corrected each other's spoken errors improved more in both accuracy and fluency than those who only received teacher feedback. This suggests that involving students in feedback (for example, having them note peers' mistakes on a checklist) can enhance awareness and engagement. However, teachers should monitor to ensure accuracy: the same study noted that teacher feedback still significantly improved accuracy compared to no correction, so a blend of peer and teacher feedback is likely optimal.

Pronunciation and intelligibility also fall under speaking pedagogy. Generative speaking requires not only grammar and vocabulary but also clear articulation. Many teachers incorporate mini-lessons on stress, intonation, or problematic phonemes when issues arise. Choral repetition (having the whole class repeat a model sentence) and tongue-twister exercises can raise awareness of sounds. While technical, these drills should be embedded in context (e.g. practicing weak forms during a simulated phone call) to maintain communicative relevance.

Differentiation by proficiency: In mixed-level classes, instructors tailor tasks accordingly. Beginners may start with highly scripted dialogues or information-gap tasks with limited vocabulary sets, gradually moving to freer role-plays. Advanced learners might engage in debates, presentations, or improvisational speaking. For example, novice classes might use "step-by-step" speaking tasks: teacher asks a sequence of yes/no questions, guiding students to a short answer. Advanced classes might analyze video clips and then perform a related skit. Importantly, both fluency and accuracy goals should be clear: for low-level students, initial focus might be on producing complete sentences at all (fluency), while higher-level students may focus on nuanced expression or syntactic complexity.

Affective strategies: Anxiety and motivation strongly affect speaking willingness. Instructors can create a supportive atmosphere (e.g. praising attempts, avoiding harsh correction) and use confidence-building activities (pair work before whole-class activities, personal story-telling on familiar topics). Some teachers assign speaking homework (like recording a brief monologue on a phone app) so students can practice privately. Building intrinsic motivation—by connecting tasks to students' interests or goals—has been shown to relate to speaking success. For instance, learners with higher academic enthusiasm and emotional intelligence tended to be more proactive and effective communicators in a recent study. This implies that encouraging self-confidence and interest in speaking (through positive feedback and autonomy) can indirectly boost spoken performance.

Classroom Strategies and Digital Tools

Effective development of writing and speaking skills relies on a variety of classroom strategies and technologies that support learners cognitively and socially. Key strategies include **scaffolding**, **formative assessment**, **collaboration**, and **learner autonomy**, often amplified by digital tools.

Scaffolding: Teachers can scaffold generative tasks at multiple levels. *Content scaffolding* might involve providing topic outlines or language banks before a writing/speaking task. For example, before a class debate, an instructor may supply useful sentence frames ("In my opinion…, I would argue that…") so students can focus on content. *Process scaffolding* breaks a task into stages: when writing an essay, the teacher might first conduct a mini-lesson on paragraph structure, then have students draft individually, then organize peer reviews. Similarly, speaking tasks can be scaffolded by conducting model dialogs and role-play rehearsals in advance. Research underscores scaffolding's impact: when Thai students' writing was scaffolded with guided lesson plans and collaborative support, their final compositions were markedly stronger. In speaking, the evidence from Sarmiento-Campos et al. (2022) shows scaffolded instruction (guided practice in authentic contexts) significantly enhanced oral performance. Scaffolding can be gradually withdrawn ("fading") as learners gain proficiency, promoting independence.

Formative assessment: Ongoing assessment and feedback during the learning process—rather than only end-of-unit tests—are crucial. Teachers might use checklists, rubrics, or observation notes to monitor students' writing drafts and speaking attempts. Self- and peer-assessment activities also serve formative purposes. For example, students might exchange essays and use a rubric to give constructive comments, then discuss revisions with the teacher's guidance. Regular low-stakes speaking exercises (role-plays recorded on smartphones, short presentations, or oral quizzes) help instructors track fluency progress. Formative prompts (e.g. "What could you add to make your paragraph clearer?") guide students without giving away answers. Effective formative assessment helps learners calibrate accuracy and content while still experimenting with language. For instance, having students submit multiple drafts of an essay (with teacher feedback at each stage) leads to steady accuracy improvements, as students correct errors iteratively.

Learner autonomy: Promoting autonomy empowers students to take charge of their skill development. Strategies include *learner-training* (teaching students how to plan a writing task, set speaking goals, or self-correct using a dictionary), *choice* (allowing topic selection or project-type selection), and *reflection* (maintaining learning journals about speaking/writing experiences). When students feel ownership, they are more likely to engage deeply. In an Iranian university study, students reported positive perceptions of autonomous writing tasks; when learners had more control (e.g. in planning and executing essays), their motivation and outcomes increased. Similarly, language-classroom technologies can support autonomy: assigning EFL students to practice speaking with language-learning apps (e.g. speech-recognition exercises) or to write blog posts in their own time encourages self-directed practice beyond class.

Collaborative activities: Working in pairs or groups can significantly boost practice opportunities. For writing, *pair- or group-writing* tasks (co-authoring a story or essay) combine multiple ideas and provide peer support. Research shows collaborative writing can lead to richer content and linguistic complexity than individual writing, as learners share strengths. For speaking, *discussion groups*, *jigsaw tasks*, and *peer teaching* are valuable. For example, in a "jigsaw discussion", each student learns a piece of information (e.g. a news item) and then takes turns informing their group, thereby requiring

explanation and question-asking (speaking-intensive). Collaborative tasks also integrate social learning: peers notice each other's strategies and errors. As noted, peer feedback during speaking not only corrects errors but also raises collective awareness of language norms. In writing, peer editing sessions give students a model reader's perspective; teachers often structure these with checklists so feedback is focused.

Digital tools – writing: Several technologies have been shown to augment writing instruction. As mentioned, grammar and style checkers (e.g. Grammarly, ProWritingAid) give immediate correctness feedback and suggestions. In practice, teachers might have students write essays in Google Docs and use the built-in comment function for collaborative revisions. Web-based collaborative platforms (wikis, blogs) allow teachers to assign extended writing projects with real audiences (publishing to a class blog, for example). Online forums or class social-media pages can encourage informal writing practice. Digital corpora and concordancers (e.g. Sketch Engine) let advanced students explore authentic usage of phrases. Importantly, students' attitudes toward these tools are mixed: while many Thai EFL students appreciated the scaffolding of digital editors, they also expressed concern about becoming overly reliant and missing teacher input. Teachers should therefore combine tech support with guided reflection: for instance, after students use a checker, the class can discuss which changes were appropriate and which may have altered meaning.

Digital tools – speaking: Technology can also enhance speaking practice. Language-learning apps (e.g. Duolingo, Babbel) often include speaking exercises with automatic pronunciation checks. Recording tools (voice memos, Flipgrid videos) allow students to practice and replay their own speech, improving self-monitoring. Virtual language labs or conversation simulators (chatbots, VR scenarios) provide safe spaces to speak. Video conferencing (Zoom, Teams) has become common for oral practice, especially in remote classes. However, experience shows that these tools carry challenges: unstable internet, microphone issues, and student reluctance on camera can impede usage. The study by Tauchid et al. (2024) highlights exactly these barriers in remote speaking tasks. Addressing them means ensuring technical readiness (e.g. reliable Wi-Fi, headphone use) and training students on the software, as well as choosing tasks that encourage engagement (e.g. smaller breakout rooms rather than whole-class presentations for shy students).

Integrating feedback and technology: The latest AI tools can assist both skills. For writing, advanced AI (ChatGPT-4, others) can generate suggestions or model answers. As one study found, ChatGPT-4's essay scoring and feedback on content and organization rivaled human teachers, offering consistent feedback across multiple dimensions. Teachers might experiment by having students compare AI feedback with a teacher's feedback to analyze differences. For speaking, AI-driven pronunciation apps or speech analytics (measuring pause length, fluency metrics) can give learners objective fluency scores. While promising, these innovations also require careful pedagogy: students need guidance on how to critically use AI feedback and interpret it. Overall, technology should **support** – not replace – the teacher's role. It can provide additional practice and motivation, but human teachers must frame tasks, check understanding, and encourage deeper reflection.

CASE STUDIES / CLASSROOM RESEARCH FINDINGS

Empirical studies of classroom interventions offer evidence of what works in real EFL contexts. A recurring theme is that **integrated, interactive methods yield gains** in both writing and speaking. Here we summarize a selection of recent findings:

- *Process-Genre Writing Instruction (Tipaya & Waluyo, 2023):* Thai university students participated in a quasi-experimental study where an experimental group learned writing through a combination of process-oriented activities, genre analysis, and technology-based feedback, while a control group followed a traditional approach. Results showed that the experimental group's post-test scores were significantly higher than their pre-test and higher than the control group on measures of content and lexical resource. Improvements in coherence and grammatical accuracy were smaller but positive. The authors noted that the "process-genre approach, constant feedback, and technology" were key to the gains. This suggests that blending collaborative drafting, explicit genre study, and digital feedback tools can meaningfully enhance EFL writing.

- *Scaffolded Writing (Chairinkam & Yawiloeng, 2024):* In Thailand, a teacher action-research project provided scaffolded instruction to novice and expert EFL writers through structured lesson plans at different writing stages. After implementing five scaffolded writing lessons (with modeling, guided practice, and reduced assistance over time), students' writing skills improved dramatically. The study reports that "implementing scaffolding strategies during the writing process significantly improved the writing abilities" of the participants. For instance, students' drafts showed more developed ideas and cohesion by the final version. The authors conclude that teacher scaffolding – including guided questions and collaborative pre-writing – is especially beneficial when gradually withdrawn to promote independent writing.

- *Project-Based Writing (Arochman et al., 2024):* Indonesian tertiary students took part in a project-based learning (PjBL) program focused on improving writing. The program involved collaborative projects that required students to research, outline, write, and present texts. Quantitative results showed a **significant pre-post improvement** in writing scores, particularly in grammar, vocabulary, organization, and content. Beyond test scores, students reported increased motivation: the authentic nature of the projects (e.g. creating a mini-book, digital magazine) gave them a sense of purpose. They also noted growth in critical thinking and independence, as they had to plan their work. This case underscores PjBL's value: by making writing purposeful and collaborative, it enhanced proficiency and learner engagement.

- *Digital Writing Tools (Pitukwong & Saraiwang, 2024):* At a Thai university, 53 EFL students used two digital writing applications (Paragraph Punch, ProWritingAid) over a semester. A pre-post writing test showed significant score gains after using the tools. Student interviews revealed that many valued the "supportive guidance and real-time feedback" these programs provided, especially for grammar and organization. At the same time, some students worried about depending too much on the software and still wanted teacher feedback. This suggests that *complementary use* of digital tools (automated checks plus teacher instruction) can accelerate skill development, but teachers should monitor tool usage to maintain critical thinking.

- *Fluency-Building Speaking Tasks (Ghasemi & Mozaheb, 2021):* Eighty Iranian EFL undergraduates participated in an experiment testing concept mapping and the 4/3/2 speaking task. Both

experimental groups (one using mapping + 4/3/2, another using only 4/3/2) showed significant gains in fluency after training. The authors argue that *concept mapping* helped learners plan and organize their ideas, leading to more fluent speech, while *task repetition* promoted automaticity. Qualitative feedback indicated that these techniques made speaking more manageable and engaging. This study provides a clear example of how cognitive scaffolds and task design can measurably improve spoken fluency.

- *Communicative Approach Impact (Refaey, 2023):* In an Egyptian secondary school, teachers implemented a speaking program based on the communicative approach (including oral drills, pair interviews, and presentations) over a term. Students' oral performance was tested before and after; the experimental group (receiving CLT instruction) showed statistically significant improvements on overall speaking and on sub-skills of pronunciation, vocabulary, and especially fluency. Effect-size analysis indicated large gains in fluency measures. Students in interviews reported feeling more confident speaking English by the end of the program. This case study illustrates that even in exam-oriented contexts, well-structured CLT activities can substantially raise students' generative speaking ability.

- *Scaffolded Speaking (Sarmiento-Campos et al., 2022):* In Peru, intermediate EFL learners in a private language school were divided into a control group (traditional speaking drills) and an experimental group (receiving scaffolded speaking instruction). The scaffolding included flexible practice opportunities (dialogues, picture questions, news videos with follow-up conversation prompts) designed to gradually build independence. The scaffolded group significantly outperformed the control group on a standardized oral exam ($p<.05$). The study reports that scaffolding made the difference – experimental learners had more practice in meaningful settings and could activate prior knowledge. This adds to evidence that guided support directly enhances speaking achievement in EFL contexts.

- *Peer vs. Teacher Feedback (Li & Hu, 2024):* A recent experiment with Chinese university EFL students compared peer-correction and teacher-correction on speaking tasks (both in online and face-to-face settings). Results showed that *peer correction* was more effective than teacher correction in improving both speaking accuracy and fluency. Moreover, both correction methods significantly outperformed no correction. Learners also expressed that giving feedback helped them notice language use. The implication is clear: involving students as active correctors can deepen their engagement and yield better speaking outcomes, likely because peers may offer a less intimidating environment and because the act of correcting reinforces one's own learning.

These classroom findings converge on a few points. First, *active, meaning-focused engagement* (through projects, tasks, and peer interaction) consistently leads to gains in output proficiency. Second, *scaffolding and feedback* – whether from teachers, peers, or digital tools – are critical in guiding learners' independent efforts. Third, *technology* can amplify learning if integrated thoughtfully: students benefit from immediate automated feedback but still need human guidance. Finally, these studies demonstrate that even short interventions (a single semester) can produce measurable improvements in fluency and accuracy, suggesting that EFL instructors can have significant impact by adopting research-backed methods.

DISCUSSION

The evidence reviewed above highlights a shift away from rote, form-focused drills toward *integrative, student-centered approaches* for teaching writing and speaking. The strongest results come from combining multiple strategies: for example, pairing communicative tasks with explicit scaffolds, or merging autonomous learning with guided feedback. Task-based and communicative methods engage learners in genuine language use (affecting fluency and expression), while cognitive and sociocultural tactics (planning, modeling, collaboration) ensure that form and accuracy are not neglected. Empirical studies support this blend. For writing, a process-genre approach (with peer and teacher revision) significantly outperformed traditional methods. For speaking, programs that varied activity type (role-plays, interviews, presentations) and included repeated practice built confidence and output (as seen in Refaey, 2023 and Ghasemi & Mozaheb, 2021).

An ongoing pedagogical challenge is the **fluency–accuracy trade-off**. When learners focus on accurate form (grammar drills, error correction), they may hesitate or speak less; when focused on fluency (timed speech), error rates can rise. In response, researchers recommend alternating focus: integrate drills and feedback to correct errors, but also allow low-pressure practice for free expression. For example, in a single lesson an instructor might first conduct a pronunciation mini-lesson (accuracy focus), then a topic discussion (fluency focus). Research suggests that as long as instruction includes periods of free communication with later analysis of mistakes, both fluency and accuracy can improve over time (Skehan, 2009; Derwing et al., 2004). The classroom studies reported show this: students who received corrective feedback saw accuracy gains, and those who did repeated speaking tasks saw fluency gains, indicating that integrating both modes is feasible.

Learner autonomy emerges as a crucial facilitator. When students take active roles (choosing topics, self-editing, giving peer feedback), they develop investment in their learning. Studies (Al-Shboul et al., 2023) found that autonomous writing tasks improved motivation and outcomes. While promoting autonomy requires careful structuring (many students are unused to it), even small steps – such as allowing choice of essay topics or encouraging self-correction checklists – can foster learners' sense of agency. Teachers also report that autonomy-supportive practices reduce anxiety and increase classroom participation, especially in speaking tasks. However, autonomy must be scaffolded: novice learners still benefit from teacher guidance, whereas advanced learners can handle more independent projects.

Digital tools and technology offer powerful but double-edged support. On the positive side, many tools provide practice and feedback beyond what a single teacher could give. Automated writing evaluation systems and AI tutors can rapidly correct numerous learners' drafts, enabling individualized pacing. In speaking, mobile apps and online platforms allow practice with recognition and record-keeping. Yet the practical challenges are real. As Alamri (2021) noted in an ESL context, teachers often encounter technical problems, lack of adequate devices, and limited time for tech integration. Similarly, remote speaking tasks suffer from connectivity issues and learners' variable digital literacy (Tauchid et al., 2024). To succeed, schools must invest in reliable infrastructure and teacher training. Moreover, digital feedback should complement, not replace, human pedagogy. For instance, students using ChatGPT or grammar checkers still need teacher oversight to interpret feedback critically. When these conditions are met, technology can enhance engagement; for example, flipped-classroom models

(where students watch micro-lectures or do listening at home) free up classroom time for interactive speaking/writing tasks, and early reports show such models boost learner autonomy and participation.

Cultural and contextual factors also influence strategy choice. In exam-focused EFL systems, teachers may face pressure to prioritize reading/listening skills or grammar; shifting time to writing/speaking development can be difficult. However, evidence suggests that improving generative skills does not undermine exam preparation – in fact, writing and speaking skills often support overall language competence. Teachers in such contexts may need to align tasks with curricular goals (e.g. using past exam formats as writing prompts) while still following communicative principles. Class size is another factor: large classes make it hard to give individual speaking time or detailed writing feedback. In these cases, grouping strategies (pair work, writing workshops) become even more valuable. Personal factors – such as introverted learners or those with high anxiety – call for differentiated tasks (e.g. allowing written journaling as an interim step before oral presentations).

From the teacher's perspective, a common challenge is balancing **fluency and accuracy** in feedback. The recent finding that peer feedback can outperform teacher feedback in improving speaking suggests one solution: by training students to help each other (with guidance), the teacher can multiply feedback sources and give learners more processing opportunities. Similarly, peer review in writing can lighten teacher load and still improve writing quality, as long as clear guidelines are provided. Teachers should also continue to monitor their own feedback styles: encouraging risk-taking and noting successful language use (praise) often motivates learners more than only pointing out errors.

Recommendations based on empirical evidence: Given the accumulated research, several actionable recommendations emerge:

- **Embrace task-based, communicative activities:** Use information-gap exercises, problem-solving tasks, and real-world projects to elicit rich speaking and writing. Ensure tasks are at an appropriate challenge level (not too easy, not overwhelming).
- **Provide ample scaffolding:** Before each task, introduce relevant vocabulary or structures. During tasks, monitor and support discreetly. After tasks, offer specific feedback linked to task performance.
- **Integrate feedback loops:** Combine teacher, peer, and self-assessment. For writing, use multiple drafts with teacher and peer comments. For speaking, debrief after activities with constructive feedback. Train students in giving effective feedback.
- **Foster learner autonomy:** Allow choices in topics, encourage learner-set goals, and teach strategies (planning, self-monitoring). Encourage reflection on learning (journals, portfolios) to build metacognition.
- **Leverage technology thoughtfully:** Use digital writing aids and speaking apps to supplement instruction. Prepare students for tech use and set clear limits (e.g. "use the grammar checker, but also explain one change it suggested"). Use asynchronous tools (forums, blogs) to extend practice outside class.

- **Balance fluency and accuracy:** Allocate some activities to free production (promote fluency) and others to focus on form. Avoid over-correcting during communicative tasks; schedule accuracy-focused practice in separate segments.
- **Address challenges proactively:** In large or reluctant classes, use pair/group work. In low-proficiency settings, start with heavily scaffolded tasks (e.g. guided dialogues) before moving to open tasks. In exam-oriented contexts, tie tasks to exam formats or present writing/speaking as valuable end-goals themselves (e.g. communication with foreigners, career needs).

In sum, teaching writing and speaking in EFL is most effective when **pedagogy is diversified and student-centered**. Rigid teacher-fronted drills alone rarely lead to generative competence; instead, students need rich input, meaningful output opportunities, and support in using language. Classroom research repeatedly shows that even simple changes – such as adding peer feedback or giving a choice of topic – can produce significant improvements in learner performance. Thus, instructors are encouraged to continually adapt and experiment with integrated approaches that weave together cognitive, communicative, and technological elements.

CONCLUSION

Generative skills – the ability to produce English in writing and speech – are critical yet challenging outcomes of EFL instruction. This review has surveyed current theory and research to identify best practices for developing these skills. The evidence indicates that **communicative, task-based approaches**, when combined with **cognitive scaffolds and learner support**, yield the strongest improvements in both fluency and accuracy. Writing instruction benefits from process-oriented planning, collaborative genre work, regular feedback, and strategic use of technology; speaking instruction benefits from varied communicative tasks, repetition exercises, pronunciation practice, and a supportive climate. Both domains gain from fostering learner autonomy and motivation.

Practical challenges remain (large classes, exam pressures, tech issues), but classroom-based studies demonstrate that even modest pedagogical changes can make a difference. For example, Thai students used digital writing tools to improve compositions, and Peruvian students under scaffolded speaking instruction significantly raised their oral test scores. Such cases show that EFL teachers in diverse settings can, with creativity and evidence-based methods, overcome constraints to teach writing and speaking effectively.

In closing, we recommend that EFL programs continue to integrate **task-based and communicative methodologies** as the backbone of writing and speaking courses, while also training teachers in scaffolding techniques and technology integration. Ongoing classroom research should further explore how these strategies interact with learner characteristics (proficiency level, personality, motivation) and contexts. Ultimately, empowering learners as active producers of language – through thoughtful pedagogy – will help them become confident, accurate, and fluent users of English in both written and spoken forms.

REFERENCES

Alamri, B. (2021). Challenges of implementing technology in ESL writing classrooms: A case study. *English Language Teaching, 14*(12), 36–36. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v14n12p36

Alisoy, H. (2024). The Impact of Cultural Differences on ESL Learners' Language Acquisition . *EuroGlobal Journal of Linguistics and Language Education*, *1*(1), 11-17. https://doi.org/10.69760/0qzswg04

Alisoy, H., & Sadiqzade, Z. (2024). Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL): Revolutionizing Language Education. *Luminis Applied Science and Engineering*, *1*(1), 60-72. https://doi.org/10.69760/lumin.202400002

Alisoy, H., Hajiyeva, B., & Sadiqzade, Z. (2024). CONNECT WITH ENGLISH A2-B1 SPEAKING HANDBOOK . *Journal of Azerbaijan Language and Education Studies*, *1*(2), 1-115. https://doi.org/10.69760/jales.2024.00115

Al-Shboul, O. K., Rababah, L. M., Banikalef, A. A., & Mehawesh, M. (2023). Role of learner autonomy in intrinsic motivation in EFL writing. *International Journal of English Language and Literature Studies, 12*(2), 107–116. https://doi.org/10.55493/5019.v12i2.4756

Arochman, T., Margana, A., Ashadi, A., Achmad, S., Nugrahaeni, D. A., & Baihaqi, I. (2024). The effect of project-based learning on English writing skill for EFL learners. *Journal of Pedagogical Research, 8*(2). https://doi.org/10.33902/JPR.202423961

Ashrafova, I. (2024). Phonetic and Lexical Characteristics of German Loanwords in English: A Study on Linguistic Adaptation and Cultural Influence. *EuroGlobal Journal of Linguistics and Language Education*, *1*(2), 44-50. https://doi.org/10.69760/2xgtn820

Ashrafova, I. (2024). The Role of Weak Forms in English Rhythm and Intonation: Implications for Language Learning. *Acta Globalis Humanitatis Et Linguarum*, *1*(2), 1-8. https://doi.org/10.69760/aghel.01024060

Badger, R., & White, G. (2000). A process-genre approach to teaching writing. *ELT Journal, 54*(2), 153–160. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/54.2.153

Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics, 1*(1), 1–47. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/1.1.1

Celce-Murcia, M. (2001). *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (3rd ed.). Heinle & Heinle.

Chairinkam, J., & Yawiloeng, R. (2024). The use of scaffolding strategies to enhance the writing development of EFL students. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 14*(9), 2996–3007. https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1409.35

Derwing, T. M., Rossiter, M. J., Munro, M. J., & Thomson, R. I. (2004). Second language fluency: Judgments on different tasks. *Language Learning, 54*(4), 655–679. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0023-8333.2004.00254.x

Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford University Press.

Əşrəfova , İlahə. (2025). Education and Chatbots: New Opportunities for Teachers and Students. *Journal of Azerbaijan Language and Education Studies*, *2*(2), 39-49. https://doi.org/10.69760/jales.2025001010

Flower, L. S., & Hayes, J. R. (1981). A cognitive process theory of writing. *College Composition and Communication, 32*(4), 365–387. https://doi.org/10.2307/356600

Ghasemi, A. A., & Mozaheb, M. A. (2021). Developing EFL learners' speaking fluency: Use of practical techniques. *MEXTESOL Journal, 45*(2). [ERIC Document ED620424]

Li, J., Huang, J., Wu, W., & Whipple, P. B. (2024). Evaluating the role of ChatGPT in enhancing EFL writing assessments in classroom settings: A preliminary investigation. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, 11*, 1268. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-03755-2

Li, X., & Hu, W. (2024). Peer versus teacher corrections through electronic learning communities and face-to-face classroom interactions and EFL learners' passion for learning, speaking fluency, and accuracy. *Heliyon, 10*(4), e25849. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e25849

Littlewood, W. (2013). *Developing the language curriculum: A student-centered approach*. Cambridge University Press.

Nunan, D. (2004). *Task-based language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

Peungcharoenkun, T., & Waluyo, B. (2023). Implementing process-genre approach, feedback, and technology in L2 writing in higher education. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education, 8*, 34. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-023-00211-7

Pitukwong, K., & Saraiwang, S. (2024). Exploring the effectiveness of digital writing tools on Thai EFL students' writing. *Contemporary Educational Technology, 16*(3), Article ep519. https://doi.org/10.30935/cedtech/14808

Refaey, E. A. (2023). Using the communicative approach to develop EFL secondary students' speaking skills. *Research in Language Teaching, 4*(25), 220–248.

Sadiqzade, Z. (2024). The Impact of Music on Language Learning: A Harmonious Path to Mastery. *EuroGlobal Journal of Linguistics and Language Education*, *1*(1), 134-140. https://doi.org/10.69760/zma1bn56

Sarmiento-Campos, N.-V., Lázaro-Guillermo, J. C., Silvera-Alarcón, E.-N., Cuéllar-Quispe, S., Huamán-Romaní, Y.-L., Apaza Apaza, O., & Sorkheh, A. (2022). The effectiveness of scaffolding method on EFL learners' speaking achievement. *Education Research International, 2022*, Article 3514892. https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/3514892

Swain, M. (1995). Three functions of output in second language learning. In G. Cook & B. Seidlehofer (Eds.), *Principle & Practice in Applied Linguistics* (pp. 125–144). Oxford University Press.

Tauchid, A., Barata, M. A., Wafa, K., & Wijayanti, R. (2024). Navigating challenges in remote speaking tasks: Unveiling technical and non-technical problems faced by students. *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning, 25*(4), 87–106. https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v25i4.7772

Tipaya, T., & Waluyo, B. (2023). Implementing process-genre approach, feedback, and technology in L2 writing in higher education. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education, 8*, 34. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-023-00211-7

Tung, C.-A. J., & Huang, S. C. (2022). Exploring four EFL writers' development of learner autonomy through the lens of complex dynamic systems theory. *English Teaching & Learning, 46*, 321–353. https://doi.org/10.1007/s42321-021-00098-y

Wang, W., Rezaei, Y. M., & Izadpanah, S. (2024). Speaking accuracy and fluency among EFL learners: The role of creative thinking, emotional intelligence, and academic enthusiasm. *Heliyon, 10*(1), e37620. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e37620

Willis, J., & Willis, D. (2007). *Doing task-based teaching*. Oxford University Press.