Innovatively Transforming Primary School EFL Writing: A Systematic Review of Studies

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The article provides a comprehensive analysis of research studies focusing on innovative teaching techniques for enhancing writing skills in English as a foreign language (EFL) among primary school students (aged 6–14 years). Particularly, it addresses the issue of underdeveloped writing proficiency among Slovenian students. The introduction discusses various challenges in developing primary school students' writing skills and presents modern techniques for successful writing development that have proven effective in English-speaking countries; which may be recommended for EFL instruction. The article introduces selective innovative teaching techniques—Shared Writing, Jigsaw Writing, Word Wall, and Storybird—for EFL writing, promising to improve writing skills while fostering students' creativity and engagement. Through a systematic literature review, the article offers insights into the effectiveness of these techniques and their implications for primary school EFL classrooms.

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Inovativno preoblikovanje pisanja pri angleščini kot tujem jeziku v osnovni šoli: Sistematični pregled študij

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V članku izpostavljamo celovit pregled študij, ki so osredotočene na inovativne učne tehnike za izboljšanje pisne zmožnosti v angleščini kot tujem jeziku med osnovnošolskimi učenci (starimi od 6 do 14 let), pri čemer obravnavamo slabše razvito pisno znanje slovenskih učencev. Uvodni del osvetli nekatere izzive pri razvoju pisne zmožnosti pri osnovnošolcih in predstavi izbrane inovativne tehnike za uspešen razvoj pisanja, ki so se izkazale za učinkovite v angleško govorečih državah in bi jih lahko priporočili tudi pri pouku tujega jezika. Za poučevanje pisanja pri angleščini kot tujem jeziku so predstavljene izbrane inovativne tehnike »skupnega pisanja« (ang. 'Shared Writing'), »sestavljanke« (ang. 'Jigsaw'), »besedne stene« (ang. 'Word Wall') ter uporaba platforme StoryBird, ki naj bi izboljšale pisno zmožnost učencev, hkrati pa spodbudile njihovo ustvarjalnost in angažiranost. Članek s sistematičnim pregledom literature ponuja vpogled v učinkovitost teh tehnik ter uporabnost pri pouku angleščine kot tujega jezika v osnovnošolskih učilnicah.

1 Introduction

As *lingua franca*, English serves across cultures and professions as a language of the interconnected world. Without complete knowledge of the English language, it can be highly challenging to communicate with global citizens. Speaking, listening, reading, and writing in English as a foreign language (hereinafter: EFL) transcend mere academic achievement – these four communication skills are a fundamental gateway to effective interaction with the (native) speakers of the language.

Among the quartet of language competencies, writing stands out as a higher-order thinking skill, demanding more extensive practice and experience compared to its counterparts (Kellogg, 2008; Klimova, 2013; Fareed et al., 2016), as it demands knowledge of grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and vocabulary alongside elements of creativity, organization, and imagination (Veramuthu & Shah, 2020). However, it is important to emphasize that both first language and EFL writing are complex and recursive intellectual processes; there are a few differences, especially when turning our thoughts into written words, which tends to be more difficult for non-native speakers (Silva, 1992; Cook & Bassetti, 2005; Manchón, Roca de Larios & Murphy, 2009) – EFL texts are shorter, less detailed, less developed, or use less figurative language than first language texts (Silva, 1992; Manchón et al., 2009).

For Slovenian students and teachers, the acquisition and teaching of writing skills in EFL are not only crucial for comprehensive language development but also for success in foreign language (hereinafter: FL) assessments on national exams, such as the National Assessment of Knowledge (NAK) for primary school pupils (aged 6–14 years) and the Matura exam in secondary schools (at the age of 19). The performance in these two national exams has primarily highlighted the inadequately acquired FL writing proficiency in Slovenian students, particularly among primary school pupils (Letno poročilo NPZ, 2022).

Despite a limited focus on EFL writing in Slovenian EFL research (see Pižorn, 2013; Jashari & Dagarin Fojkar, 2019; Nagode, 2023), foreign scholars stress the underdeveloped EFL writing skills among primary school students. This issue is also overlooked in international comparative research, which concentrates on reading and listening (OECD Marconi's research from 2023 excludes writing).

Consequently, numerous approaches and techniques have been introduced to enhance EFL writing skills, improving performance and motivation among students and teachers, who play a pivotal role in encouraging writing (Bausch, 2010; Purnama, 2015), especially with young learners full of energy (McKay, 2006). Besides motivation, teachers' exploration of new ways of teaching also demands creative thinking "to find out the appropriate method in order to help students master those problems" (Bafadal & Rafika, 2015, p. 118).

The present article conducts a systematic literature review of selected innovative teaching techniques and approaches to develop writing skills in EFL among primary school pupils, which have demonstrated success in practice. The techniques, such as Shared Writing (Routman, 2005; Doubleday et al., 2015), Jigsaw writing (Aronson, 2008; Ardila, 2012; Bafadal & Rafika, 2015), Word Wall (Green, 2003; Wilker & Funk, 2008), digital platform StoryBird (Ramirez, 2013; Giacomini, 2015; Zakaria et al., 2016) and others, were initially designed for teaching writing in English as a first language (hereinafter: L1) and later adapted to teaching EFL. As such, they could be recommended as examples of good practice in EFL classes within primary schools. Based on these techniques, which address the fundamental needs of students and teachers, recommendations for the future development of EFL teaching methodologies will be provided.

While previous literature reviews on EFL writing (see Selveraj & Abdul Aziz, 2019; Palanisamy & Abdul Aziz, 2021; Karakuş, 2023) have provided valuable insights, their primary focus has been on secondary and tertiary levels (Selveraj & Abdul Aziz, 2019; Palanisamy & Abdul Aziz, 2021). However, the challenge of teaching writing should be addressed fundamentally within the context of primary education. Furthermore, although Karakuş (2023) offers suggestions for successfully teaching writing skills – leveraging technology, focusing on specific methods or strategies, and elucidating writing structure – our primary focus is on the evaluation of innovative techniques in primary EFL writing instruction, along with suggestions for their integration into primary EFL classrooms.

2   Theoretical Framework

Writing, essential in language acquisition, requires precision and effective communication (Fareed et al., 2016; Karakuş, 2023). Challenges in student writing, including motivation for writing, negative impacts from social media, inconsistent feedback, and large class sizes (Fareed et al., 2016), necessitate innovative methodologies for motivation, inclusivity, engagement, and collaborative learning (Chuang, 2014; Hornstra et al., 2014). Innovative techniques, such as paraphrasing and sequencing, uniquely engage learners and improve writing skills, fostering confidence (Kashinath & Raju, 2020). However, aligning teaching writing with students' interests remains a contemporary challenge for educators (Almazroa & Alotaibi, 2023; Eslit, 2023). Recent research (Kashinath & Raju, 2020; Eslit, 2023) suggests innovative writing techniques encompass interactive activities, technology, and personalized learning initiatives, ensuring diverse learning styles, cultivating critical thinking, collaborative skills, and active writing participation for enduring educational experiences.

In Slovenia, developing EFL writing skills in primary schools presents significant challenges due to orthographic differences between Slovenian and English, impacting students' phonological awareness and initial writing difficulties in EFL (Zorman, 2008; Skela et al., 2009). The discrepancy in phonemes – 44 in English compared to Slovenian's 29 – creates spelling challenges for Slovenian beginners in EFL (ibid.). To address this, Slovenian teachers emphasize sound-letter correlation, laying the foundation for students' understanding (Kokalj, 2019). Besides orthographic differences, Slovenian students also face difficulties transitioning from listening and speaking to reading and writing. These challenges include a lack of motivation for writing, exposure to different language inputs, difficulty internalizing the task types, misunderstandings regarding evaluating writing tasks, teachers' feedback (Pižorn, 2013) and their attitudes, and the general underdevelopment of learning strategies (Nagode, 2023). In such cases, didactics recommend integrating various teaching methods, techniques, and approaches to comprehensively impart EFL writing skills (Skela et al., 2009).

2.1   Selected Innovative Techniques for Teaching Writing in EFL

The selected techniques – Shared Writing, Jigsaw, Word Wall, and Storybird – have been chosen for their ability to promote collaborative writing, group activities, vocabulary integration, and creative storytelling, thus influencing students' writing process. Compared to other traditional writing techniques, these strategies actively engage primary school learners in the EFL writing process, allowing them to create model texts and collective stories. This engagement leads to improved individual writing performance and the development of critical thinking and collaborative skills.

"Shared writing is a collaborative method that builds upon the teacher-students' initial modelling of writing aloud, providing students with a scaffold to attempt their own successful writing" (Routman, 2005, p. 84). This adaptable method, suitable for pairs, groups, or whole classes, involves collaborative brainstorming, vocabulary selection, and concept development to create an ideal written composition (de Lange, Dippenaar & Anker, 2018). Together, a teacher and students interactively plan the structure, organize ideas, design content, and write the model text. After completing the first draft, both the teacher and students review the text, making improvements and revisions to produce the final version. Finally, students follow this model to create their own individual creative texts.

The Jigsaw technique is "a useful cooperative strategy enabling a group of learners to cover several topics simultaneously within a shorter amount of time" (Bafadal & Rafika, 2015, p. 118). It involves "dividing the class into competency groups (also known as home groups), where each group receives a list of subtopics to research. Individual members then collaborate with 'experts' from other groups to research deeper into the assigned subcategory. Afterward, they return to their home groups, taking on the role of instructor for their assigned subcategory" (Bafadal & Rafika, 2015, p. 121). This technique is beneficial for primary students as it promotes the development of diverse ideas for creating and writing a comprehensive text and encourages interactive collaboration among classmates. Through this process, young learners take on the responsibility of instructing their peers, and also learn how to use and write appropriate EFL vocabulary and grammar structures. In this manner, they enhance young learners' active engagement in the writing process.

"Word Wall is a collection of high-frequency sight words that are age appropriate, classified into groups or categories" (Sartika, 2017, p. 180), where words are displayed on a wall or whiteboards in large printing (Kusuma, 2021). Initially, this technique was designed for teaching vocabulary and reading (Jasmine & Schiesl, 2009) but was later transferred to teaching writing (Sartika, 2017).

Digital storytelling, particularly using platforms like Storybird, engages FL learners in using multimedia for the enhancement of their literacy skills, and it raises the question of the positive impact of digital tools on the writing process (Menezes, 2012; Wertz, 2014; Kazazoglu & Bilir, 2021). The digital platform Storybird "allows its users to write and publish their stories" and "enables getting feedback from teachers and experts" at the same time (Kazazoglu & Bilir, 2021, p. 44). The platform allows students to "write in different forms such as picture books, long-form stories, comics, flash fiction, poetry, and blogs" (ibid., p. 46), complementing the stories with visuals before publication.

3 Method

A systematic review includes diverse scholarly contributions published in educational journals and academic theses, focusing on teaching writing in EFL through innovative techniques. The review applied specific search criteria, targeting qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-method research designs published in English between 2010 and 2023, explicitly addressing writing skills enhancement in EFL, particularly within primary school settings. The review followed a systematic approach outlined by Impellizzeri and Bizzini (2012), involving six key stages: (1) defining the review question and eligibility criteria, (2) searching for studies, (3) selecting studies, (4) data extraction, (5) data synthesis, and (6) interpretation of results.

The primary search was conducted utilizing the electronic sources accessible through the University Library of Maribor, particularly databases such as Ebsco, WoS, SSCI, and Scopus, focusing on the keywords "innovative techniques in teaching English writing", "elementary school", "primary school", "English as a foreign language", "word wall teaching writing", "Jigsaw writing", "teaching shared writing", "digital platform Storybird writing". Since these databases found only a few relevant articles, the search was further extended to Google Web. The review focused on

information, including participants' age groups, the year of research, measured constructs, key findings, and recommendations from the retrieved studies.

The initial keyword search with basic filters across multiple databases – Ebsco, WoS, SSCI, Scopus – revealed 403 articles in total (94 articles on Innovative techniques, 84 articles on the Shared writing technique, 84 articles on the Storybird platform, 82 articles on the Word Wall technique, and 59 articles on the Jigsaw technique, all applied to teaching EFL for primary school students). After refining the search with specific keywords, the number of relevant articles decreased significantly to 29 (15 articles on Innovative techniques, 5 articles on the Jigsaw technique, 4 articles on the Shared writing technique and the Word Wall technique, and 1 article on the Storybird platform). After manual analysis, only 5 articles from the databases were found to be relevant. Further extending and limiting the research to Google Web (9 articles found) resulted in the finding of 14 relevant articles for this analysis.

4   Results

The outcomes are organized into chapters. Initially, an analytical presentation of research studies and academic theses will be presented in a table format, categorized into five thematic clusters: (1) the general use of innovative techniques, methods, and approaches for teaching EFL writing skills to primary school students, (2) Shared Writing as an innovative technique for teaching writing in EFL for primary school students, (3) Jigsaw writing as an innovative technique for teaching writing in EFL for primary school students, (4) Word Wall as an innovative technique for teaching writing in EFL for primary school students, and (5) Storybird platform as innovative technique for teaching writing in EFL for primary school students. Subsequently, a comprehensive discourse on the findings from these studies will be presented, providing a detailed analysis and discussion.

4.1   Table analysis of research studies and theses according to 5 thematic groups

Table 1: Analysis of research studies and diploma and master theses according to five thematic groups

Thematic groups	Authors, Year	Title	Participants	Measured Constructs/Variables and Measurement Instruments	Key Findings	Recommendation
General use of innovative techniques, methods, and approaches for teaching EFL writing skills to primary school students	Cole & Feng, 2015	Effective Strategies for Improving Writing Skills of Elementary English Language Learners	11 students	Investigating the validity of teaching techniques; A mixed method approach (experimental and control group, a student survey, a teacher survey, tests)	Findings suggest that by using technology, pre-taught vocabulary, teacher influences, and implementation of positive, diverse literacy practice, writing skills can be developed.	Authors suggest using journal writing, graphic organizers, teacher/peer conferencing, and focusing on expressing ideas rather than being critical of students' grammatical errors.
	Hussain, 2017	Teaching Writing to Second Language Learners: Bench-marking Strategies for Classroom	400 students, 160 EFL teachers (primary & secondary school)	Evaluating the writing skills of students in learning FL using techniques such as brainstorming, fable writing, speed writing, loop writing, and mini saga; a mixed method approach	The results revealed that teachers believe writing is the most difficult skill to teach, students in general are interested in FL writing, and the most popular technique among those presented was brainstorming, preferred techniques are also loop writing and narrating fables.	The author recommends using various techniques (among those presented) in teaching writing skills for EFL, such as brainstorming.

Thematic groups	Authors, Year	Title	Participants	Measured Constructs/Variables and Measurement Instruments	Key Findings	Recommendation
General use of innovative techniques, methods, and approaches for teaching EFL writing skills to primary school students	Yusuf, Jusoh & Yusuf, 2019	Cooperative Learning Strategies to Enhance Writing Skills among Second Language Learners	30 students	Investigating the impact of cooperative learning methods (specifically the jigsaw technique and student team achievement division) on improving students' writing skills; a quantitative research method (tests, experimental and control group)	Students' writing scores had increased from the pre-test to the post test after the implementation of the cooperative learning method.	Authors support implementation of this method in the classroom, as it promoted cooperation among students and reduces peer competition and promotes academic achievement and positive relationships.
	Lee & Wong, 2013	Bringing Innovation to EFL Writing: The Case of a Primary School in Hong Kong	450 students, 3 teachers who have been involved in the project	Evaluating the implementation of innovative techniques and method in teaching writing in EFL in comparison to traditional teaching methods; A mixed-methods approach (teacher interviews, student questionnaires, tests)	The change has brought improvements to students' motivation in learning writing and enhanced their performance.	Authors suggest using an innovative writing programme that incorporates writing as a process (from ideas to drafting and producing a final written piece) and genre (writing letters, diaries, etc.)

Thematic groups	Authors, Year	Title	Participants	Measured Constructs/Variables and Measurement Instruments	Key Findings	Recommendation
Shared Writing as an innovative technique for teaching writing in EFL	Antika, 2019 (Master Thesis)	The Effect of Applying Shared Writing Strategy to the Students' Writing Ability at Eighth Grade SMP Budisatrya Medan	120 students	Finding out the effect of applying shared writing strategy to the students' writing ability; quantitative research (experimental and control group, tests)	The research approved applying shared writing strategy to the students' writing ability.	The author suggests implementing the technique in classroom as the students evaluated it as more interesting, creative, and they were happier with their results.
	Al Zadjali, 2016	Shared writing in Omani Young Learner Classrooms	23 students and 23 EFL teachers	Exploring the effects of Shared writing practice in developing children's writing skills, and confidence when writing in the English language; small scale qualitative case study.	The findings revealed that the implementation of shared writing practice has contributed to the enhancement of children's writing speed, spelling, sentence structure, punctuation, and handwriting levels.	The author supports implementation of the technique in the classroom as it was proven to have a positive effect on teaching and students' writing skills.

Thematic groups	Authors, Year	Title	Participants	Measured Constructs/Variables and Measurement Instruments	Key Findings	Recommendation
Jigsaw writing an innovative technique for teaching writing in EFL	Mahdy, Ryhan & Hasn, 2018	The Effect of Jigsaw Technique on Enhancing EFL Intermediate Students' Writing Skill	60 students	Exploring the effect of using the jigsaw technique on students' writing achievement; quantitative research (experimental and control group, tests)	The results showed that the jigsaw technique is considered as more effective, useful, and favourable to teaching writing skills.	Teachers should use the technique with every communication skill, on all levels. However, they need to be well prepared and instructed in using the technique.
Jigsaw writing an innovative technique for teaching writing in EFL	Bafadal & Rafika, 2015	The Effect of the Jigsaw Technique in Teaching Writing Descriptive Texts	40 students	Experimenting with the effectiveness of the Jigsaw technique in teaching descriptive text writing; quasi-experimental research design	The research demonstrated the effectiveness of using the jigsaw technique in teaching writing.	The authors suggest the use of the technique; it was an enjoyable and suitable technique to teach writing.

Thematic groups	Authors, Year	Title	Participants	Measured Constructs/Variables and Measurement Instruments	Key Findings	Recommendation
	Mayrina, 2011 (Diploma Thesis)	Using Jigsaw Technique to Improve Students' Narrative Writing	35 students	Discovering the enhancement of students' narrative writing ability through the implementation of the Jigsaw technique; a qualitative research (interviews, questionnaires, checklists) and quantitative research (tests).	The study findings indicated that the Jigsaw technique was effective in enhancing the students' motivation and participation, leading to improved results in the writing test.	The author recommends implementing the technique in the classroom, emphasizing the active involvement of teachers. The technique can be further applied for teaching other skills as well.
	Abdullah, 2011	Effects of Jigsaw III Technique on Achievement in Written Expression	71 students	Comparing the impact of the Jigsaw technique with the instructional teacher-centred teaching method on students' academic success in written expressions; A mixed-methods approach (feedback, opinionnaire, pre-and post-tests)	The analysis of a written expression course showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group, with students having positive impressions of the Jigsaw technique.	The author prefers teaching writing using the jigsaw technique over the instructional teacher-centred teaching method and suggests its practical implementation.

Thematic groups	Authors, Year	Title	Participants	Measured Constructs/Variables and Measurement Instruments	Key Findings	Recommendation
Word Wall as an innovative technique for teaching writing in EFL	Saraswati, 2019 (Diploma Thesis)	The Effectiveness of using Word Wall Technique to Teach Writing a Recount Text	62 students	Evaluating the effectiveness of the word wall technique in improving students' writing achievement; quasi-experimental research	The word wall technique is effective for students to improve their achievement in writing.	Enjoyable learning environment in necessary. The author suggests using the technique as it helps students arrange their knowledge and memorize the words just by visual exposure.
	Amri & Sukmaningrum, 2023	Implementation of Wordwall as a Learning Media to Improve Students' Writing Skill	36 students	Examining the effectiveness of the Word Wall technique as a learning medium in enhancing students' writing skills; quantitative research (experimental and control group, tests)	The results showed that the experimental group had significant improvement in their writing in EFL.	Language teachers should consider using Wordwall as a learning tool to enhance their students' writing skills.

Thematic groups	Authors, Year	Title	Participants	Measured Constructs/Variables and Measurement Instruments	Key Findings	Recommendation
Storybird platform as an innovative technique for teaching writing in EFL	Shamsulbahri & Abdul Aziz, 2020	The Effectiveness of Storybird in Improving English Narrative Writing	8 students	Exploring the use of technology, especially digital storytelling websites; quantitative research (experimental and control group, tests)	The research findings indicate a positive improvement in students' written texts after using the Storybird platform, and it also increases proficiency levels, motivation, and interest in learning English.	The authors suggest exploring various digital tools and strategies in English teaching and learning for younger generations and promote the use of the Storybird platform.

Thematic groups	Authors, Year	Title	Participants	Measured Constructs/Variables and Measurement Instruments	Key Findings	Recommendation
Storybird platform as an innovative technique for teaching writing in EFL	Kazazoglu & Bilir, 2021	Digital Storytelling in L2 Writing: The Effectiveness of "Storybird Web 2.0 Tool"	6 students	Discovering the integration of the digital storytelling tool Storybird in EFL classrooms when teaching writing skills for Generation Z; qualitative research (pre- and post-questionnaires).	The results show that Storybird has a positive impact on the students' perspectives towards L2 writing.	Authors claim that Storybird can and should be used effectively as a digital tool for enhancing L2 writing in EFL classrooms.

4.2   Discussion of Analysis Findings

A total of 14 academic theses and scholarly articles were examined in detail, providing comprehensive insights into diverse aspects, including publication dates, participant demographics, measured variables, assessment tools employed, key observations, and recommendations.

The studies covered a range of research methods, categorized into qualitative (Al Zadjali, 2016; Kazazoglu & Bilir, 2021) and quantitative approaches (Mahdy, Ryhan & Hasn, 2018; Antika, 2019; Yusuf, Jusoh & Yusuf, 2019; Shamsulbahri & Abdul Aziz, 2020; Amri & Sukmaningrum, 2023); where the researchers tested the experimental and control groups and evaluated students' progress using pre- and post-tests after exposure to the innovative teaching techniques. Additionally, some studies adopted a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative experimental research with pre- and post-tests, followed by qualitative analysis through questionnaires or surveys (Abdullah, 2011; Mayrina, 2011; Lee & Wong, 2013; Cole & Feng, 2015; Hussain, 2017).

The scope of the studies primarily extended beyond Slovenian borders, with a predominant focus on Asian countries, including Indonesia (where education reforms have recently brought many scientific works in the EFL field; see Karakuş, 2023), Malaysia, Jakarta, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Philippines, and the Middle East – Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Oman, and Turkey.

The participants primarily consisted of EFL primary school learners (6–15 years old), occasionally including EFL teachers. The researchers mainly focused on assessing the effectiveness of the innovative techniques and methods, thus excluding parents and other pedagogical staff. The largest sample (450 students) was taken by Lee & Wong (2013), and the smallest (6) by Kazazoglu & Bilir (2021), which highlights the disparity in the number of students and brings forth the issue of generalizability, statistical power, and reliability when comparing the teaching techniques. The students were selected for a study because the researchers asked the EFL teachers to participate with their class (Mayrina, 2011; Bafadal & Rafika, 2015; Saraswati, 2019; Yusuf, Jusoh & Yusuf, 2019; Shamsulbahri & Abdul Aziz, 2020). Some researchers actively participated in the teaching process themselves (Cole & Feng, 2015), while others collaborated with a specific school, randomly selecting

participants within it (Abdullah, 2011; Antika, 2019). In contrast, some studies chose students and EFL teachers randomly, regardless of the school (Lee & Wong, 2013; Al Zadjali, 2016; Hussein, 2017; Mahdy, Ryhan & Hasn, 2018).

Numerous authors (see Lee & Wong, 2013; Bafadal & Rafika, 2015; Kazazoglu & Bilir, 2021, and others) agree on the importance of bringing creative teaching approaches into EFL classrooms, especially regarding writing skills. Studies focusing on specific techniques, such as shared writing (Al Zadjali, 2016; Antika, 2019), jigsaw writing (Abdullah, 2011; Mayrina, 2011; Bafadal & Rafika, 2015; Mahdy, Ryhan & Hasn, 2018), word wall (Saraswati, 2019; Amri & Sukmaningrum, 2023), and the digital platform Storybird (Shamsulbahri & Abdul Aziz, 2020; Kazazoglu & Bilir, 2021) recommend the use of technology, pre-taught vocabulary, brainstorming, graphic organizers, visual exposure aids, word memorization, journal writing, and teacher/peer conferencing due to their proven efficacy on students' writing speed, spelling, sentence structure, and confidence. Moreover, these techniques encourage collaborative, interactive learning and creativity, fostering a more interesting and engaging learning process. They help improve academic achievement and give more importance to ideas rather than focusing solely on correcting grammatical errors (Lee & Wong, 2013; Cole & Feng, 2015; Hussain, 2017; Yusuf & Jusoh & Yusuf, 2019).

However, certain authors (Mayrina, 2011; Mahdy, Ryhan & Hasn, 2018) highlight the challenges in their implementation, especially if teachers are not adequately trained or prepared for innovative approaches. They also stress that not all innovative techniques may be suitable for every learning environment, age group, or educational setting and suggest the potential for collaborative efforts among language teachers to share successful implementations of innovative techniques.

Ultimately, the synthesized findings from the studies support the theoretical framework, emphasizing the importance of selecting engaging and well-informed teaching techniques, fostering students' engagement and effectiveness in mastering the complex writing skill within the EFL context.

5   Conclusion

Developing writing skills in EFL contexts requires advanced cognitive abilities and extensive practice. This is particularly true in the Slovenian context, where mastering EFL writing skills is not only essential for comprehensive language development but also imperative for achieving desired outcomes in national language assessments.

A systematic literature review has examined the challenges of developing primary writing skills in EFL. The analysed studies introduce innovative writing techniques that foster diverse EFL literacy practices among primary school learners, including various learning styles and preferences. These techniques promote collaborative writing, creativity, and increase student motivation and participation, fostering a more interesting and engaging learning process. However, challenges such as lack of resources, inadequate technology or digital infrastructure, and insufficient teacher training may hinder the effective implementation of these techniques, especially among primary EFL teachers accustomed to traditional teaching methods. Therefore, we recommend the following strategies for advancing EFL teaching methodologies: conducting workshops for EFl teachers, encouraging feedback among teachers, promoting action research on selected techniques, and providing ongoing resources and support to EFL teachers.

Due to the scarcity of studies on EFL literacy practices in the primary school context, there is potential for further research to explore, improve, and adapt innovative EFL writing techniques based on teachers' feedback. Additionally, there is an opportunity for EFL teachers to collaborate and share successful applications of these techniques.

Despite potential challenges such as time planning, lack of teacher experience, technical support (especially for Storybird), classroom management, and assessment, we still recommend implementing selected innovative techniques in Slovenian EFL classrooms because of the benefits associated with student-centred teaching practices. Specifically, Slovenian EFL teachers are advised to implement Shared writing, Jigsaw, and Word wall techniques to establish the basic grounds for primary EFL writing – from phonemes to words, sentences, and longer texts, while encouraging active teacher involvement. Additionally, using the digital platform Storybird is encouraged to supplement learning by giving the students a higher

purpose in developing their writing skills, as digital tools have been shown to increase student motivation and enable long-term knowledge retention.

Acknowledgments

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