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THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL BACKGROUND ON WRITING STYLES IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT: Writing in a foreign language is influenced by numerous linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural factors. Among these, cultural background plays a significant role in shaping learners' writing styles, organizational patterns, and rhetorical preferences. This article explores the influence of cultural background on the writing styles of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. The study examines how cultural norms, values, and communication traditions affect the way students organize ideas, develop arguments, and express opinions in written English. Learners often transfer rhetorical conventions from their native language to English writing, resulting in differences in coherence, cohesion, paragraph structure, and argumentation patterns. Such cultural transfer may create challenges in academic writing contexts where English rhetorical expectations differ from those of the learners' first language. The article also discusses the importance of cultural awareness in EFL writing instruction. Understanding cultural influences enables teachers to provide more effective guidance and helps students adapt their writing to international academic standards without losing their cultural identity. Through the analysis of existing literature and educational practices, the study highlights the need for culturally responsive teaching approaches that recognize the diversity of learners' backgrounds. The findings suggest that integrating intercultural competence into writing instruction can enhance students' writing performance and promote more effective communication in academic and professional settings. The research contributes to the growing body of knowledge on the relationship between culture and language learning and offers practical implications for EFL educators seeking to improve writing instruction in multicultural classrooms.

KEYWORDS: cultural background, writing styles, EFL learners, intercultural competence, academic writing, rhetorical patterns, cultural transfer, English language teaching.

INTRODUCTION: Writing is one of the most important language skills in foreign language learning. It enables learners to express ideas, share knowledge, and communicate effectively in academic and professional environments. However, writing in a foreign language is a complex process that involves not only linguistic competence but also cultural awareness. In recent years, researchers have increasingly recognized that culture plays a significant role in shaping the way individuals write and organize their thoughts. Culture influences communication patterns, ways of thinking, and rhetorical conventions. As a result, learners often transfer writing habits and organizational structures from their native language to English. This phenomenon, known as cultural transfer, can affect various aspects of writing, including paragraph development, argumentation, coherence, cohesion, and the presentation of ideas. For example, while English academic writing generally emphasizes directness, clarity, and logical organization, other cultures may prefer indirect communication, circular reasoning, or a more descriptive style. In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, students frequently encounter difficulties when adapting to the rhetorical expectations of English writing. These difficulties are not always related to grammar or vocabulary; they may stem from differences in cultural norms and writing traditions. Consequently, understanding the relationship between culture

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and writing has become an important area of research in applied linguistics and language education. The purpose of this article is to examine how cultural background influences the writing styles of EFL learners. The study aims to identify the major cultural factors that shape writing behavior and to discuss their impact on academic writing performance. Furthermore, the article explores pedagogical strategies that can help teachers address cultural differences in writing instruction and promote intercultural competence among learners. By investigating the interaction between culture and writing, this study seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the challenges faced by EFL students and to provide practical recommendations for improving writing instruction in multicultural educational settings.

The relationship between culture and writing has been widely discussed in the field of applied linguistics. Kaplan (1966) was among the first scholars to introduce the concept of contrastive rhetoric, arguing that different cultures organize written discourse in different ways. According to his theory, cultural patterns influence the structure and organization of texts, leading learners to transfer rhetorical conventions from their first language to a second language.

Later studies expanded Kaplan's ideas and emphasized that writing is a social and cultural practice. Connor (1996) suggested that cultural values affect the ways writers develop arguments, support claims, and interact with readers. Researchers have also found that students from collectivist cultures often prefer indirect communication, while students from individualistic cultures tend to write more directly and explicitly. Recent research highlights the importance of intercultural competence in writing instruction. By understanding cultural differences, teachers can help learners adapt their writing styles to meet international academic standards while maintaining their cultural identity.

This study employs a qualitative research approach based on the analysis of existing literature related to culture and EFL writing. Academic articles, books, and research reports published in the fields of applied linguistics and language education were reviewed. The collected sources were analyzed to identify common themes concerning cultural influences on writing styles. Particular attention was given to rhetorical patterns, organization of ideas, coherence, cohesion, and argumentation strategies used by learners from different cultural backgrounds.

The analysis revealed that cultural background significantly influences EFL learners' writing styles. First, learners often transfer organizational patterns from their native language to English. This transfer can result in writing structures that differ from the expectations of English academic discourse. Second, cultural values affect argumentation styles. Students from some cultures tend to avoid direct criticism and prefer indirect expression of opinions, whereas English academic writing generally values clear and direct arguments. Third, differences in rhetorical conventions may influence coherence and cohesion. Learners sometimes rely on writing techniques common in their native language, which may appear unclear or repetitive in English. The findings also indicate that cultural awareness can improve writing instruction. Teachers who recognize cultural differences are better able to explain academic writing conventions and help students develop effective writing strategies. Integrating intercultural communication activities into writing courses can facilitate students' adaptation to diverse writing contexts.

CONCLUSION: Culture plays a crucial role in shaping the writing styles of EFL learners. The study demonstrates that cultural background influences rhetorical organization, argumentation patterns, coherence, and overall writing performance. Understanding these influences is essential for both teachers and students in multilingual and multicultural educational settings.

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The findings suggest that culturally responsive teaching approaches can enhance learners' writing competence and intercultural awareness. EFL educators should incorporate cultural discussions and comparative writing activities into their instruction to help students develop effective academic writing skills. Future research may investigate the influence of specific cultural factors on writing performance through empirical studies involving learners from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

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