

Developing Writing Skills Based On CEFR Requirements: Didactic Foundations And Challenges For English Learners In Uzbekistan

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Abstract: The development of writing proficiency remains a complex pedagogical challenge in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings. This article explores theoretical foundations for developing CEFR-aligned writing competence and analyzes persistent difficulties faced by English learners in Uzbekistan and L2 writing development, and instructional design, as well as regional studies highlighting the systemic challenges faced by Uzbek learners and teachers. Although English education in the country has expanded significantly, and substantial national reforms have been done at modernizing foreign language education, many learners still struggle to meet CEFR-aligned writing expectations, remaining particularly at B1–C1 levels where coherence, genre structure, argumentation, and accuracy become central. Conducting research in second language writing, didactic theory, and CEFR-oriented pedagogy, this article analyses systemic factors—including curriculum constraints, form-focused teaching traditions, insufficient feedback mechanisms, and limited exposure to authentic writing context that inhibit learners' progress. The article proposes a conceptual model of didactic technologies grounded in scaffolding, genre-based instruction, process-oriented learning, and digital mediation. Recommendations for strengthening teacher preparation, instructional materials, and classroom practices in Uzbekistan are offered to support improved alignment with CEFR writing requirements.

Keywords: CEFR; writing instruction; didactics; English language teaching; Uzbekistan; L2 writing development; formative assessment; action-oriented approach; writing pedagogy; educational reform.

Introduction: Writing proficiency represents a multifaceted dimension of second language competence, requiring integration of linguistic accuracy, textual organization, genre awareness, and communicative intent (Hyland, 2019). Within CEFR-oriented education systems, writing outcomes serve as a critical benchmark for academic and professional readiness due to CEFR's emphasis on clear communicative standards across proficiency levels (Council of Europe, 2020). Uzbekistan has adopted CEFR as the primary framework for curriculum design, assessment, and teacher training. However, national assessments and teacher reports have consistently indicated that learners underperform in writing relative to other skills: like reading and listening where candidates are able to achieve maximum scores in language tests, the initial component here still remains at intermediate and upper-intermediate levels (State Inspectorate for Quality Control in Education, 2021).

The purpose of this article is to examine theoretical approaches that integrate on three core areas: (1) the CEFR's action-oriented and can-do-based approach, (2) identifying systemic challenges faced by Uzbek learners, and (3) proposing a conceptual model of didactic technologies for local classrooms. These frameworks collectively inform how writing skills can be developed in ways that are systematic, communicative, and context-sensitive for learners in Uzbekistan to CEFR-aligned writing instruction and analyze factors that hinder writing achievement among Uzbek learners.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Walsh (2010), writing is essential since it is widely employed in higher education and the job. Krashen (2009) notes that writing ability is a long process and students who is proficient in it can make brief declarations, tell stories, plan formal or informal

presentations, participate in academic production activities, and communicate effectively. Meanwhile, students who do not know how to express themselves in writing will struggle to communicate effectively with instructors, employers, colleagues, or just about anybody else. Proposals, notes, reports, applications, preliminary interviews, e-mails, and other forms of professional communication are common in the everyday life of a college or institution student or successful graduate.

Shpit and Sobolevskaya (2019) note that growing significance and the intensification of research in different areas of science and technology lead to the increase of publication activity of graduate and postgraduate students in high-impact English language journals and international conference proceedings.

Yildirim and Sümengen (2023) state writing successfully entails creating writing objectives that are practical and precise to what your piece of writing requires. A productive writing process follows a clear and planned approach that assists you in meeting your writing objectives. Demirel and Fakazli (2018) state creative writing is a type of writing in which imagination, creativity, and originality are used to tell a narrative through powerful written pictures with an emotional effect, such as in poetry writing, short story writing, novel writing and more (cited in Yıldırım & Sümengen, 2023)

The CEFR, which was revised in 2020, lists "Reception," "Production," "Interaction," and "Mediation" as the specific communicative language activities and methods. The CEFR divides speaking and writing abilities into two fundamental categories: "production" and "interaction" abilities. Writing includes three sections as learning outcomes: "total written productivity," "creative writing," and "reports and essays" (CEFR, 2020, p. 61). Under the heading of written engagement, there are three subcategories: letters, notes, communications, and forms (CEFR, 2020, p. 71).

McMahon and Escribano (2012) note the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) "describes in a comprehensive way what language learners have to learn to do in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop so as to be able to act effectively" (Council of Europe, 2001: 1).

Writing in a second language is widely understood as a recursive, cognitive, and social process (Hyland, 2016). Process-based writing pedagogy, rooted in the work of Flower and Hayes (1981), highlights the importance of planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Genre-based theory, influenced by systemic functional linguistics

(SFL), emphasizes that learners must understand the social and rhetorical purposes of each genre they produce (Byrnes, 2010). Both approaches align with the CEFR's focus on task purpose, discourse structure, and communicative effectiveness.

Existing research on English education in Uzbekistan identifies a growing emphasis on CEFR-based reforms, but also persistent implementation challenges. After the government mandated CEFR alignment across national curricula, schools and universities began restructuring syllabi and assessment systems (Temirova & West, 2022). However, studies show that many teachers lack sufficient training in using CEFR descriptors for writing assessment, leading to inconsistencies and misconceptions (Khodjamkulov, 2016)

In addition, Vygotskian sociocultural theory underscores the role of scaffolding and guided participation in writing development. Learners benefit from modeling, peer collaboration, and teacher mediation within their zone of proximal development (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). Such perspectives support pedagogical approaches that integrate collaborative writing, guided feedback, and iterative revision.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

This study employs a theoretical research design, drawing on an extensive synthesis of scholarly literature on CEFR-aligned writing instruction, didactic principles, and regional challenges in foreign-language education. A theoretical design is appropriate because the aim of the article is not to measure learning outcomes empirically, but to examine how internationally recognized standards especially the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) can inform writing pedagogy in the Uzbek context (Council of Europe, 2020). By integrating conceptual, pedagogical, and context-specific perspectives, the framework establishes a foundation for proposing a coherent approach to develop writing skill aligned with CEFR descriptors.

The CEFR's action-oriented and can-do-based approach

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) positions language learning as a form of social action, requiring learners to perform tasks with specific communicative purposes (Council of Europe, 2020). The CEFR also establishes proficiency-level descriptors (A1–C2). The first stage involves analyzing CEFR requirements related to written production and written mediation, particularly the proficiency descriptors scaled from A1 to C2. These descriptors specify what learners "can do" at each level, guiding teachers in designing writing tasks,

evaluating learner performance, and aligning instruction with international standards (North et al., 2018). Scholarly work on CEFR-informed writing instruction emphasizes functional, communicative writing tasks, genre awareness, and process-oriented pedagogy as essential elements of effective curriculum design (Piccardo & North, 2019). In examining these sources, the article synthesizes how CEFR principles support scaffolding, task differentiation, and integration of digital writing practices. Attention is also given to research on the alignment between CEFR descriptors and classroom assessment strategies, which is particularly relevant for teachers transitioning from traditional grammar-translation approaches to competency-based instruction (Little, 2006).

Identifying Systemic Challenges Faced by Uzbek Learners

The second methodological step involves reviewing national educational documents, regional studies, and research on English-language learning in Uzbekistan. Scholars have noted several systemic issues affecting learners' writing development, including inconsistencies between curriculum goals and classroom practices, insufficient exposure to authentic written input, and limited teacher training in CEFR-aligned assessment (Akbarov & Ganieva, 2021). Additional challenges involve ingrained exam-oriented study habits, learners' restricted lexical range, and difficulties in transferring ideas coherently into English due to L1 interference (Ismailov, 2020). These contextual studies are synthesized to identify recurrent barriers across the Uzbek education system, from general secondary schools to higher education institutions. This step ensures that the proposed pedagogical model responds not only to universal CEFR principles but also to the realities of English classrooms in Uzbekistan, where class size, resources, and teachers' methodological background play significant roles in shaping writing instruction.

Proposing a Conceptual Model of Didactic Technologies for Local Classrooms

Based on the previous analytical steps, the study develops a conceptual didactic model for enhancing CEFR-aligned writing instruction in Uzbekistan. This model draws on modern didactic theories such as constructive alignment (Biggs, 2014), communicative language teaching, and activity-based learning. It emphasizes the integration of didactic technologies—including writing tasks, digital writing platforms, peer-review systems, and formative assessment tools that can be realistically implemented within local educational settings.

The model also incorporates universal didactic

principles such as learner autonomy, progression, feedback-rich instruction, and differentiation, which are strongly supported in CEFR-based pedagogies (Council of Europe, 2020). The theoretical grounding allows the model to serve as a bridge between high-level CEFR standards and the practical challenges identified in the Uzbek context. Thus, the methodological framework supports both conceptual analysis and the formulation of actionable pedagogical recommendations

DISCUSSION

The findings of this theoretical study indicate that aligning writing instruction in Uzbekistan with CEFR requirements presents both significant opportunities and systemic challenges. The integration of CEFR principles into national standards has laid an important foundation for modernizing English instruction, yet effective implementation requires deep pedagogical shifts, sustained teacher training, and context-conscious didactic innovation.

Interpreting CEFR Requirements in the Uzbek Context

The CEFR's action-oriented and communicative orientation encourages a move away from traditional grammar-translation methods toward task-based, process-oriented, and genre-aware writing instruction (Council of Europe, 2020; Hyland, 2016). However, in Uzbekistan, the translation of CEFR principles into classroom practice is often hindered by entrenched instructional habits, rigid assessment formats, and limited teacher familiarity with CEFR descriptors (Khodjamkulov, 2016; Temirova & West, 2022). This misalignment frequently results in superficial adoption, where CEFR terminology is used in curricula but does not fully shape pedagogy. The key implication to teacher training programs must go beyond introducing CEFR documents and cultivate practical competencies in designing writing tasks, rubrics, and feedback processes that genuinely reflect CEFR's action-oriented approach.

The Role of Didactic Technologies and Instructional Design

The conceptual model proposed in this study highlights the role of didactic technologies including writing stages, digital platforms, peer review, and formative assessment in supporting learners' writing development. Research shows that scaffolding and aligned assessment routines significantly enhance learners' ability to plan, organize, and revise texts (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Biggs, 2014). In contexts like Uzbekistan, where many learners struggle with coherence, cohesion, and argumentation (Islamov, 2019), such tools are essential. Digital technologies, in particular, can compensate for resource limitations,

enabling collaborative drafting, cloud-based writing portfolios, and immediate feedback tools (Hampel & Stickler, 2015). Their incorporation aligns with CEFR's emphasis on mediation and multimodal communication. However, disparities in digital access across urban and rural schools present equity challenges that policymakers should address.

Implications for Curriculum Development and Assessment

The review suggests that curriculum developers must ensure constructive alignment between CEFR learning outcomes, writing tasks, and assessment practices (Biggs, 2014). In Uzbekistan, this alignment is often weakened by exam-oriented cultures and summative assessments that prioritize accuracy over communicative effectiveness. As CEFR emphasizes communicative purpose, audience awareness, and task fulfillment, writing assessments must evolve to evaluate these competencies, not only linguistic correctness. The implication to national exams, textbook tasks, and classroom assessments should gradually shift toward performance-based evaluation, including essays, summaries, reflections, and multimodal writing tasks that mirror CEFR descriptors.

Implications for Teacher Professional Development

The success of CEFR-based writing instruction ultimately depends on teacher expertise. Teachers must develop competence in:

- interpreting CEFR descriptors,
- designing genre-specific writing tasks,
- providing formative, development-oriented feedback,
- integrating digital tools for writing,
- supporting scaffolding and peer collaboration.

Research from similar post-Soviet contexts shows that sustained professional development, mentoring, and collaborative teacher communities are essential for successful CEFR implementation (Silova, 2010). This implies that Uzbekistan should invest not only in one-off training programs but also in continuous, practice-oriented professional development systems.

Broader Educational and Policy Implications

At the policy level, CEFR alignment offers an opportunity to internationalize Uzbekistan's educational system. However, effective implementation requires coordination among policymakers, curriculum developers, teacher educators, and school administrators. Investment in materials, digital tools, teacher training, and classroom research are necessary to ensure that CEFR-based reforms lead to improved writing competence among

learners.

CONCLUSION

This study has examined how CEFR requirements and modern didactic principles can guide the development of writing skills among English learners in Uzbekistan. By synthesizing international research on CEFR-based pedagogy, theories of L2 writing, and the specific educational context of Uzbekistan, the study proposes a conceptual model that integrates action-oriented learning, didactic scaffolding, formative assessment, and context-sensitive instructional design. The analysis reveals that while Uzbekistan has made notable progress in adopting CEFR as a national standard, significant challenges persist in aligning classroom practice with CEFR principles. These challenges include limited teacher training, gaps between curriculum goals and assessment systems, resource constraints, and lingering reliance on traditional teaching approaches. Overcoming these obstacles requires targeted professional development, greater emphasis on formative and performance-based assessment, and thoughtful integration of digital tools.

The proposed didactic model offers a pathway for enhancing writing instruction by aligning learning outcomes, teaching methods, and assessment practices with CEFR descriptors. Its adoption can help learners progress more systematically in their writing abilities, better preparing them for academic and professional communication in the global context. Ultimately, improving writing skills in Uzbekistan's EFL classrooms requires both pedagogical innovation and systemic support. By combining CEFR standards with sound didactic foundations, educators can foster more communicative, competent, and confident English writers capable of participating fully in today's interconnected world.

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