

About Teaching Writing and Reading as Forms of Students' Independent Work

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Abstract: The study analyses self-guided students' work organization while studying Foreign languages. Furthermore, it highlights the development of writing and reading skills as forms of students' self-study. It concentrates on different ways to train and improve these skills. The study starts with telling about the role of written communication in the modern world and gives significant differences between an oral speech and written one. Then, it focuses the reader's attention on two levels of thoughts passing, level A and B to be exact and considers them in details. Besides, the study deals with exercises for teaching writing. Further, the study goes on to say about developing reading as the second form of students' independent work. It describes the number of skills which are necessary to master this activity. According to the study learning how to read is divided into three phases and text comprehension needs some components that are presented in the study. Then, the study gives some basic techniques to perform the tasks of teaching and points out how it is important to choose texts for reading properly. In conclusion, the study says that development of writing and reading skills can be helpful for students to join other people's culture.

Key words: Students' self-study, training, ability, knowledge, skills, developing, comprehension, task, complexity, linguistic, content

INTRODUCTION

Communicative purpose of teaching Foreign languages is certainly relevant today. This objective is accomplished by forming in students the necessary language and speech skills in reading, listening, speaking and writing which leads ultimately to mastering a Foreign language.

The role of written communication in the modern world is difficult to overestimate, so teaching writing requires some consideration. Between oral speech and writing, there are significant differences in both psychological and linguistic aspects. Oral forms are characterized by:

- Rich intonation forms
- Facial expressions, gestures
- A certain pace
- High degree of automation
- Contact the other person
- Specific set of linguistic tools and their structure
- Linearity in time as you cannot revert to any segment of speech

For written forms of communication other features are typical, i.e:

- Specific set of linguistic tools which do not occur in oral speech
- Structural complexity that is more difficult than in oral forms
- Greater awareness in the design
- Completeness
- Another way of intonation design for example, the order of the words (Kirby and Crovitz, 2012)

The absence of the interlocutor and intermediary feedback forces the writer to formulate their speech so that it is more reasonable and extensive than in spoken language. Writing person cannot express intonation in their speech, so the vocabulary must be rich and carefully considered syntactically. Expression of thoughts in written speech is practically unlimited in time, so there is a possibility to work on both content and a form (Leontiev, 1997). The adequacy of the form to the content becomes the subject of special attention. And as a consequence, a written speech is more logical and lexically diverse than an oral one. In addition, the writer does not use gestures, facial expressions is unable to keep back phrase and as a result, their written speech is more competent and grammatically correct (Kolbysheva, 2014).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Regarding the correlation of speech activity types, writing connects speaking, reading and listening. Writing is based on skills which include the following:

- Calligraphy, i.e., the image of the letters
- Spelling, i.e., following the rules of spelling
- Composition, i.e., creation of written statements
- Lexical and grammatical skills

In the writing process, the writer's consciousness about thoughts expressions is not only directed to the content of the utterance but also to its form. Speech planning in writing is more important than in speaking. Passing thoughts in writing can be done in two levels:

- The level A presents competent graphical and spelling fixing of own oral speech while preserving all its features
- Level B, the producing of written speech with all its characteristics (completeness, syntactic complexity, consistency, lexical diversity, grammar aspects)

Writing in the level A is the just a recording-reproduction, i.e., rewriting, writing of dictations while in the level B it is your own producing. This activity is complicated as it implies mastering both listening comprehension and speaking. Besides, you need special abilities of the text transformation and to be good at written language, taking notes of someone's speech in the form of its outline, writing essays, etc.

Teaching writing at the level A takes place at schools. As for the level B which supposes writing abstracts, annotations, articles, reports, it is for teaching in higher education institutes. There are a lot of exercises for teaching writing. Some of them are as follows:

- Rewriting (in various forms) which creates and improves the technique of writing, especially if it conducts rewriting parts of sentences and phrases from memory
- Writing the record (different spelling dictations and writing materials while listening for the further working on this material)

Spelling dictations are very effective in training to achieve a competent spelling but they take a lot of time and due to the fact that spelling is not the most important activity compared within the overall objective it cannot be

considered as the necessary one. However, listening comprehension has a beneficial effect on the development of verbal skills:

- Free and creative dictations are the initial exercises in the development of writing skills and can be included in the training system
- Exercises in writing, i.e., writing letters, essays, compositions, articles, descriptions of events, etc. and the value of these exercises in the development of writing skills is enormous, for this reason, they are worth training
- Exercises-games (crosswords, puzzles, etc.) that are appropriate at the initial stage of learning
- Planning of the story (text) as a support for subsequent transmission of its contents
- Making a brief annotation after reading, i.e., a brief description to set out its contents
- Writing abstracts, i.e., reports based on the review of literature and other sources

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Among the all exercises, it is advisable to distinguish between special and non-special ones. Special exercises include tasks to develop and form writing skills as the direct object. Non-special exercises are done with other goals but in a written pattern and therefore simultaneously improve writing skills (e.g., written responses to questions, description of a picture or event for later playback, etc.) (Kirby and Crovitz, 2012).

Why do we need to distinguish between special and non-special exercises? There isn't enough time for doing special exercises which is the main reason, so it is necessary to use non-special ones to be given for homework as an independent work or self-study, the proportion of which currently has increased significantly in the system of teaching Foreign languages.

The second very important activity in this respect is reading in a Foreign language and it is becoming more and more essential in the learning process and self-guided student's work organization.

Being receptive activity (like listening), i.e., based on the perception of language signs, reading is significantly different from listening. Not without reason the reading is easier than listening both in the process of learning and functioning. Visual perception is always easier than auditory. In addition, while reading you can always go back to a misunderstood part any number of times. And finally, to recreate the situation leaning against a language form is always easier than vice versa.

However, this does not mean that there are no complicating factors. Reading includes a much broader scope of language material, greater complexity of their content and composition, more complicated grammar structures, longer sentences than in an oral speech. Thus, with external easiness and passivity reading is an active combination of subconscious work (at the level of perception of linguistic signs) and conscious one (at the level of information processing) (Rogova, 1975). And above all, reading becomes a form of learning as the process of information extraction with it being active and independent. Like any skill, the ability to read is based on certain skills. Among them are (Ahmadi and Gilakjani, 2012):

- Skills that form the reading technique
- Lexical skills
- Grammatical skills

All these skills are closely interrelated with each other and the ability to read involves mastering all three groups. The only technique of reading is not enough, i.e., students can read the text correctly but they do not understand what they are reading. Learning to read is divided into three phases:

- The stage of “loud reading” (primary stage)
- Silent reading (secondary one)
- The stage called “visual” reading (third grade)

Moreover, according to the experts, on the second and third stage “loud reading” is generally inappropriate as it takes a lot of time and inhibits the formation of reading mechanisms. Silent reading is three times quicker than aloud one. What is more, the faster readers cover speech material, the better they understand the text (Lozanov, 1977; Passov, 1989). Comprehension of the text or understanding is a complex process which needs the following components:

- A certain level of language skills
- A certain level of reading skills
- The presence of a task in the process of reading
- A certain level of text difficulty
- Knowledge of the subject, the experience in this particular field of knowledge
- The degree of students’ mental development

The first two conditions show the results of training, next two points refer to the organization of the learning process, though last two issues do not depend on a teacher (Rogova, 1975).

During the teaching of comprehension, it is definitely important to consider such aspects as guessing mechanism development, the correct selection of texts, both in content, a form and volume, optimal control techniques which should not be directed only to reading of the text aloud and retelling it in a native language (Folomkina, 2005). Thus, the task of teaching reading can be defined as follows:

- Increasing an operational unit of a text perception
- Teaching to understand the text with the first perception
- Teaching to perceive new combinations of known units
- Developing the speed of reading
- Developing structural anticipation
- Developing meaningful anticipation
- Developing the ability to guess the meaning of unknown units
- Training to correlate instantly a form with its perceived meaning
- Developing the ability to understand logical and semantic links between texts of different origin
- Developing an ability to “ignore” unknown words or units if they do not disturb understanding in general

There are some basic techniques to perform these tasks: the first technique focuses on improvement and development of reading skills through, the increase of the perception units. To fulfill this task, it is useful to practice semantic groups of words (phrases) reading during a limited time and give increasing phrases. Each phrase repeats previous words and includes new ones. Due to the repetitive vocabulary subsequent units are recognized and read faster. This phrasing gives the opportunity for students to learn new words which would be met further in a text. Such exercises have several aims:

- The extension of perception units
- Promoting the assimilation of new words meaning, along the way of reading and developing a mechanism of guessing
- Drawing students’ attention to a particular point, correlated with the content of the text, improving the mechanism of logical understanding

The second technique concentrates on learning how to recognize structural and semantic speech parts which helps students extract information from the text, such as sentence structure, punctuation, stylistic modes, general context, title, references, etc. There may be exercises to guess, to plan a read material to establish a logical

connection between separate paragraphs. The third technique considers the development of reading skills, i.e., the ability to read any text within the set of limits. The basis of this technique is the principle of novelty. During studies students are given the text and checked, then they get another text on the same material for homework and their understanding is tested at the next lesson where students receive a third text with the same material. Each subsequent text includes some unknown vocabulary to develop their guessing. This technique trains skills that are necessary for the process of reading mechanisms development

The forth technique suggests that performing preliminary tasks develops focusing and fluent reading. These tasks can include questions to the text

The fifth technique deals with the development of logical understanding and semantic guesswork. Doing such a kind of exercises is connected with a constant appeal to the text during a limited time. It is possible to distinguish such exercises as (Rogova, 1975):

- To find phrases that are similar in content with the given ones
- To determine whether these phrases correspond to the content of the story
- To choose the phrase (from the given ones) that matches the content of the story; to find phrases, supporting
- To find what characterizes
- To find the reasons why
- To find problems
- To choose the appropriate title from the given ones
- To choose a correct reply from the suggested ones
- To choose a phrase or sentence from the paragraphs of the story which transmits its meaning

It is necessary to pay attention to the choice of the texts and themes for reading and writing which determines motivation and activity of the process.

CONCLUSION

The content should meet the students' interests so that the chosen material can establish a certain ratio between the content and students' experience. It can be

texts from specific literature, texts of cross-cultural nature and texts, reflecting the national-regional component which has a particular importance as a form of joining other peoples culture. It is important to teach students how to be tolerate and how to respect other cultures also how to understand the identity of their own culture. Furthermore, students should develop the ability to represent their native culture in a Foreign environment, to provide speech and social support in situations of Foreign guests staying in their country, to explain traditions and lifestyle, scientific and cultural achievements and contribution to the development of the world culture.

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