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**THE FORMATION OF STUDENTS’ WRITING CULTURE
AT UNIVERSITY**

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the issues of forming students' writing skills in the process of teaching English at the non-linguistic faculties of university. The reasons for the insufficient formation of students' writing skills are analyzed, namely: a decrease in the school leavers' level of training, a general drop in the culture of writing in society, and an attitude toward writing as a technical skill for a long time. The necessity of developing writing skills in the system of other academic literacy skills such as reading, public speaking (presentations) is grounded. The principle of interrelated teaching of reading and writing is discussed. The ways of forming pupils' writing skills at secondary schools, as well as at practical classes in English at university are shown. In high school, the development of writing skills is practiced through teaching of reading. The development of students' writing skills is carried out when summarizing a text, paraphrasing and quoting in the preparation of essays, articles, presentations.

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1. Introduction

In the modern world, the ability to write clearly and accurately is an essential part of a person's general culture. This is especially true of young people entering the profession as written communication is a way of conducting research, dealing with partners and colleagues, applying for a job, etc. A person's writing culture should be first developed at school, then at university and continue improving with the emergence of new challenges. However, the school-leavers' and university students' writing culture is a problem area now, so researchers and practising teachers should find ways to develop the methodology aimed at improving students' writing skills.

2. Problem Statement

At present, the formation of writing skills and culture in the process of teaching a foreign language is an actual problem, since many students have difficulties in writing a text, expressing their opinion in an essay, and formulating a problem. Students' written speech is not sufficiently formed, as evidenced by the stylistic errors, the low degree of coherence of the texts they create, the abundance of lexical and syntactic mistakes in them. There are a number of reasons for the insufficient development of students' writing skills.

3. Research Questions

This article will analyze the reasons for the insufficient formation of students' writing skills and show the necessity for developing writing skills in the system of other academic literacy skills: reading, discussion and presentation. We will consider the methods of developing the high school students' writing skills that lay the foundation for their successful studies at the university. The principle of interrelated teaching of reading and writing will also be discussed, and the ways of forming the writing skills of students at practical English classes at non-linguistic faculties of the university will be shown.

4. Purpose of the Study

Our research is aimed at analysing the reasons for the students' inability to write for academic contexts and identifying the ways of forming the students' writing culture at practical English classes at non-linguistic faculties of the university.

5. Research Methods

The main research method is the thorough analysis of theoretical studies on the problem for the purpose of the practical application of existing methodologies for forming the students' writing culture. The system approach to the academic literacy skills developing is also applied..

6. Findings

The research on forming the students' writing culture has been conducted for two years (2016 – 2017), with the participation of students of law faculty and the faculty of philosophy and sociology at Perm State National Research University. At the beginning of the study period, the students' writing skills had a number of significant faults.

According to a number of researchers, the reasons for the inability to write lie in the "worldwide processes of transforming the culture of writing as a whole, as well as in reorienting teaching English in Russia to a communicative approach that does not involve the development of written speech and rejects the traditional grammatical-centered approach to language teaching" (Ostrovskaya & Vyshegorodtseva, 2013, p. 109).

When referring to the traditions of teaching in Russia, one can observe that Russia was one of the most educated countries of the world on the threshold of the 1990s. This was confirmed by such data as the adult literacy rate, the proportion of workers with higher and secondary specialized education, the number of students per 10,000 people of the population, etc. (accessibility, universality, free-of-charge) (UNICEF, 1990). The population of the country was literate, fond of reading. The book was not only a popular entertainment, but also a serious activity, a means of acquiring new knowledge and mastering a modern profession.

During the Soviet era, there was a linear system of teaching school subjects, in which each section of the training course was studied with that degree of depth that the tasks of teaching required, without returning to it at the next stages of training. It was replaced in the 1990s by a variational strategy, when each school could choose the way of conducting the lessons that it considered necessary. The Ministry of Education issued standards and methodologies that the teachers mainly disliked and they did not reflect reality. In the conditions of variability, a lot of programs and textbooks appeared that contradicted each other and scientific norms. There was an educational chaos, called reforms. The introduction of the State Exam contributed to a decline in the quality of secondary school education.

Despite the fact that in the era of information technology, written communication has become more in demand, and the final certification of secondary school leavers in foreign languages in the form of the State Exam includes tasks aimed at testing writing skills, in the school practice of teaching a foreign language, teaching writing is not paid enough attention. Writing "serves as less important means of teaching other aspects of the language, as a result of which students make a large number of mistakes while doing such tasks as "Personal Letter" and "My Opinion" essay" (Tkachuk, 2016, p. 40).

There are the following reasons for the fact that the students' writing skills in secondary schools are not developed properly in the process of teaching a foreign language:

1. The absence for a long time of a social order for teaching writing as a type of speech activity.
2. Considering writing as a technical skill.
3. The unspoken status of writing as a skill of minor importance.
4. Difficulties of systematic teaching of writing as an independent type of speech activity (Nikolaeva & Fomenko, 2016, p. 23).

The results of the State Exam in 2015 showed that "in the writing of a personal letter, positive tendencies were observed, but in producing an expanded written text with elements of reasoning the situation is somewhat worse" (Verbitskaya, Makhmuryan & Simkin, 2015, p. 4). In this regard, there is a need to improve the preparation for the State Exam in terms of the formation of productive writing skills at the lesson.

In the methodological publications, an approach to the development of writing skills through teaching reading in secondary school is described. In accordance with it, "study texts are a written form of a spoken text with such characteristics as development, consistency and logic. The text contains the necessary language elements for use in written communications. In this case, it is a model of the future written paper" (Tkachuk, 2016, p. 41). The work on creating written texts with elements of reasoning based on reading texts can be organized in two stages: reproductive and productive. At the reproductive stage, there is a discussion of the text problem, reading the text for general understanding, working with vocabulary, discussing the contents, retelling. The productive level presupposes the preparation of an essay on the specific problem contained in the text.

In school practice, a peer review method is also used, which is one of the methods of problem training. It consists of peer study and correction by students of each other's written works with a view to their further improvement and includes a number of stages. At the initial stages, students get acquainted with the structure of written work, study lists of sample phrases and expressions, samples of reviewing written works, there is a discussion of the criteria for assessing written work. At the final stages, a review of written works, analysis and reflection is carried out.

The method of review can serve as a good basis for the subsequent development of students' writing skills at university. Thus, at the Humanities faculties of the Perm State National Research University, work is underway to develop the skills of summarizing a text (summary). Students exchange their summary versions with the purpose of evaluating them and further correcting. The content of this work will be described below.

Thus, the methods of developing the students' writing skills in a well-organized and systematic work existing in the secondary school serve as a guarantee of the fact that well-prepared students with advanced reading and writing skills arrive at the university.

In terms of preparing our students and graduate students, the task is to master the culture of professional speech, both oral and written, and culture implies the process and result of continuous improvement.

Let us consider the relationship between writing and reading as types of speech activity. It has been extensively explored in many Western studies that have proven the effectiveness of their interrelated learning. It is established that "the basis of writing and reading is a single graphical communication code" (Nuzha & Schemeleva, 2013, p. 115). In addition, these types of speech activities are similar on the psychophysiological level. A.R. Luria, comparing reading and writing with oral speech, noted that the basis of the first ones is "a specially organized activity characterized by a conscious analysis of its components" (Luria, 2002, p. 240).

In the Russian linguodidactics, these issues were developed in the works of L.V. Shcherba, who expressed the idea of the effectiveness of mastering the skills of writing through reading (Shcherba, 1974). He suggested to teach written speech based on a sample text, which was studied by the students, being the source of linguistic material, speech patterns and clichés.

Studies show that students with good reading skills were good at writing, and vice versa. Our own long experience of teaching confirms this position.

The students' study literacy is based on their knowing the strategies of skimming and scanning reading and reading for detail. For successful learning, one needs such reading skills as anticipation, determining the author's position, key and secondary information, understanding the cause-effect relationships of the text elements. As reading skills develop, students come to the process of reproducing, creating the texts based on what they read, which is the basis for writing their own academic texts.

The principle of interrelated learning of reading and writing is taken into account in many modern textbooks of leading publishers (Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, etc.).

Thus, to write any text, be it a separate paragraph or an entire essay, one needs to work on developing reading skills (read to write).

A person belonging to an academic environment, regardless of a particular profession, should be able to create a written document that represents the results of his or her research activities.

State standards in the teaching of a foreign language in the sphere of professional activity, for example, legal English (English for lawyers), require the teaching of students to write abstracts, business letters, and summaries.

Work on developing the skills of summary writing involves familiarizing students with its rules and sufficient practice both in the classroom and outside it.

When summarizing a text, careful reading of the original source is required, as well as the ability to find the main idea and the most important supporting positions of the text (subpoints).

The ability to write a summary is closely related to reading and full understanding of what one has read. It is important when working on individual reading, which not only expands students' knowledge in their future profession, improves the vocabulary, but also serves as a basis for the preparation of reports and presentations. The skills of compressing the text, highlighting the main idea and essential information of a text, the ability to paraphrase contribute to the development of students' analytical skills, increase their academic literacy. The skills of summary writing must be systematically developed and for this purpose we teach students by providing them with strategies for writing summaries, familiarize them with standard phrases, and teach them how to use them. When studying a topic, a teacher can invite students to read the material and then write a summary of what has been read; volume - 100 - 150 words. Another option is to record the contents of a lecture from memory. A good practice in the classroom is students' exchange of their summaries in order to evaluate each other's work (Peer Response).

For a successful summary writing, paraphrasing skills are important, that is, using the writer's own words to convey the ideas of other people. Paraphrasing differs from summaries in that it usually coincides with the original, however, the words and structure of the original sentence must be changed.

In addition, it is important to develop students' understanding of when to summarize, paraphrase or quote a written source, which depends on the type of assignment. If the task is to make a report on a specific article or text, a student will present most of it in the form of a summary, paraphrasing the most important points and citing what is not only important in terms of contents, but is also written especially brightly and accurately.

As to our research, the vast majority of students involved demonstrated the ability to write summaries, paraphrasing and quoting skills while working systematically on writing essays, preparing presentations and reports. At the same time students improved other academic literacy skills, such as public speaking and discussion. All the skills mentioned are important for students' professional growth as future specialists. Being asked to write a feedback on how useful the writing skills practice was our students pointed out that it was a valuable experience.

7. Conclusion

It should be noted that the work on forming the culture of writing requires the proper organization of students' self-study, work with the dictionaries of various types, systematic teacher-student interaction. There exists a whole

range of reasons for the insufficient formation of students' writing skills, which they need not only to write essays, but also for successful studies at university as a whole. In this regard, it is necessary to develop the study literacy of students in their first and second years at university. The forming of writing skills takes place on specialist educational material and interdisciplinary approach should be taken into account. Particular importance is given to the interrelated learning of reading and writing. Developing the students' skills of summary writing, paraphrasing and quoting is carried out when preparing and writing essays, articles, reports, giving presentations.

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