

PARAGRAPH WRITING: SPECIFIC NATURE OF TEACHING 1ST YEAR GENERAL ENGLISH STUDENTS

This article is on the difficulties in teaching writing skills a 1st year (General English).

Since writing has only recently become a part of teaching a FL in Ukrainian schools and is still very often considered additional or secondary. 1st year General English students really have difficulties in it. Although students have been perfectly taught writing of their native language classes, this would not lessen the necessity of teaching them writing in a FL.

Writing is not just putting down what is supposed to be said. It does not have acoustic and visual aids: pitch, stress, rhyme, gestures and facial expressions which help speakers make their audience get interested in what they are saying, writers cannot rely on immediate feedback to be sure that they are expressive and convincing enough.

Moreover as practice shows the ways of expressing ideas for an English speaking person and a Ukrainian speaking one are different.

So does writing seem to be an enormous and difficult task for our students? Rather.

To become proficient at writing, one must learn the steps involved and practice the skills required at each step. Whatever to write about, one should follow a process that consists of three steps: prewriting, writing a draft and revising.

One important goal of prewriting is to find ideas for writing. With observation, thought, and practice, students will become aware of many possible writing ideas from their own interests, activities and the world around them.

In accordance with the General English Course Program, the first-year students are proposed reading, listening, discussing, sharing opinions, presentation their own ideas on different aspects within the framework of a given topic. Using their own life experience, what was heard and seen, students form their attitude to the topic.

Discussing aspects which are familiar to the students makes the process of transition from general to more concrete easier.

For instance, topic "Me and My Family". Polishing up the course material or a limited topic (subtopic) "Family Relationship", we move from general to more narrow aspects such as: "Parents and Children", "Generation Gap", "Sharing Duties in a Family", which helps to define the only idea and develop it. The examples are the following ideas: "The Role of a Father in Raising a Daughter", "The Role of a Mother in Raising a Son", "Bridging the Generation Gap", "The Event that Changed a Child's Philosophy of Life Completely", "A Mother as a Breadwinner".

Obviously, speaking is preparation for paragraph writing. An experience shows that defining and polishing up the only idea in speaking promotes its successful writing.

So, in the prewriting stage topics are selected, limited and details of them are listed.

Then one should write sentences: a topic sentence, the one that states the main idea of a paragraph; supporting sentences, which offer specific facts, examples or reasons to explain or develop what is stated in the topic sentence; and a concluding sentence, the one which restates the topic sentence or offers a final comment about the topic.

The first-year-students have difficulties in making up a topic sentence. The tendency of moving one from idea to another within the framework of one paragraph is often observed.

For example:

— The paragraph develops the idea "Your Idea of an Ideal Family".

The student gives the topic sentence "There are many types of families: blended family, nuclear family, long-distance family and others".

— The paragraph develops the idea "The boy suffers from being the only child in the family".

The student's topic sentence is "Feelings and thoughts of the boy who is the only child in the

family are extremely different from children's ones who have a brother or a sister."

In order to avoid developing several ideas in one paragraph students are offered series of training exercises on defining the topic sentence.

Supporting sentences should be under control too. Sometimes they go farther than the topic sentence suggests and may develop another idea.

Each written paragraph should be finished with a concluding sentence. Students should differentiate between two types of concluding sentence. The first type restates the topic sentence in a different way. By restating the topic sentence in a concluding sentence, the author ensures that readers understand the point of the paragraph.

The second type of concluding sentence offers a final comment about the topic. The author may, for example, state a logical conclusion, give a personal impression, pose a question, or recommend a course of action. Of course, the author's final remark must flow naturally from what was said in the paragraph. Students must be taught how to manipulate it. It is important to show the examples where the success of the paragraph depends upon the concluding sentence. Whom the paragraph is directed to, what the author wants to underline influence the concluding sentence.

When the paragraph is ready students must revise it.

To revise means to reorganise if necessary, to

rewrite. Students can always improve their first draft of a paragraph.

That's why it is advisable to take in account while putting the task into the test that paragraph writing is a creative and time-consuming task, so writing it needs time.

Students of Kyiv-Mogyla Academy are provided with modern Oxford and Cambridge textbooks, which constantly develop students' text organisation abilities. Moreover the books *Mosaic I Writing, Patterns Plus* which give theoretical explanation on developing a paragraph with numerous examples in combination with lexis on the topics foreseen by the Program are always available for the students at the library.

The paragraph organising articles and tasks are often presented in the first, second a third unit of the textbooks. That stresses low important it is to teach writing.

On the other hand, the desire of the students to be taught a paragraph writing is strongly motivated nowadays. They have their own experience when they faced the problem of being misunderstood, because of non-developed writing skill, namely paragraph writing.

Taking in account all mentioned above we can state that our common effects will lead the students of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy to become more effective in writing and correspond up-to-date demands.

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НАПИСАННЯ ПАРАГРАФА (PARAGRAPH): ОСОБЛИВОСТІ НАВЧАННЯ СТУДЕНТІВ 1-го КУРСУ ЗА ПРОГРАМОЮ ЗАГАЛЬНА АНГЛІЙСЬКА

Ця стаття присвячена проблемам навчання студентів навичок письма за програмою 1-го курсу (Загальна англійська).