

Teaching essay writing to students in foreign language classes

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Abstract: The article focuses on the fact that with the renewal of educational programs in higher education in the context of modernization, students are increasingly involved in research work, participation in various international examinations in English. The article deals with the process of students' preparation for essay writing in foreign language classes. There are many effective teaching methods and means to develop and improve the learners' essay writing skills. They are structured taking into account interdisciplinary links and are aimed to prepare students for essay writing. So, this article will introduce a brief and clear guidelines and recommendations, as well as clichés for a proper essay writing.

Key words: written communication, productive skills, language skills, task-related skills, approaches to writing

With the modernization of education, changes in the structure and updating of educational programs in higher education, students are increasingly involved in scientific and research work in their specialty, participation in international English language examinations, such as IELTS, TOEFL and CEFR. This serves to increase motivation to study the foreign language discipline, which is a part of the international examinations. Students read literature from foreign sources and show interest in conducting research experiments and writing their research papers on the results of their work. Foreign language teachers help students to edit articles and teach them how to format them correctly. Besides that, it is known that nowadays one of the points of modern foreign language teaching programs in some different specialties is preparation for essay writing.

So, what is an essay? An essay is a creative work in which students should clearly express their points of view on a given topic, supporting them with logical arguments, introduce the reader to the opinion of opponents and convincingly refute it. The main task of the student is to clearly and distinctly formulate their thoughts and provide irrefutable proof of the correctness of their judgments [7, 8]. Essay writing is one of the types of students' independent work, when they learn the vocabulary of the specialty, learn to present the essence correctly and draw conclusions on the topic of the essay set by the teacher.

Nowadays there are great opportunities for students to study different issues problem in depth. Work on materials from various foreign sources is very welcome.

Such work motivates students to study a foreign language in detail and in depth. In the process of training students master different types of activities, for example, they learn the structure of scientific articles and how to work with them, read texts on specialization and translate them, mastering professional vocabulary, learn to write essays on a given topic, presenting their points of view in an argumentative way.

These study guides contain a wide variety of authentic, technical texts taken from foreign academic journals and articles. The teachers recommend a variety of lexical and grammatical tasks to be completed. Their sequence is not accidental. They are very effective because they check, firstly, reading comprehension and, secondly, they lead the students purposefully to writing an essay on a given topic. Here is an example of such exercises:

- 1) answer the questions;
- 2) which statements are true (+) and which are false (-);
- 3) match the words and word combinations with the translation;
- 4) match synonyms;
- 5) match antonyms;
- 6) find the English equivalents;
- 7) fill in the gaps;
- 8) translate the sentences;
- 9) give a brief summary of the text;
- 10) write a few sentences with the main ideas of the texts.

Students may not have previously had to write an essay, so the teacher will give them the following guidelines for the general structure of an essay.

First, they should write an introduction. The introduction should give a clear idea of what is to be discussed next, and the teacher should see that the student is answering a specific set of questions.

So, a good introduction should demonstrate the students' intention to answer the question posed; show that they understand the topic; outline the structure of the answer and the main aspects it will address.

When writing an essay, students can be advised to use the following clichés that will help them to more accurately indicate the direction of the topic.

For example:

This essay deals with...

This assignment will examine...

This report will analyze...

Students can also use words and expressions that will emphasize the outline of the essay, for example:

The essay is divided into four sections...

It will first consider...

It will then continue to describe...

The third part compares...

Finally, some conclusions will be drawn as to....

The main body of the essay should present each of the arguments using examples. The information is to be clearly divided logically. For this purpose, the text should be divided into paragraphs. It is necessary to think about the structure of the essay and make sure that the main body logically leads to the conclusion.

Thesis is the students' thoughts on the issue at hand in the form of assertions, while arguments are the proofs of these assertions. Arguments may be facts, phenomena of social life, events, experiences, scientific evidence, references to scientists' opinions. Depending on the length of the essay, it is necessary to determine the necessary number of theses. At the same time, there should be two arguments for each thesis. The logic is simple: one argument is unconvincing; three arguments overload the text. Therefore, students are aimed to write the essay in such a way that each thesis is supported by two arguments. At this step, students are advised to get familiar with related issues on the topic of the essay. It will allow them to determine what they should write in the essay and what they shouldn't. After that, students study the literature, sources, outline the key points, define the main issues to formulate their own theses, thoughts, statements and support them with arguments.

The conclusion should summarize the ideas expressed. Here the students should give an answer to the question formulated in the topic of the essay. Or, depending on the topic, indicate the perspective or consequences of the problem in question. The lecturer teaches that a good conclusion is not just about summarizing. The conclusion should be thoughtful, for example, applying what has been written to a real-life situation.

At the same time, there are points that should be avoided in the conclusion of an essay: for example, putting forward completely new ideas. If they are really important, they should be included in the main body. It is inappropriate to use an exculpatory tone. One should be confident in one's statements. Students are advised to avoid phrases like 'I may not be an expert' or 'At least this is my opinion'. According to many teachers, the conclusion is the most important part of an essay.

It demonstrates that the student has a good command of the material and has thoughtfully approached the problem.

As a rule, a lecturer can devote an entire class to this work and comes up with a plan for writing an essay. Before they start working on the text, students are encouraged to compile a glossary, learn how to compose phrases using special vocabulary. This will make their future work much easier. A student should have a clear idea of the content of his/her essay, be able to write the essay, laying it out according to the suggested plan.

An essay in English should eventually fit into 200-250 words, where only the most basic points are given in a concise form. It is worth noting that in an essay the teacher suggests the extensive use of impersonal constructions giving the text objectivity: It is believed that... It cannot be argued that...; passive voice, non-categorical verbs, for example: suggest, claim, suppose; to show one's attitude to the issue, but to avoid personal judgments, one can use adverbs: apparently, arguably, ideally, strangely, unexpectedly. Students may use modal verbs would, could, may, might to tone down the categorism; to avoid generalization, the teacher suggests using qualifying adverbs: some, several, a minority of, a few, many.

The teacher can offer students individual homework assignments to write their own essay on a given topic. Such work arouses students' interest: they eagerly discuss the written essays, make comments, present their own ideas and modifications into the readymade essays of their classmates. Here is a sample essay on «Making a good salary is more important than job satisfaction» with the given plan.

What is your opinion?

Do you agree with this statement?

Write 200-250 words.

Use the following plan:

- make an introduction (state the problem);
- express your personal opinion and give 2-3 reasons for your opinion;
- express an opposing opinion and give 1-2 reasons for this opposing opinion;
- explain why you don't agree with the opposing opinion;
- make a conclusion restating your position.

Essay writing is an incomparably more effective way of developing skills in careful argumentation, conceptual clarity, sensitive interpretation and effective evidence gathering. As a result of the work done it turned out that preparation for writing an essay and the process of writing an essay on a given topic is a rather complicated work that requires certain lexical and grammatical knowledge, the ability to express thoughts, compare different points of view and draw conclusions. It should be

noted that this work, being very 40 time-consuming, arouses a certain interest among students [5,6]. They work a lot with different texts and dictionaries, realizing that the main condition for writing a good essay is to be fluent in the subject. After all, the students will have to express their own points of view, reasons, and draw conclusions. To structure the work logically, the first thing to do is to think about the outline of the essay. It usually consists of separate brief thesis on a given topic, which as they are disclosed should be argued and supported by evidence. So the accumulated experience will be useful to students in their future scientific work and will help them not only to write articles, but also to communicate with foreign colleagues and participate in international projects, conferences and international examinations.

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