

TEACHING READING-TO-WRITING IN ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES COURSES

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In modern conditions the English language which has become the language of academic communication promotes primarily the free exchange of knowledge in the scientific community. Today we are talking about the need to form an academic

communicative competence within the English for Academic Purposes courses. The main objectives of the course EAP is to develop the students' ability to learn and conduct their own research in English. Such attention to writing as one of the key academic skills is paid primarily due to the fact that in foreign universities the control of knowledge and abilities of students is carried out in the form of written works, mostly of academic essays. In this case especially foreign students as a rule suffer significant difficulties with the implementation of written works.

In the Ukrainian universities development of academic writing also is of great importance, it acts as a core competency in EAP course, because written works are of great importance in all courses at all levels (bachelor, master, post-

graduate). There are various methods of teaching academic writing. Sometimes writing is taught as a separate skill, sometimes in combination with reading, sometimes as a part of an integrated policy for the development of academic skills.

Teaching reading-to writing method has been widely discussed and depicted in different works of Western scientists [1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15]. A number of studies in the field of reading and writing relationship show that when the reader interprets the text critically he goes from a simple understanding of the content of the text and awareness of the possibility of its use as a role model to a willingness to review and alter the text [9].

The obvious relationship of reading and writing can be traced also in the preparation and planning of the written message. It should be noted that in the practice of modern foreign education interrelated learning of reading and writing is already considered an axiom. Thus, students are requested to follow the construction of models, discursive conventions of academic tests that they read as a part of the course; they are encouraged to review the strategy analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information in the text and to incorporate them into the system of argumentation in their own writings.

Academic literacy assumes mastering of the strategies of search, scanning, skimming and critical reading. Among the reading skills necessary for successful learning we can refer the skills of anticipation, differentiation between key and background information; also the ability to understand cause-and-effect relationships of semantic elements of the text. New material is originally introduced in the texts for reading and only after studying and analyzing it, students proceed to produce own texts. For example, when performing the assignment to write a topic sentence a lot of preparation work with texts is preceded, students first learn to identify the main idea of the text and related ideas of a separate section, and then the whole text, and then they analyze paragraph structure and determine the topic sentence in each paragraph [8, p. 39-50]. Thus writing any text, whether it's one sentence or essay (for students) or a research abstract (for postgraduates), is preceded by the work on the development of

reading skills. According to this scheme the majority of textbooks on academic writing are organized [3, 4, 5, 8].

In the West this approach has long been used as a mainstream in teaching academic skills. Concerning the situation in Ukrainian high schools we should note that this approach must be considered in the development of academic writing courses for students, and for other categories of students (for example, researchers and postgraduate students).

However, there is another component that must be taken into account in the EAP training, namely the specifics of Ukrainian students. According to many scholars and practitioners they do not have a sufficient level of development of academic competence even in their native language. This is due, as a rule, to a number of objective reasons, but first and foremost it is connected with inadequate attention paid to writing in the system of education at the university. Despite the obvious importance of academic writing in the modern Western educational paradigm, in our country very little attention has been traditionally paid to it. In the domestic methodology writing has had the status of secondary means of teaching other kinds of speech activity, and speaking has been proclaimed the basis of communicative teaching of foreign languages. However, as practice shows, the problem of development of writing skills is not the only one. When teaching EAP teachers often face the fact that students do not have a sufficiently developed reading skills.

A possible solution to this problem could be the introduction of a part of general course in English with analyzing texts in Ukrainian, aimed at the development of academic literacy. It could be done at the initial stage of training. As part of these courses students must master not only the basics of competent academic speech, learn genre features of scientific texts, to learn to read texts of varying complexity in their native language, but also to get acquainted with the theory of argumentation. This practice exists in some foreign universities, where courses in academic writing are offered not only to international students but also native speakers. For example, the University of California research shows that

more successful performing an essay is usually handled by the students who have trained a course of academic writing at the university before. Only 1/3 of applicants to the university have research skills and are able to cope with the task of synthesizing information from multiple sources and to create reasoning system based on academic literature [1, p. 20].

Students are taught strategies of brainstorm, generating ideas, techniques of writing a draft, editing written text, as well as understanding the importance of what the process of writing suggests, namely, a revision of the original claims and arguments, rejection of certain points of the plan and the inclusion of other original compositions reconstruction. It is noteworthy that in Western pedagogy writing is interpreted as a fundamental basis of the whole learning process, because it is by writing an academic essay, based on a thorough and careful reading academic texts, students perceive a particular academic discipline, and their written works serve as an indicator of the depth and maturity of their research thinking. The most popular areas of written literacy development in the UK and US universities are learning the basics of data analysis and argumentation (69%), synthesizing information from multiple academic sources (63%), preparation for writing argumentative-foot academic essay (72%), scientific articles (59%) [1, p. 26].

Currently, however in Ukrainian universities courses on the development of academic literacy are not available. Or due to the small amount of hours allocated to them the courses do not achieve their goals, and the development of academic literacy often becomes the task of teachers of English personally. In such a situation, in the course of EAP or reading courses you must take into account the potential difficulties that the students may face during the training course and to plan it in such a way that enough time must be given to the development of basic academic reading and writing skills. Even if good training manuals are used at EAP, teachers will need to supplement their own materials to develop the necessary skills to allocate additional time to study the general principles of work with texts. In addition, when planning independent work of students it is necessary

to provide for these types of jobs that would have purposefully develop reading and writing skills.

Thus, we emphasize the need for the development of academic English courses taking into account the continuity of learning principles of reading and writing (read to write), and the specificity of our students who tend to need more support in the process of the formation of reading and writing skills.

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15 листопада 2016 року

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