Жукова Т.В. Implementation of Academic Writing Teaching Techniques at English Classes / Т.В. Жукова // Вісник Чернігівського національного педагогічного університету ім. Т.Г. Шевченка. Випуск 111. Серія: педагогічні науки: Збірник. – Чернігів: ЧНПУ, 2013. – С. 99-102 ( 0,7 д.а.) ( **Наукове фахове видання).**

УДК 378.147

**Zhukova T.V.**

**IMPLEMENTATION OF Academic Writing TEACHING**

**TECHNIQUES AT ENGLISH CLASSES**

*Abstract: Importance of academic writing teaching in the system of higher education is explained in the article. The article traces the major methodological aspects of organization process of essay writing and their implementation at English classes. Some ways of essay evaluation and avoiding plagiarism are defined.*

#### *Key words: academic* writing, essay, prewriting techniques, introduction, conclusion, *evaluation, plagiarism.*

As we observe modern life stipulates the usage of writing. Writing facilitates learner mobility and competitiveness in the job market. Academic writing is considered to be an integral part of all *ESP* (*English for Specific Purposes*) courses. In the light of *Common Framework of Reference for Languages* strategies for diversifying and intensifying language learning are very important at present time.

Psychological and psycholinguistic aspects of writing have been contemplated by famous Russian and Ukrainian scientists О.Таrnopol’skyi, A. Davidenko, І. Zymnia, K. Lazarenko, L. Mazunova, S. Nikolaieva, N. Skliarenko, and others. Some authors have worked out methodological foundations of teaching some kinds of writing activities, such as note-taking (V. Pavlova), creative writing (О. Таrnopol’skyi), formal letters (S. Litvin). But it should be acknowledged that academic writing teaching at foreign language classes isn’t paid enough attention in Ukraine.

Very important contribution to the methodology of academic writing teaching was made by American and British linguists and Professors L. Blanton, T. Johnson, F. Linda, A. Seow, A. Oshima, C. [Spencer](http://www.google.com.ua/search?hl=ru&tbo=p&tbm=bks&q=inauthor:%22Carolyn+M.+Spencer%22), [B. Arbon](http://www.google.com.ua/search?hl=ru&tbo=p&tbm=bks&q=inauthor:%22Beverly+Arbon%22) , J. Swales, M. Swan, D. Zemach. They worked out step-by-step process for researching and writing successful academic papers, some useful pre-writing strategies to generate students’ ideas for writing, ways to avoid plagiarism, different feedback formats (self-evaluation, peer-evaluation, and teacher-evaluation), main features of academic writing, transitions for combining sentences, etc. Useful workshops and academic writing courses organized by Professors and English language specialists from Oxford, Cambridge, Howard, Wisconsin Universities are available in the Internet. US Embassy in Ukraine organizes Academic and Professional Exchange Programs for us, English advisors.

English learners don’t have only to process but also to produce. They have to be able to write essays, written reports, summary reports, motivation letters, and project work. They should make adequate usable notes; organize paragraphs, making headings and subheadings; use logical connectors for linking paragraphs; write introduction and conclusion; quote correctly; construct bibliography, etc.

Academic writing is clearly defined by having a clear purpose, either an exam question to answer or research project to report on. Most academic writing in English is linear: it starts at the beginning and finishes at the end, with every part contributing to the main line of argument. “Whatever kind of writing you are producing, the writer is responsible for making your line of argument clear and presenting it in orderly manner that the reader can follow” [6, p. 5].

The department of foreign languages of Tavria state agrotechnological university proposes students of all specialties to participate in the yearly contest for the best essay on a definite topic. The topics proposed are “How have English classes in TSATU helped me to become a successful person?”, “What event in your student's life in TSATU has become the most significant one for you and why?”, “How do you understand the following quotation: “A country's competitiveness starts not on the factory floor or in the engineering lab. It starts in the classroom (Lee Iacocca, Ex-President and CEO of Chrysler)”? Besides, the students are assigned to write different essays according to the curriculum; for example, “The house of my dream”, “What is ideal job for me?”, “Pros and cons of my future profession”, “Globalization of accountant role in modern society” (for future accountants), etc. The students consider that they gain rich experience for their future career due to learning writing essays.

How does the course of academic writing teaching work? Firstly we ask students what the term ‘academic writing’ means for them, if they have any experience of academic writing and which one, what kind of writing they did, what length their writings were, what part of writing they enjoyed, what difficulties they usually had during writing, and what they expect to learn from the course. Therefore, we discuss their attitude to academic writing and its purpose, which is “the presentation of 'new knowledge' via a review of what is currently known about a given topic as the foundation for the author's new views or perspectives on the topic” [3, p. 14).

And only after that I explain them how it is important to learn writing essays, summary reports, research papers, etc. for their future career. The students notice that essays are written “from one’s experience and knowledge for a general audience” [6, p. 12] in friendly, everyday language, and can be handwritten or typed. According to L. Flower “students create a text of their own, trying to integrate information from sources with ideas of their own, and attempting to do so under the guidance of a purpose” [1, p. 28].

It’s important to define the aim of the essay which should be deduced strictly from the wording of the title or question, and needs to be defined at the beginning. The purpose of the essay is to say something using the idea of the subject, to present ideas one has learned in his own way.

After discussing the main theoretical points we proceed to practice.

Taking into consideration that writing is a continuous process which ends with well-organized ideas on paper – that is, it starts at the beginning and goes through some steps in a specific order; the students have to be taught all these steps. Therefore, the advisor should explain the nature and purpose of each step of the academic writing process: getting started; prewriting and outlining; gathering and organizing the information; writing the draft; revising and rewriting; editing and rewriting [7, p. 7].

Getting the assignment the students should understand it answering some questions: What should I do? What is the purpose of the essay? What will I learn? What is important about the topic? Why does the topic excite me? What do I think the reader would want to know? What did I do to plan before I began writing? [7, p. 5].

Teaching prewriting techniques is very important in the essay writing process. The students should write the topic at the top of the paper and then make a list of each idea that comes into his mind about the topic (listing). They may use words as well as phrases or sentences. They also may draw a “balloon” and write the topic into it, then make balloons around the center one and write down as many ideas on the topic as they can into the balloons (clustering). The students may use another way of prewriting: writing as much as they can about the topic until they run out of ideas (free writing). The students don’t have to worry about spelling or grammar. While rereading they should circle the main ideas which are to be developed [2, p. 4].

One of the most significant steps in essay writing is brainstorming. It is the art of thinking critically to discover original, hidden insights about the topic [3, p. 12]. Brainstorming technique is aimed at defining the problem, exploring the evidence, identifying assumptions, doing some research, etc. Advisors usually choose the prewriting technique which works best for their students.

After they look through the ideas they have generated, and highlight the most useful, students prepare an outline. The outline allows the students to think beforehand what they're going to write so that when they do write it; if they've done their planning right, they won't have to do as much rewriting. When they construct their outline, they should keep it brief. The titles, headings, and points in the outline should be about one line each. As students say, outline helps preventing from being disordered.

Gathering information is an important part of academic writing. Information may come from three sources: facts the students know, facts they find from reading and facts they discover for themselves. Some pieces of advice will be of great help for them: as they read about the topic, they should keep a piece of paper and pen handy to write down interesting quotations they find; with print sources, they might put a checkmark beside interesting passages and write questions or other thoughts in the margins as well [3,p. 17].

As the students research the topic, they will naturally be analyzing the arguments of different authors. When analyzing an argument of any text, or creating one of their own, they should first identify the main claim and then locate all the reasons for it. After researching, analyzing, and brainstorming, the students should have a worthwhile insight to write about. We have to revise that an informal essay consists of three main parts: the introduction, the body and the conclusion. We discuss the main points concerning the structure of an essay.

As students can see an essay is made up of a group of paragraphs about one subject.

The introduction begins the essay. The first goal in introduction is to grab the reader's attention and generate some interest about the topic. For that, one might present an interesting fact, a surprising piece of information, or an exciting quotation. So the first sentence should be an interesting comment about the topic. General comments include several sentences that give some background information about the topic. The thesis statement is the last and the most important sentence in the introduction. It states the specific topic of the essay. The introduction should introduce the central idea or the main purpose of the writing.

The main body consists of one or more paragraphs of ideas and arguments. Each paragraph develops a subdivision of the topic. The paragraphs of the essay contain the main ideas and arguments of the essay together with facts, descriptions, illustrations, examples, or experiences (i.e. supporting details) showing important or interesting information to help the reader understand the main idea.

A topic sentence is generally the first sentence of the paragraph, and it states the topic of the paragraph and describes its claim or point, thus orienting the reader to the purpose of the paragraph. The entire paragraph should be focused around the stated topic sentence. It’s sometimes difficult for students develop their ideas. So we have to teach them to implement some techniques for development: illustrate their idea with examples, give an authoritative quotation, anticipate and respond to counterarguments, back the ideas with more evidence, offer another perspective to the idea, etc. It is very important that the arguments in your thesis are presented in a clear, balanced and unemotional way [1, p. 118].

The paragraphs should be linked in order to connect the ideas. The purpose of the essay must be made clear and the reader must be able to follow its development.

The conclusion includes the writer’s final points. It should recall the issues which appear in the introduction but they should be expressed in different words than those in the introduction. Comments can include a summary of all the main ideas, an evaluation of the ideas, or writer’s opinion. The final statement is a final thought that “ties up” the topic for the reader. It should clearly signal to the reader that the essay is finished and leave a clear impression that the purpose of the essay has been achieved. Any totally new ideas should not be introduced in the conclusion.

After discussing the structure of an essay students should decide what information is important, what they will put first, second, third. They may number the information in their notes in order they will write about it (a “planned” outline). Then the students write their first drafts. To improve the content and organization of the paragraphs they give their essays to their classmates for evaluation. So they are proposed to fill in the evaluation checklists while reading one another’s essays. Evaluation checklists should contain the following questions: Is the essay interesting? Is the essay interesting? Is there a thesis statement at the end of the introduction? Do body paragraphs start with a clear topic sentence? Is there a conclusion that restates the thesis statement? [2, p. 9]

Having analyzed evaluation checklists and discussed them with other members of their class the students reread their essays paying attention to the content and organization of the paragraphs, looking for spelling, grammar, and punctuation mistakes. They edit and rewrite their essays.

Responding to student writing by the teacher plays a great role in the successful implementation of process writing. It is appropriate between drafting and revising. We can do it in oral or in written form (in the margin, between sentences, or at the end of the essay) [8, p. 12-13]. Responses have to be text-specific in the form of helpful suggestions concerning the essay organization, topic sentences and supporting ones, the style and linking words, citation and references, etc.

While reading the students’ drafts we usually analyze the organization, the greatest strengths and weaknesses of essays, the main ideas, the ideas which need further development, clearness of writing, etc. I sometimes ask students to rewrite their essays without their first drafts, or read each other’s essays aloud in class. Therefore, they have the possibility to rethink what they have written.

Lastly, they proofread the final copy to check it according to the requirements, as well as for vocabulary use, essay style, references, and checking for plagiarism.

I think it’s very important to teach students to avoid plagiarism. We teach them how to paraphrase and quote from original texts. D. Pecorari argues that universities should avoid placing responsibility for academic writing solely with students and look at how we can teach our way out of the problem [4, p. 34].

There are three main ways to integrate quotations into your essay: direct quotation, paraphrase, and mixed quotation. Students should usually paraphrase the material, and only directly quote it, or give a mixed quotation when the phrasing of the quotation is interesting, memorable or catchy.

Direct quotation involves quoting word for word one or more sentences from an author or source.When they quote, they have to be sure to introduce their quotation with a clause that lets the reader know who the author or source is.

Paraphrase, instead of quoting the author word for word, involves putting the original phrasing into your own words. Students have to be careful to substantially reword the original, however. If they leave just several words in a row unchanged, it will be considered plagiarism because it’s essentially stealing someone else's phrasing.

Mixed quotations are a mix between direct quotation and paraphrase. Mixed quotations involve paraphrasing half of the original but mixing in a few direct selections from the author. In this case one should be sure to blend in the quotation with the grammar of one’s own sentence.

We should also teach our students the elements of unity and coherence which are necessary features of academic writing. Unity means that only one idea is discussed in the paragraph. The main idea is stated in the topic sentence of the paragraph, and then each supporting sentence develops that idea.

Coherence means that a paragraph is easy to read and understand because all supporting sentences are constructed in logical order and connected with the help of appropriate transition words. The movement from one sentence to the next must be logical and smooth. Each supporting idea should be discussed one after the other. Furthermore, the relationship between the ideas should be expressed by the right transition words or phrases. Students should not forget about transition words not only between the sentences of the paragraph but between the paragraphs of an essay.

The workshop should be organized to teach students using sentence connectors. Only practice will help them to do it. First the students are proposed to learn or revise the main linking words and phrases. So we teach them to combine sentences using linking words ‘and, also, too, moreover, furthermore’ for additional information; ‘that is, in other words, in fact, as a matter of fact’ for clarification; ‘for example, for instance, such as, to illustrate’ for providing examples; ‘because, since, for this reason’ for causes; ‘consequently, as a result, therefore, thus’ for effect; ‘first, first of all, second, before, after, then, next, later, more important, finally’ for meaningful order [6, p. 93].

Some attention is paid to punctuation marks. Mostly there are students’ mistakes in using commas because there are a lot of differences in their using in English and Ukrainian. For example, students have to use commas after or before such phrases as ‘namely, as well as, although, for example*,* for instance, in this way, to a certain extent, without doubt, that is why’ in English, whereas in Ukrainian commas are not used in these cases. I usually remind the main ways of its usage: after adverbial clauses and groups, before connectors to join two independent clauses, to separate some non-defining phrases from the rest of the sentence, etc. It should be mentioned here that punctuation isn’t paid enough attention, and it has to be improved.

At the end of an assignment students should give a list of all the sources they have referred to. Their reference list must provide full and accurate details, as it is the means by which the reader can follow up their sources. They have to **make sure that every text reference appears in the reference list, every item in the reference list is mentioned at least once in the assignment**, and**those references have the same spellings and dates as the ones in the reference list.**

**Evaluating has to be the necessary stage of the writing process. But I must admit, we are often short of time and don’t pay much attention to it. Why is evaluating important for students? On one hand, it changes their attitude to writing: they become more responsible for their own essays. On the other hand, they clearly understand the main requirements, and try to do their best to reach excellent results. It should be stressed that the teacher doesn’t have to forget to present all the criteria for evaluation in advance. They should include detailed interpretation of the assignment, development and organization of ideas, format or layout, grammar and structure, punctuation and spelling, and clarity of communication [5, p. 18]**.

English advisors should have process-oriented writing instructions with the help of which we need to systematically teach students problem-solving skills connected with the writing process that will enable them to realize specific goals at each stage of the composing process. Thus, writing teaching program may be constructed as a set of instructions which provides students with a series of planned learning experiences to help them understand the nature of writing at each stage.

The English advisors of foreign languages department at TSATU offer advice, guidance, and tuition for students who wish to improve their writing skills. We try to explain them the whole process of writing in the simple and understandable way. We organize lectures and workshops which students of any level and specialty may attend. And it really results in the students’ successful essays.

I think writing is necessary for all students in higher education. Academic writing teaching has to be one of the priority tasks of the process of studying foreign languages in modern society. Writing is a good way to stimulate students’ learning and critical thinking, and to generate their competitiveness.

***Жукова Т.В.***

***ІМПЛЕМЕНТАЦІЯ МЕТОДІВ НАВЧАННЯ АКАДЕМІЧНОГО ПИСЬМА НА ЗАНЯТТЯХ З АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ***

*Резюме: У статті пояснюється важливість навчання академічного письма у системі вищої освіти. Стаття простежує основні методологічні аспекти процесу організації написання есе та їх імплементацію на заняттях з англійської мови. Визначаються деякі засоби оцінювання есе та уникання плагіату.*

*Ключові слова: академічне письмо, есе, перед-письмові методи, вступ, висновок, оцінювання, плагіат.*

***Жукова Т.В.***

***ИМПЛЕМЕНТАЦИЯ МЕТОДОВ ОБУЧЕНИЯ АКАДЕМИЧЕСКОГО ПИСЬМА НА ЗАНЯТИЯХ ПО АНГЛИЙСКОМУ ЯЗЫКУ***

*Аннотация. В статье объясняется важность обучения академическому письму в системе высшего образования. Статья прослеживает основные методологические аспекты процесса организации написания эссе и их имплементацию на занятиях по английскому языку. Определяются некоторые способы оценивания эссе и уклонения от плагиата.*

*Ключевые слова: академическое письмо, эссе, перед-письменные методы, вступление, заключение, оценивание, плагиат.*

**Використані джерела:**

1. Flower L. Problem-Solving Strategies for Writing in College and Community /

L. Flower. – Ft. Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1998. – 256 p.

2. Herrin J. How to Teach Academic Writing / J. Herrin. – Alushta : Part Copy, 2007. – 46 p.

3. Johnson T. Ten Steps to Writing an Essay / T. Johnson . – American University, Cairo, 2004. – 218 p.

4. Pecorari D. Academic Writing and Plagiarism / D. Pecorari. – London: Continuum, 2008. – 244 p.

5. Seow A. The Writing Process and Process Writing / A. Seow. – New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002. – 320 p.

6. Silber C. 1995. Some General Advice on Academic Essay Writing / C. Silber – University of Toronto, 1995 – 78 p.

7. [Spencer](http://www.google.com.ua/search?hl=ru&tbo=p&tbm=bks&q=inauthor:%22Carolyn+M.+Spencer%22) C. Foundations of Writing: Developing Research and Academic Writing Skills / C. [Spencer](http://www.google.com.ua/search?hl=ru&tbo=p&tbm=bks&q=inauthor:%22Carolyn+M.+Spencer%22), [B. Arbon](http://www.google.com.ua/search?hl=ru&tbo=p&tbm=bks&q=inauthor:%22Beverly+Arbon%22) . – Illinois, USA, 1996.– 247 p.

8. Zemach D. The Process of Learning Process Writing / D. Zemach. – Essential Teacher 4(1), 2007. – p. 12-13.