

LATIP 2021**International Conference on Language and Technology in the Interdisciplinary Paradigm****EVOLUTION OF APPROACHES TO TEACHING WRITING IN
NATIVE AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

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Russia), nevostrueva@corp.nstu.ru**Abstract**

This article reviews the evolution of approaches to teaching writing in English as a native and foreign language and in Russian as a native and foreign language from a linguodidactic point of view. Many established pedagogical approaches do not have a worthy theoretical and methodological foundation and do not allow identifying a single dominating approach, but allow speaking about the expediency of integrated, comprehensive use of the best achievements of each approach in the modern methods of teaching academic writing. The genre approach in teaching writing and listening is considered a very promising direction in modern Russian as well as in foreign language teaching. This approach integrates a number of achievements of contrastive rhetoric, process writing, formation of composition skills and situational variability of writing, as well as traditional and modern technologies, such as modeling, learning by samples, etc. This approach fits into the educational paradigm of academic writing and it is in demand for the production of written texts of different levels of complexity.

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1. Introduction

Writing in *foreign-language education* is one of the most important adaptation mechanisms, the mechanism of inheriting a huge layer of textual information accumulated by mankind in the new conditions of evolution - information domination evolution's phase and a phase of information exchange. Writing has always been regarded as a universal way of transmitting people's cultural and historical experience from generation to generation above time and space. The emergence and existence of large cities, states and empires without writing would have been unthinkable. Disregard for writing as the most culturally-bearing type of speech activity and written form of communication quickly turns out to be a collapse in general culture in society (Mazunova, 2004).

2. Problem Statement

Foreign-language writing, declared in the programs of the 90's for universities as one of the goals of foreign language teaching, in reality is still an auxiliary tool, a universal fixer of the formal-language side of the foreign language, a reliable way to diagnose and control language skills and speech skills (Mazunova, 2004). Such conditions contribute to the development of writing as an independent type of speech activity, but are not sufficient for the development of its complex levels. Using not the main, but only a secondary function of writing, it is not possible to provide its development as an independent, self-valuable type of speech activity (Mazunova, 2004). In addition, it does not engage the educational potential of writing, does not take into account its role in the process of intellectual formation of an individual and in the development of his/her productive thinking.

3. Research Questions

This article describes the evolution of views on writing and approaches to teaching writing in Russian and foreign methods of teaching native and foreign languages.

4. Purpose of the Study

- To consider the peculiarities of existing approaches to teaching writing in a native and foreign language. 4.2. To select the most relevant approach for the modern stage of teaching writing, integrating the best achievements of existing approaches and focusing on the research perspective.

5. Research Methods

The aims of the present study are to analyse and synthesise methodological, linguistic, psychological and pedagogical literature exploring the transformation of approaches to teaching writing in the native and foreign languages in the domestic and foreign traditions using the method of generalization and comparison of existing approaches, the method of expert evaluation and highlighting promising approaches to the development of students' writing in modern conditions.

6. Findings

Foreign-language writing today is seen as:

- - the phenomenon of the culture of the country of the foreign language being studied;
- - the phenomenon of education, that grows and develops solely on the culture of society, which has universal significance and which does not arise and develop spontaneously, but under conditions of specially organized training (educational institutions);
- - the phenomenon that, as it improves, turns into an ever more perfect instrument of translating culture, conceptualizing knowledge, materializing new knowledge, more perfect means and method of remote (above time and space) human interaction. (Mazunova, 2004).

At the end of the 19th century applied linguistics perceived writing only as an auxiliary activity in a foreign language, with the help of which oral forms of speech were recorded, so much attention was paid to writing as a system of spelling signs, as well as the formation of orthographic skills (Matsuda, 2003). The formation of approaches to teaching writing in foreign methodology was greatly influenced by the ideas of Ch. Bloomfield and C. Freeze, who believed that, having mastered sounds and words, it is possible to go to fixing them in writing without additional training. Therefore, the pedagogical developments of the 1940s-1950s based on audiovisual and audiolinguistic approaches did not include the written aspect of speech.

A turning point in the teaching of writing is considered to be the separation of the teaching of English as a foreign language TESOL in 1966 into an independent scientific and practical discipline (Matsuda, 2003). At the same time composition studies were continued in the native language, which later contributed to the development of the theory of writing in a foreign language.

In the 1960s, the view of writing in the native language prevailed as a *free, unregulated activity*. However, with this approach to writing instructions, students had serious difficulties in freely expressing their thoughts and achieving the text's goal-setting.

The approach to teaching writing as a *supervised and controlled activity* (Grabe, 2001) provided a solution to the problem of producing texts. The essence of the approach was reduced to training in the creation of sentences based on the use of samples, lexical and syntactic methods of phrase transformation. A written task created according to these samples was considered to be successfully completed, but the requirement for strict adherence to the samples interfered with the development of the author's creative abilities.

Let us agree that the text-sample should not be presented as a Procrustean bed for fitting one's own text in it and interfere with the manifestation of the author's creative abilities. At the same time, sample texts are still in demand today and help to analyze the logical-compositional structure of the text, the use of lexical and stylistic means, the means of authorization, intensionality, etc. and produce their own texts.

Manuals in which instead of texts-samples a variety of recommendations are given, e. g: "when compiling theses do not cite facts and examples", "keep in theses the original form of statement, the originality of the author's judgment, so as not to lose documentary and convincing", cannot be used independently, because they require comments from the teacher. The availability of samples in the form

of completed assignments in the manual significantly increases the effectiveness of independent learning (Zaika, 2020).

The principle of using samples in teaching writing is also applied in the *rhetorical approach*, which is characterized by the transition from the sentence level to the paragraph level, the construction of which depends on the mode of presentation: description, narration, reasoning. However, according to methodologists, the text created within the rhetorical approach, when transferred to a foreign language, culturally determined rhetorical skills and individual experience of the author may not meet the expectations of native speakers (Matsuda, 2003). Indeed, teaching the culture of foreign language writing is a long and painstaking process of enrichment with new culture and new linguistic knowledge, formed on the basis of the native language and the actual language awareness of the learner in the process of foreign language textual activity, proceeding on the basis of the language and culture being mastered as its essential components (Mazunova, 2004).

It is known that distinctive and similar features are more firmly assimilated in comparable identical objects in contacted languages. This explains the use of the binary text for contrastive comparison of all levels of writing. A binary text is understood as two text samples identical in genre, style and subject content in the native and foreign languages, serving as a basis for mastering all aspects and levels of foreign-language writing with reliance on similarities and consideration of socio-cultural and formal-language differences in the writing cultures of these languages (Mazunova, 2004).

The *contrastive-rhetorical approach* is formed, focusing on the logic and organization of variant forms of writing, the creation of a multi-abstract written text in a foreign language. Structural elements of the paragraph (topic formulation - main sentence and topic development - sentences supplementing, illustrating, explaining, developing the topic) are included in the practice of teaching writing. Attention is paid to ways of expressing semantic connections between paragraphs (main paragraph and related paragraphs containing example, opposition, description, explanation, classification). The structural components of the whole text (introduction, main part, conclusion) were used in teaching students of foreign universities, for whom the main form of writing became essay-narrative, description or argumentation (Silva, 1990).

Rhetorical and contrastive-rhetorical approaches in foreign methodologies have become a link and an intermediate stage between fully controlled and uncontrolled writing, continuing the idea of developing creative, independent writing.

A review of foreign experience shows that independent rhetoric courses are currently in demand. In particular, many American universities teach a course called "Rhetoric and Composition", the highest level of which is the mastery of academic writing. One of the goals of the discipline is to study and master the principles of creating a persuasive discourse in writing for effective communication, to develop a number of communicatively important skills of working with printed texts and in an electronic environment (academic and technical writing, professional text editing, etc.).

The Rhetoric course provides an introduction to the theory and practice of rhetoric, the social and ethical aspects of rhetoric, and the art of persuasion. The skills to be acquired are analytical thinking, persuasion in *written* and oral form.

Rhetoric: Rhetoric of Science explores the various methods of persuasion used by scientists in the presentation of scientific knowledge.

Rhetorical courses aim to develop a variety of discursive abilities and skills necessary for successful communication in *written* and oral form (Ridnaya & Kolesnikova, 2018, pp. 237-238).

The ideas of discourse analysis, according to which writing is a non-linear process, a process of generating not only structure, but also meaning (Zamel, 1982), contributed to the emergence of *the process approach* to writing.

In the framework of this approach the learning situation is built in such a way that the author could focus as much as possible on the process of text composition, namely to discuss their ideas before writing, to correct them in the process of writing and to edit them afterwards (Matsuda, 2003). The teacher's role is reduced to an assistant and consultant, interactive techniques and collaborative elements start to appear.

The problem with *the process approach* is how to teach the author-creator of a text to generate ideas, write them down, refine and revise them. Zamel (1982) has proposed a very generalized process model for the creation of written text: planning, writing, and reviewing. However, while analysing *the process approach* Kim and Kim came to the conclusion that these processes are recursive and interactive, and these mental acts can be reviewed, evaluated, and corrected before any text is created.

The process-based approach to writing instruction emphasizes the author as an independent text creator, so students must be given time and opportunity to develop their abilities to plan, identify a problem, propose solutions, and evaluate the outcome. Response is crucial to mastering the phases of writing, so various means of feedback are used, such as teacher-student conferences, other students' comments and discussions, audio-recorded feedback, and paraphrasing. The disadvantages of the process approach include the same set of process elements for all types of writing, disregard to the typology of texts and the purpose of their creation, and insufficient linguistic and methodological background input (Badger & White, 2000). There is little consideration of the various external factors, including extra-linguistic factors that help the author identify problems, formulate solutions, and shape texts. Therefore, a number of scholars have expressed fair doubts that the process approach can prepare students for at least one type of academic writing, and excessive use of peer review can leave students with an unrealistic view of their abilities.

One of the clear advantages of the process approach is its primary focus on the formation of writing skills. Due to the process approach, the following directions were distinguished in the study of writing as an independent type of activity: text, processes, participants and context (Grabe, 2001). Grabe and Flower & Hayes models that in the 1990s represented only writing processes without taking into account social and pedagogical context were later adjusted towards social context influencing discourse creation of different *genres* taking into account addressee factors, goals and motivation, reading as an important source of knowledge, and this is how the theory of genre-based teaching appears (Hyon, 1996).

Here it is appropriate to dwell on the concept of genre. The term *speech genres* was introduced into the scientific paradigm by Bakhtin (2000), who defined them as "...relatively stable, thematic, compositional and stylistic types of statements" (p. 173). The genre approach (we speak only by certain speech genres, that is, all our statements have certain and relatively stable typical *forms of constructing the whole* (Bakhtin, 2000)) fits into the communicative approach concept proposed by Passov (2015) and

is highlighted within the discourse approach as the leading approach in teaching foreign languages (Ridnaya & Kolesnikova, 2018).

The philosophy of the genre approach is that all texts conform to certain conditions of communication, and the author, in order to successfully join a certain discursive community, needs to be able to create texts that conform to the expectations of their readers in terms of grammar, structure, and content. Otherwise, many people who have a great command of language often feel completely helpless in some spheres of communication precisely because they have no practical command of the genre forms of these spheres (Bakhtin, 2000).

In writing instruction, genres were viewed as fixed and classified into distinct and mutually exclusive categories and subcategories. For example, genres in the domestic and foreign tradition first included exposition, argument, description, and narrative, treating them as large categories with subtypes such as business writing and laboratory report. Thus, teaching genres meant teaching the modes of presentation, the textual patterns in the form and content of each genre. Critics of the genre approach point out that genre instruction turns into instruction in textual organization and arbitrary models that meet little of the student's learning goals, and students who are not motivated to work with such models remain largely passive (Badger & White, 2000). The genre approach focuses on the text level, where personal intentions are framed in typical rhetorical forms to achieve certain social *goals* (Hicks, 1997).

The positive aspects of the genre approach are the recognition that writing is conditioned by the social situation, has a definite purpose, and that learning can occur consciously through imitation and analysis (Badger & White, 2000).

The genre approach is reflected in the modern Russian methodology of teaching foreign languages and Russian as a foreign language, where, unlike foreign methodology, traditional views on writing as a type of productive speech activity are preserved and developed. The purpose of mastering the culture of foreign language writing can be defined as the need to form the ability to freely use the *basic genres and styles* of foreign language writing to solve educational, professional and personal tasks of students associated with conceptualization of encyclopedic and linguistic knowledge, remote interaction of people above time and space as well as the need for personal self-expression (Mazunova, 2004).

Contrary to the criticism that the genre approach does not meet the learning goals of students, we believe that this issue is not a methodological problem because different genres are mastered at different stages of writing proficiency. At the stage of mastering writing-fixation (the first level of difficulty) such genres as notes of different kinds and word for word notes are mastered. When mastering reproduction writing (second level of difficulty), reconstruction skills are formed on the basis of genres of exposition of different styles and types (e.g., brief summarizing of narrative, descriptive and reasoning types). Transformation writing (third level of difficulty) is connected to the creation of texts of secondary genres based on the compression of text content: summary of the text read/listened to, thesis, annotation, abstract, etc. When writing productively (fourth level of difficulty), a large variety of writing types and writing genres is also possible to use.

The genre approach as a focus on genres can be traced at all stages of mastering different types of writing. A solid mastery of basic types of foreign language writing stimulates parallel mastering of the

most generalized forms of textual content presentation and the main genres of written speech (Mazunova, 2004).

7. Conclusion

Thus, the review of the evolution of approaches to teaching writing in Russian and foreign traditions allows us to conclude that the problem of singling out or creating a single approach to teaching foreign-language writing is still urgent today. In practice, most teachers in conditions of student-centred conception of education use achievements of all existing approaches, selecting and adapting them depending on the complexity of the writing proficiency stage of their students, their situations, goals and learning profiles. Such a mixed, eclectic approach helps them solve current problems.

With this article we wanted to draw attention to the genre approach, which is currently gaining more and more supporters in the methodological community. The genre approach is result-oriented and the finished product of different levels of complexity is in demand at all stages of writing instructions, including academic writing that is relevant nowadays.

The genre approach integrates the best achievements and techniques of other approaches (e.g., modeling, pattern-based learning, etc.)

Genre competence occupies a leading place in the hierarchy of competences aimed at mastering written speech in the native and foreign languages (Ridnaya & Kolesnikova, 2018).

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