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Integrated writing pedagogy in the EFL classroom

Streszczenie

ZINTEGROWANA PEDAGOGIKA PISANIA W KLASIE EFL

Poniższy artykuł omawia kwestie związane z materiałem szkolnym postrzeganym jako jako praca domowa przez wielu nauczycieli języka angielskiego jako języka obcego (EFL) ze względu na jego czasochłonność: pisanie w drugim języku. W pierwszej części przedstawiono niektóre problemy, z którymi często borykają się uczniowie języka angielskiego podczas zajęć z języka angielskiego. Tu pojawiają się odniesienia do konkretnych kultur, ale problemy te można również rozpatrywać uniwersalnie. Kolejna sekcja opisuje dwa specyficzne podejścia do pisania, które nauczyciele mogą przyjąć w czasie prowadzenia zajęć i oceniać ich skuteczność. Trzecia i ostatnia część szczegółowo opisuje, w jaki sposób nauczyciele mogą zapożyczać aspekty pierwszych dwóch podejść, aby stworzyć zintegrowane podejście, mające na celu pomoc uczniom w przezwyciężeniu problemów, jakie napotykają podczas komponowania tekstów w obcym języku (L2). W tym miejscu zawarte są zarysy proceduralne, aby nauczyciele mogli przenieść tę zintegrowaną pedagogikę pisania do swoich klas EFL.

Słowa kluczowe: nauka pisania, pisanie w obcym języku, proces nauczania pisania, nauczanie EFL/ELT

Summary

The following article discusses something which is frequently perceived as nothing more than homework by many instructors of English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

*   Piotr Jednaszewski – dyrektor wydziału edukacji St Mary`s Academy, Falkirk, Szkocja. Specjalizuje się w metodyce nauczania języka angielskiego jako języka obcego, komunikacji i negocjacji. Autor i współautor książek i artykułów z zakresu metodyki nauczania negocjacji, zarządzania instytucjami edukacyjnymi, nauczania języka angielskiego jako języka obcego oraz stosunków międzynarodowych.

for its time-consuming nature: second language writing. The first section outlines some issues that students of English often experience when taking English-language classes. Here, references to specific cultures are made, but the problems can also be universally considered. The subsequent section describes two specific approaches to writing instructors can adopt in their own classrooms and evaluates their effectiveness. The third and final section details how instructors may go about borrowing aspects of the two approaches to form an integrated approach aimed at helping students to overcome the problems they face in composing L2 texts. Here, procedural outlines are included so that instructors can take this integrated writing pedagogy into their own EFL classrooms.

Developing students' writing skills is all too often relegated towards the bottom of teachers' priority lists, even though those taking proficiency tests used for international university entrance or visa purposes such as the Cambridge Main Suite or IELTS or TOEFL frequently attain their lowest score in the writing component. This in itself is evidence enough that students need to practise writing as often as possible, and perhaps even practise it more than the other skills, since writing proficiently in a second language is among the most difficult and longest endeavours in second language learning as a whole. As such, there are some problems associated with L2 writing.

English writing conventions

One of these issues that L2 learners can experience is the unfamiliarity with the target language's writing conventional macrostructures and genre characteristics (Tribble, 1996, p. 10)[1]. For instance, if you asked your students to do some creative writing, some of them might put in something that is not usually seen in English story-telling, since there is an overarching structure to it; similarly, when it comes to using temporal conjunctions which show the order in which events happened, as is fairly standard practice in storytelling narratives, these can be considered to be poor writing in some parts of the world, such as in the Persian Gulf (Swan & Smith, 2001)[2].

There may be a range of smaller parts that make up the larger whole that differ too, such as "different organisational preferences, approaches to argument[…]

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[1]   C. Tribble, *Writing*, Oxford 1996.

[2]   M. Swan, B. Smith, *Learner English: A teacher's guide to interference and other problems* (2nd ed.), Cambridge 2001.

getting readers' attention, estimates of reader knowledge, uses of cohesion and metadiscourse markers, usage of linguistic features i.e. subordination, modifiers, lexical variety, objectivity, complexity in style" (Hyland, 2003, p. 46)[3]. So, where an Italian student might produce an appropriately lengthy paragraph containing a clear progression of ideas in Italian, the English rendering might be inappropriately lengthy and comparatively muddled. Their syntactic patterns might therefore not be applicable to English writing (Hedge, 1998)[4]. Similarly, where a French student might produce a sophisticated argument around their central problem, their English rendering might seem difficult to follow since their stance is not explicitly stated in their introductory paragraph. This is because French writers typically insert a question rather than an answer in their thesis statements (Lape, 2020)[5]. These are just two examples from my experience of working with students coming from such backgrounds, but they can be seen as part of a wider phenomenon: that writing conventions are not universally shared across cultures, and that, rather, "each language has rhetorical conventions to it" (Connor, 1996, p. 5)[6].

The requirement for a template

Continuing Connor's previous assertion that "the linguistic and rhetorical conventions of the first language interfere with the writing of the second language" (ibid.), it seems clear that students require a template from which to base their own attempts at L2 writing. Many cultures expect their instructor to provide them with such model answers to emulate, or expect their course books to include these for them. Indeed, this is particularly the case with Chinese and Korean students, whose traditional L2 learning processes tend to revolve around rote memorisation of knowledgeable texts (Swan & Smith, 2001)[7]. That said, there is some evidence that in the last decade or so this is beginning to change at least at the level of higher education. For instance, in Korea, case studies conducted over revisions of written composition brought positive results in terms of confidence and student appreciation (see for instance Lee &Schallert, 2008, p. 506-537, or So & Lee, 2013, p. 1-10)[8]. Similarly, in China, noticeable changes in approach

[3]   K. Hyland, *Second Language Writing*, Cambridge 2003, s. 46.

[4]   T. Hedge, *Writing*, Oxford 1998.

[5]   N. G. Lape, *Internationalizing the Writing Center*, United States 2020.

[6]   U. Connor, *Contrastive Rhetoric: Cross-Cultural Aspects of Second Language Writing*, Cambridge 1996, s. 5.

[7]   M. Swan, B.Smith, *Learner English: A teacher's guide to interference and other problems* (2nd ed.), Cambridge 2001.

[8]   C.H. Lee, D.L. Schallert, *Constructing trust between teacher and students through feedback and revision cycles in an EFL writing classroom*, „Written Communication" 2008, nr 25:4, s. 506-537.

are starting to be made from internalising knowledge towards foregrounding of writing strategies (see Lan & Liu, 2010, p. 24-40)[9]. Learning by heart is not merely practised in Asian territories though, since it is also commonplace in the Middle East, with Arabic and Farsi speakers also being long-term practitioners of such a habit (Swan & Smith, 2001). This is especially problematic since students from these places are also required to get to grips with a previously unseen writing system, writing from right to left, and a brand-new alphabet.

It is also worth remembering that some cultures write down precious little in comparison to some of their international contemporaries, which means that a model answer is necessary as they otherwise may have no idea how the written form is supposed to look. For example, if we return to the storytelling narrative as discussed before, the majority of West African language speakers transmit such tales almost exclusively orally, and rarely stop to transcribe them on paper.

Getting started

Have you, as an English as a Foreign Language instructor, ever given a writing task to your students, set a time limit, started the exercise, and after half of the time allocated has passed, noticed that some students have written next to nothing, neither in terms of a plan for their task nor of physical words forming paragraphs? Why are some students like this and others are able to compose a great amount of ideas and prose itself in the same time period, even if both parties are theoretically of the same CEFR level? The latter cohort might be considered skilled writers, who are able to a number of things while writing, according to case studies (see Zamel, 1983, p. 165-187)[10], such as:
- Being able to loop back around to the planning phase as and when required;
- Possessing individual strategies for starting out a new piece, be these in the form of mind maps or diagrams, composing lists, noting down key terms, etc.;
- Recognising that revisions need to be made at a paragraph level rather than changing small segments of written discourse;
- Getting bogged down on linguistic expression is not a productive enterprise; rather, focussing on development of clear or coherent ideas is what is recognised as important.

L. So, C.H. Lee, *Case study on the effects of an L2 writing instructional model for blended learning in higher education*, „The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology" 2013, nr 12, s. 1-10.

[9]   X. Lan, Y. Liu, *A case study of dynamic assessment in EFL process writin*, „Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics" 2010 , nr 33, s. 24-40.

[10]   V. Zamel, *The composing processes of advanced ESL students: six case studies*, „TESOL Quarterly" 1983, nr 17:2, s. 165-187.

On the other hand, those in the former cohort who in such situations may sit and barely put pen to paper, nor mind to work, are quite commonplace in the EFL classroom. Writing can be a challenging experience even in our native language, and this is very much exacerbated at the second language level. Some students genuinely struggle with both formulation of ideas and externalisation of their form. Imagine you ask your group of teenage students to write a story. Crafting a good story requires a good deal of imagination, but if you ask teenagers to read aloud, for instance those coming from Asian countries like Japan, they will be too embarrassed to do so (Swan & Smith, 2001)[11], freeze up, and produce nothing. Similarly, if you set the same task to groups of adults, they will end up focussing excessively on how accurate each stretch of their writing is and not on the development of plot points (Perl, 1979, and Sommers, 1980, p. 317-336)[12], going very slowly as a result. And this is not only true of lower level students writing stories, but also of postgraduates writing academically in their second languages, since in some studies conducted, approximately two-thirds of participant students cited a language barrier, while three quarters of their assessors cited the lack of coherent ideas as a major sticking point in their submissions (see Singh, 2019, p. 972-992)[13]. And this dearth of ideas of not unique to Malaysian students: far from it, as other studies have shown the same of Pakistani students (see Rupidara, 2021, p. 101-117)[14] and Georgian students (see Doghonadze, 2017)[15], for instance. With the rise of technology, we are writing less and less, and this worrying trend is set to continue. What this means is that people are less and less comfortable with composition, and this has ramifications which trickle down into the EFL classroom and necessitate an explicit focus on teaching how to actually write.

Teaching writing in the classroom

There are two approaches to be outlined in this article which can lead to improved writing performance. While I will suggest adopting an integrated

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[11] M. Swan, B. Smith, *Learner English: A teacher's guide to interference and other problems* (2nd ed.). Cambridge 2001.

[12] S. Perl, *The composing processes of unskilled college writers*, „Research in the Teaching of English" 1979, nr 13:4, s. 317-336.
N. Sommers, *Revision strategies of student writers and experienced adult writers*, „College Composition and Communication" 1980, nr 31:4, s. 378-388.

[13] M.K.M. Singh, *Academic Reading and Writing Challenges Among International EFL Master's Students in a Malaysian University: The Voice of Lecturers*, „Journal of International Studies" 2019, nr 9:4, s. 972-992.

[14] L.I. Rupidara, *How Hard Can English Writing Be? A Literature Study on Problems of EFL Students in English Writing*, w: *Women's Voices in EFL Classroom: Research, Review, Evaluation and Critique*, red: Djahimo, S.E.P. (ed.), Ebook: Deepublish 2021, s.101-117.

[15] N. Doghonadze, *Teaching EFL Reading and Writing in Georgia*. United Kingdom 2017.

approach, borrowing aspects of both approaches, it is nonetheless a necessary starting point to examine each approach individually to determine its merits and place in the classroom.

Process writing

To begin, let us consider ourselves when we write. If you are a university graduate whose job involves very little writing, think back to how you used to produce essays or theses as an undergraduate/postgraduate. If you are someone, say a teacher, teacher trainer, or office worker, think about how you ordinarily compose pieces. These pieces can be either academic or non-academic in nature. Do you write whatever comes to your mind or first reflect on how to organise and phrase what it is you will write? The chances are that the more academic in nature, the more time you will allocate to thoroughly planning your ideas, mapping out your paragraphs and main points, and selecting appropriate references to back up these points. Even more informal writing acts though, like text messages, often require careful thought as to the phrasing of what is being said, so as to not cause offense or misinterpretation, and so on. This process undergone in determining your starting point in the act of writing is implemented in the EFL classroom under the moniker of "process writing" (Dressman, Sadler, 2020, p. 80)[16].

Process writing came about as a counterpoint to older approaches to writing that involved reproduction of model texts, favouring ideas and projecting structural organisation, over an end product (Kern, 2000, p. 196)[17]. Effectively, this shift away from product to process echoed the new methodologies brought into the classroom with the advent of Communicative Language Teaching, or CLT (Thornbury, 2006)[18]. In essence, it foregrounds the planning aspect prior to the writing aspect, following it up with a reviewing aspect, with questions to be asked of students so that they can better internalise the strategies required for effective second language writing (Flower & Hayes, 1981)[19]. These stages can be broken down into more detail (Tribble, 1996, p. 38)[20].

Process writing format

Firstly, students would dedicate themselves to the pre-writing stage of the process. This would involve determining what the task requires of them, planning paragraphs and relevant language they can use, as well as outlining their main

[16]   M. Dressman, R.W. Sadler, *The Handbook of Informal Language Learning*, Oxford 2020.

[17]   R. Kern, *Literacy and Language Teaching*, Oxford 2000.

[18]   S. Thornbury, *An A-Z of ELT: A Dictionary of Terms and Concepts*, London 2006.

[19]   L. Flower, J.R. Hayes, *A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing. College Composition and Communication 1981*, nr 32, s. 365-387.

[20]   C. Tribble, *Writing*. Oxford 1996.

points or stance to be adopted if it happens to be a discursive piece. Ideas can be outlined in pairs or in small groups as a brainstorming session in the form of mind maps, etc. This must be done in a non-judgemental way though so as to not "limit the very creativity and productivity with the technique is designed to promote"(White & Arndt, 1991, p. 18)[21]. Following this, they would compose the piece. Having finished, students would move onto the revising stage of the process, entailing the reorganisation or rewriting of awkwardly constructed clauses, sentences or paragraphs, as well as the modification of certain lexical items if used in an inappropriate register. In other words, while the initial drafting "focuses on what the writer wants to say", "redrafting focuses on how to say it most effectively" (Hedge, 1998, p. 23)[22]. It is worth mentioning here for instructors that this revising stage of process writing is at its most useful and least time-consuming when students are able to use their own personal computers in the EFL classroom (Nation, 2008)[23]. The concluding stage would involve editing, aiming to reduce the frequency of lexical/grammatical errors present or identify misuse of pronunciation, and so on.

Process writing's place in the classroom

While such processes (e.g. brainstorming, making mind maps, editing, etc.) are incredibly fruitful and go a long way towards mitigating the kind of thing frequently seen by Cambridge examination invigilators, namely students writing without a clear plan to their work in mind, there are nonetheless some drawbacks to process writing. If focussing solely on process writing, for instance, students might have little idea of what their product should actually look like in terms of organisation, register and language level. It has been quite clearly pointed out that "teachers do students no service to suggest, even implicitly, that »product« is not important. In this country [the U.S.A.] students will be judged on their product regardless of the process they utilised to achieve it. And that product, based as it is on the specific codes of a particular culture, is more readily produced when the directives of how to produce it are made explicit" (Delpit, 1988, p. 287)[24].

Genre-based writing

This brings us onto an approach which more explicitly demonstrates how students can put together certain texts. Before I delve into the specifics, here is

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[21]   R. White, V. Arndt, *Process Writing*, London and New York 1991, s. 18.

[22]   T. Hedge, *Writing*, Oxford 1998, s. 23.

[23]   I. Nation, *Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Writing*, Ukraine 2008.

[24]   L.D. *Delpit, The Silenced Dialogue: Power and Pedagogy in Educating Other People's Children*, „Harvard Educational Review" 1988, nr 58, s. 287.

some food for thought: how do you know a menu is a menu from simple obse-rvation? Put aside any external factors like being in a restaurant and knowing contextually that it is a menu. How do you know a review is a review from simple observation? Do not take into consideration any external factors like whether the piece was published in a newspaper or magazine. What would be characteristic of a menu, and what would be characteristic of a review?

If you mentally answered the first question by thinking about the specific features of a menu, such as numbered lists corresponding to individual dishes, prices on the right-hand side, and bolded indicators of dish type like "appetizers" or "main courses", and answered the second question by reflecting on specific fe-atures of a review, such as pictures of whatever is being reviewed, a star rating out of five or ten, and so on, then it might be said that you have certain expectations of a particular parent discourse community (Johns, 1990)[25]. What this means is that a set of communicative purposes is being conveyed by a particular type of writing, like conveying information about dishes or giving a positive or negative recommendation of a restaurant as in our two examples, and that these purposes shape the rationale for and provide the blueprint for the content and style of the piece of writing (Swales, 1990, p. 58)[26]. In response to the third question, it is clear that wehave preconceptions of characteristics of menus and reviews, and that they dictate their layout (prices on the right of the menu, star system at the top of the review, etc.). As adults, we have sufficient world knowledge of menus and reviews that we recognise similarities between texts and therefore draw on this to better make sense of them (Hyland, 2004)[27]. This is what knowing your genres is all about: that we have certain expectations of subject matter, tone, organisation, and relevant language based on what it is we are reading (Devitt, 2008)[28].

The implications of this in the classroom are contained in what is called the "genre-based approach" to writing. An antithesis to the process approach, genre--based pedagogy aims to provide students with a firm grasp of text requirements through textual analysis (Tribble, 1996)[29]. While this may be seen by some as essentially the old product approach, where students are given a model answer and asked to reproduce it as closely as possible, it differs in that the model texts provided to students are "analysed in functional terms as much as in linguistic ones" (Thornbury, 2006, p. 250)[30]. This analytical approach would firstly involve

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[25] A. Johns, *L1 composition theories: implications for developing theories of L2 composition* w: *Second Language Writing: Research Insights for the Classroom*, red. B. Kroll, Cambridge 1990, s. 24-36.

[26]   J. Swales, *Genre Analysis*. Cambridge 1990.

[27] K. Hyland, *Genre and Second Language Writing*, United States 2004.

[28] A. J. Devitt, *Writing Genres*, United States 2008.

[29] C. Tribble, *Writing*, Oxford 1996.

[30] S. Thornbury, *An A-Z of ELT: A Dictionary of Terms and Concepts*, London 2006, s. 250.

identification of purpose, and then, once this has been established, it would permit further focus on linguistic or organisational aspects of the genre in question (Myskow& Gordon, 2010)[31]. It has also been suggested that students can be provided more with more than one example of texts within a specific genre, and look at commonalities, rather than focussing solely on one example (Harmer, 2004, p. 29)[32].

Genre-based writing format

Taking the review as our example of target genre in the classroom, a genre--based approach would begin by providing model texts, followed by identification of purpose, which in the case of a review would be considered to be informing the reader whether or not the thing being reviewed is worth the reader's time, followed by an analysis of structural and linguistic features. What might such features be? We might point to any number of things: the summary, introductory paragraphs giving background information, recommendatory paragraphs towards the end, the stars allocated, non-gradable adjectives, topic specific lexis, verbs expressing opinion, and so on. After this, students would go on to product a new text in the target genre, having been exposed to multiple examples (Macken-Horarik, 2001, p. 26)[33], or alternatively having been exposed to one or two examples which conform to genre norms and one or two examples that do not as a way of raising awareness of what it should and should not look and read like respectively (Lackman, 2010)[34]. This produced text could then be subjected to exploration of whether the genre features discussed previously were met by the writer(s).

Genre-based writing's place in the classroom

The advantages of adopting a genre-based approach in the EFL classroom have been convincingly laid-out (see for instance, Hyland, 2004, p. 10-11)[35] and include the likes of:

1. its explicitness, especially as a way to circumvent the issue that, as we saw, process writing does not address, namely the achievability of producing

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31 G. Myskow, K. Gordon, *A focus on purpose: using a genre approach in an EFL writing class,* „ELT Journal" 2010, nr 64:3, s. 283-292.

32 J. Harmer, *How to Teach Writing*. Pearson 2004.

33 M. Macken-Horarik, *"Something to Shoot for": A Systematic Functional Approach to Teaching Genre in Johns*, w: *Secondary School Science. In Genre in the Classroom: Multiple Perspectives*, red A. M. United States 2001, s. 17-42.

34 K. Lackman, (2010). *A Framework for Teaching Writing: An Introduction to Genre Analysis*, [ebook] Ken Lackman i Associates Educational Consultants. http://www.kenlackman.com/files/FrameworkforWritingHandout10.pdf [dostęp 21.10.2021].

35 K. Hyland, *Genre and Second Language Writing*, United States 2004.

a product based on a community's expectations. By contrast, genre-based approaches make it abundantly clear for learners what they need to do and how they need to do it.

2. its ability to go back to the students and their own needs and can inform course content. For instance, if the students need to write a CV or business emails, a genre-based approach can facilitate their access to the host community they personally require to access (Thornbury, 2005)[36].

3. its achievability in that students are far better scaffolded by instructors in this writing style than they are by the likes of process writing where many of the ideas are self-generated.

4. its systematisation of language and context, meaning that analysis of both ends up becoming natural for students when producing their own texts within the targeted discourse community.

It has been noted that students require practice of as wide a range of genres as possible so as to feel comfortable if set a task requiring them to produce a review, or a business email, or whatever is required of them in their upcoming proficiency tests or personal lives (Nation, 2008)[37]. As well as the advantages listed above to genre-based pedagogy, case studies have also shown its ability to enhance students' writing prowess in terms of narrative, argumentative and expository pieces (Chen & Su, 2012, p. 185)[38].

We have seen the benefits and drawbacks of process writing and the innumerable benefits of genre-based writing, but what if we combine aspects of them? In the following section, I will suggest a way to go about this in your own EFL classroom.

Recommended outline to implement an integrated approach to writing

Combining process and genre-based approaches is by no means a new idea, and it has been met with mixed opinions in EFL academia. Although some might cast doubt on the effectiveness of integrating them rather than focussing predominantly on one approach (see for example Dikli et al., 2014, p. 53-76)[39], others have praised the results of this combination (see for example Khan &Bontha,

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[36] S. Thornbury, *Beyond the Sentence: Introducing Discourse Analysis*, London 2005.

[37] I. Nation, *Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Writing*, Ukraine 2008.

[38] Y. Chen, S. Su, *A genre-based approach to teaching ELF summary writing*, „ELT Journal" 2012, nr 66:2, s. 184-192.

[39] Dikli i in., *A Reflective Overview of a Process Approach to Writing in Generation 1.5 ESL Classrooms: Instructors' and Students' Perspectives*, w: *Methodologies for Effective Writing Instruction in EFL and ESL Classrooms*, red: R. Al-Mahrooqi, V.S. Thakur, A. Roscoe, United States 2014, s. 53-76.

2014, p. 94-114)[40]. Indeed, prominent academics on L2 writing have gone so far as to say that effective writing pedagogy is reliant on drawing on aspects of both process and genre-based approaches (Bamforth, 1992, p. 97)[41].

Before I detail potential staging for a lesson involving a mixture of process and genre-based approaches to writing, we must firstly choose a genre and a topic to match that genre. Since we began this article with consideration of narrative storytelling, and continued by considering key genre features menus and reviews, let us imagine we are conducting a lesson on storytelling about an experience which took place in a restaurant. It is hoped that the following procedure can be taken, built upon and adapted to fit any other genre you aspire to use in your own classrooms.

Before putting together a lesson on whichever genre you decide to expose your students, you must first consider the genre and its key features, as we did earlier with the likes of menus and reviews. So, let us ask ourselves: what is characteristic of a story in English? Stories are generally speaking linear and involve a beginning, a middle, and end (Oller, 1983)[42]. But is there more to them than that in terms of macrostructure? Some have identified five distinct elements contained within spoken narrative (McCarthy, 1991, p. 138)[43]. The first of these five elements is what is termed an "abstract", which is essentially a short statement containing an indication of narrative content. The second of these is what has been called the "orientation", which provides the listener (or reader in the case of written narrative) with information as to the key participants in the narrative as well as the place and time in which it takes place. The third of these is the "complicating event" or "events", which is the device used to drive the narrative forward towards its conclusion. The fourth of these is the "resolution", which describes how the complicating event was dealt with by the story's participants. Finally, the fifth of these is the "coda", which provides the listener (or reader) with some sort of moral takeaway from the narrative experience. As well as these structural aspects of stories, there are some other key features we expect in narrative in terms of lexis and grammar. When it comes to the former, we might expect lexical items and sets from whichever semantic field the story takes place in, onomatopoeic verbs or verbs which show the manner in which something happened, as well as non-gra-

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40   K. Khan, U.R. Bontha, *How Blending Process and Product Approaching to Teaching Writing Helps EFL Learners: A case study*, w: *Methodologies for Effective Writing Instruction in EFL and ESL Classrooms*, red R. Al-Mahrooqi, V.S. Thakur, A. Roscoe, United States 2014, s. 94-114.

41   R. Bamforth, *Process versus genre: anatomy of a false dichotomy*, „Prospect" 1992, nr 8(1), s. 89-99.

42   J.W. Oller, *Story Writing Principles and ESL Teaching*. „TESOL Quarterly"1983, nr 17, s. 39-53.

43   M. McCarthy, *Discourse Analysis for Language Teachers*, Cambridge 1991.

dable adjectives and so on. Regarding the latter, we might expect indirect speech, a range of narrative tenses, and the use of the definite article once the situation has been sufficiently instilled into the reader or listener's mind (Widdowson, 2007, p. 25)[44]. Having identified such component parts of your chosen genre, you can move onto finding or creating a model answer, or model answers, which will be presented to students as an example of a knowledgeable text for genre-analysis.

Now that we have contemplated what is characteristic of a story, I will move onto chart a precise lesson staging, showcasing both process and genre-based approaches to writing.

1. Activating students' schemata

Introduce the topic of the lesson to the students. Since we said our example was going to be about exploring the genre of storytelling through the topic of restaurants, I would ask my students to first brainstorm words that they associate with restaurants. This might seem like a simple task but depending on the students' level some differences between nomenclature can be clarified here. Students can be asked to brainstorm individually and then in pairs so that they navigate meaning together. Such an activity is a great way to start a lesson on storytelling since by being asked to brainstorm words associated with restaurants, the students are effectively being scaffolded for later stages wherein they are expected to write about an experience in a restaurant, as they already have access to the appropriate semantic field.

Once the brainstormed lexis has been reviewed and consolidated, you can move onto the narrative's "abstract", if we borrow McCarthy's earlier term, which in this example would be something like 'it was one of the worst experiences I have ever had in a restaurant'. It is better if you provide the abstract as English proficiency tests often provide the opening line of narrative for you, as is the case in the PET and FCE for Schools exams, for instance. Here, students are asked to brainstorm once more specific instances of unfortunate situations that can arise when out for lunch or dinner. This is clearly within most students' real life experience, which has been noted as being a key component in informing successful writing (Nation, 2008)[45]. This is because adult (although not exclusively) students will presumably have built up substantial experience of eating out over their lives, and therefore may be able to tap into episodic memory and use this mental schema to inform their ideas for horrible experiences (White and Arndt, 1991, p. 18)[46]. Make sure to board as many of these ideas as possible. Give out

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[44] H.G. Widdowson, *Discourse Analysis*, Oxford 2007.

[45] I. Nation, *Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Writing*, Ukraine 2008.

[46] R. White, V. Arndt, *Process Writing*, Longman 1991.

pieces of A4 paper to pairs and have them subsequently organise such ideas as mind maps, which speaks to visual learners but also allows intra-paragraph patterns and connections to be drawn, which is a great way of getting them to think about the narrative macrostucture we will make explicitly clear in subsequent lesson stages, as well as cohesion and coherence between these points (Hedge, 2000, p. 311)[47]. Do as much brainstorming and mind-map making as required so that ideas flow in a learner-centred way and provide them with the impetus to get started easily when asked to write later on.

2. Provision of a model text/model texts

Let us imagine for the ease of argument that you have distributed a story of an awful restaurant experience to your students. Of course, it is worth mentioning here that you should pre-teach any difficult lexis that you think your students will stumble present within your model text(s), and give them a purpose to read or listen to the narrative selected. Naturally, if you are using story in its oral form, a transcription should be provided for analysis in the subsequent stages.

This model story that you provide ought to include five distinct paragraphs in an effort to mirror the aforementioned five-act structure typical narratives adhere to. Here, you can set up matching exercises where your students have to consider the purpose of each paragraph: is it providing a moral for the story, for example, or is it charting the complicating event which drives the narrative to its conclusion? By leading them to become familiar with its inherent staging, this step fulfils learners' need for a Vygotskian-esque template to base their own compositions around, as well as reinforcing any existing familiarity with how English stories are structured (Hyland, 2003)[48]. What I mean by this is that students learn from a more knowledgeable other, especially when in the process of acquiring our native languages, so students extract what they can from this "perfect" example.

Once such an activity has been completed, you can proceed to focus on specific lexical or grammatical aspects that characterise English storytelling. For instance, you can ask students to race one another through the text in order to find one or more examples of various grammatical structures, such as indirect speech, past perfect simple or continuous forms, etc., or lexical items, such as those associated with restaurants or onomatopoeic verbs (i.e. "the waiter barked the order to the chefs in the back"). You could also draw attention to the words which show a relationship between one sentence/clause or another, such as the conjunctions, as these are an effective marker of inter-text cohesion (Cook, 1989)[49]. Additio-

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[47] T. Hedge, *Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom*, Oxford 2000.
[48] K. Hyland, *Second Language Writing*, Cambridge 2003.
[49] G. Cook, *Discourse*, Oxford 1989.

nally, you can look at a range of other cohesive devices such as referencing with pronouns or definite articles, substitution and ellipsis (Thornbury, 2005, p. 23)[50]. If you wanted to foreground cohesion and coherence, you could also distribute the model answer on a sentence-by-sentence level and have the learners piece it back together using the contextual clues.

Provided that you have examined one or more model texts and the students have accumulated familiarity with the structural and linguistic features of English storytelling, you can move onto the next stage of the lesson, which would be more productive in nature:

3. Drafting of the students' version

Invite your students to get back into pairs and allocate them time to begin an initial draft of their own version of the story, namely 'it was one of the worst experiences I have ever had in a restaurant'. Since students have already brainstormed their ideas sufficiently, this activity should be highly learner-centred and instructors should not intervene much unless required to clarify arising lexis. Make sure that your time allocation is neither too long nor too unrealistic since this is merely an initial draft and will not be fully representative of the finished product.

4. Provision of checklists

At this stage, you can collect in the students' first drafts of their stories and redistribute them at random. The objective here is that students read one another's efforts in a bid to determine whether or not it corresponds to their genre expectations. The way that you can do this is to provide each pair of students with a checklist for peer correction, containing polar questions targeting the inclusion of certain things in the text they are examining. For instance, you could include questions like "does the final paragraph provide a moral for the story?", "does the writer include an example of indirect speech?", etc. Not only does such a task require students to reinforce their genre knowledge, but it also lets them notice the difference between their language output and their peers' language output. Checklists in general are something that are popularly championed in self-study books for learners (see for example Tribble, 1989)[51] as well as many modern published course books, since they develop the learners' conscientiousness of what they are writing and how they are writing it. At this stage though,

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[50] S. Thornbury, *Beyond the Sentence: Introducing Discourse Analysis*, London 2005.

[51] C. Tribble, *Word for Word*, Turin 1989.

focus the checklist's questions on the incorporation of genre features and not on grammatical or orthographic error.

5. Revising

Once you have conducted some feedback and students are aware of any shortcomings in their pieces in terms of macrostructure or non-inclusion of essential grammatical/lexical aspects, you can move onto the revising stage in process writing. As outlined previously, this is far easier if you are able to use personal computers in the classroom since rejigging takes substantially less time. Allocate some time, but less than you did for the previous drafting phrase, so that students can make suitable amendments or appropriate alterations should they have missed anything out.

6. Editing

Allocate some final minutes to the nitty-gritty of English language teaching, or, in other words, tell your students to check things like subject-verb agreement, spelling and verb form appropriateness. Upon completion of this task, you can once more take in your students' work, redistribute them and have them reconsider the previous checklist's questions as well as provide a new one on whether they can spot any errors regarding spelling, grammar, lexical choice, or punctuation. Discuss these as a group and clarify any uncertainties on the board.

7. Class discussion

I would suggest rounding off such a lesson by holding a class discussion wherein they compare aspects of the target genre to aspects of the genre in their own cultures, as a way of considering any differences, and whether the experiences they drew upon for their inspiration for their finished products were true or not. Moreover, by giving your students an opportunity to discuss the inspirations behind their compositions, it offers them the chance to personalise them, relate them to their own lives, and sharing such stories can often provide some much needed laughter into the classroom, reinforcing positive student-student and student-teacher relationships.

Conclusion

To conclude, students of English as a Foreign Language have numerous challenges to overcome when learning to write in their target language, as a result

of factors such as differing writing conventions between their own culture and English culture, their need to absorb model texts to inform their own writing output and perhaps mimic them in the future, and also their paucity of ideas owing to the decreasing importance of being able to write effectively in the twenty-first century. Fortunately, there are two approaches to writing that instructors can draw upon in order to circumvent as much as possible these issues: firstly, there is process writing, which can be utilised to encourage creativity, thorough planning and execution of such plans, and secondly, genre-based writing, which necessitates analysis of model answers and guidance towards absorption of English writing norms. If integrated, these two approaches to second language writing can go some way towards combating the issues experienced by students, and an adaptable lesson staging implementing both of these can be found for instructors in the third and final section of this article to be taken and adapted at their leisure.

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