

COMPOSITION WRITING TECHNIQUES

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Writing is a natural outlet for the students' reflections on their speaking, listening, and reading experiences in their second language. When students are not focused on grammatical mistakes and when they write freely, they develop confidence and a sense of power over the language that none of the other skills is likely to produce until the students are advanced in their studies. Students begin writing as soon as they enter the doors of Foreign Language Department and approach the time-table till the last day of their licentiate paper presentation. They keep writing exercises, vocabulary notes, dictations, and again vocabulary notes and exercises, compositions, essays, term papers, research paper.

Before mastering a foreign language students together with teachers have to overcome a number of problems: How to begin? How to develop ideas? How to finish? I, personally, came across quite a bewildering problem in the group second year students. They do not know how to produce a simple piece of writing as composition, because unfortunately it is not clearly explained at schools. As a result, I have to check and evaluate their brainstorming which can hardly be called compositions, for they lack unity to support main ideas, coherence for these ideas to flow clearly and logically to the next, elaboration developed by details. They do not know how to start, how to prove ideas, how to finish.

As the primary duty of any teacher is to instruct and inspire, I decided to get rid of this problem and to give them necessary techniques they can experiment with to write Introduction, Setting and Conclusion.

A good introduction serves two purposes: to catch the reader's attention, to state the main idea. How to achieve that? The following techniques suggested by Blau, Sheridan in *The Writer's Craft* might be helpful in writing a good introduction.

1. Interesting facts: make the reader curious, inform him and surprise; give some alarming evidences, some shocking facts. For example: "The total mass of living things on Earth is estimated to be about seventeen billion billion tons. This is the only about 1/300 the mass of the atmosphere, and only 1/70 000 the mass of the ocean. Nevertheless, the biosphere is so active chemically that it is responsible for much of the environment about us." (Isaak Asimov, "More Words of Science")
2. Vivid detailed description: capture the readers imagination, use mysterious, sensory description. For example: "The first snowfall came

early in December...The low sky was like a sheet of metal; the blond cornfields had faded out into ghostliness at last; the little pond was stiff under its willow bushes.” (W. Cather, “My Antonia”)

3. Asking questions: intrigue and make your reader think, for example: What is the latest book you have read?
4. Incidents and anecdotes: interest human’s attention, make him/her smile or nod in recognition, for instance: A man in Cambridge, Massachusetts, took his neighbor to court because the neighbor hadn’t cut his grass in fourteen years.
5. Quotations: bring something inanimate to life, personalize and add interest to writing. For example: “ A flute “, wrote an early nineteenth-century British critic, “is a musical weed which springs up everywhere.”

“How to develop ideas, how to breathe in life into them?” In order to achieve that the main idea should be supported, described, and proved. The following techniques advised by Blau, Sheridan in *The Writer’s Craft* are used to elaborate ideas in the setting.

1. Facts and Statistics: use statements which can be proven through observation, experience, consulting some sources. For example, the statement: “The re are 60 seconds in a minute.” If you doubt this statement, check it in encyclopedia. Statistics are facts about people, business, money, and so on, that involve numbers. Example: 25 000 adults revealed that 55% do not exercise 3 times a week for 20 minutes in US, according to Center for Disease Control.(1, p.341)
2. Sensory details: develop ideas using the words that appeal to five senses. Write the way things look, smell, taste or feel. Describe the brilliance of dew.
3. Incidents and examples: support your ideas with incidents and examples. This technique helps to convey your idea and enlarge its signifcance. They can be taken from your personal experience, from books, films, mass media. Examples of real love can be found for instance in the film “Pretty Woman”, in the book “Gone With the Wind” by M Mitchell.
4. Quotations: quotations can be used for many purposes. It can be used to illustrate the point you want to make. You can quote an expert to lend authority to a point you have already made.

Every experience – from songs, films, football games to writing and human’s life – has to end. In order to be satisfied with your writing it needs a conclusion. Although every good conclusion is unique and different it must display the following characteristics:

- follow logically from the rest of the piece of writing
- do not introduce new, ambiguous material
- leave the reader with something to think about

To achieve this result the following techniques (2,p.353) may be of good help:

1. Restating the main idea: one way to end a piece of writing is by returning the central idea and restating it in a new way.
2. Generalizing about the information given: when you present much information about certain people, books, events-generalize them in the end, tie together the information, make a totalization of already mentioned things.
3. Make a prediction: give hope to the reader or end on the note of gloom to capture his/her imagination. Speak about the possibility to travel between stars, the consequences of global warming, if it is necessary.
4. Ask a question: sum up mentioned opinions to conclude by asking a question. This technique leaves your reader thinking. For example: “Things wild and free are being to destroy by the impersonality of our attitude toward the land. What better way to fight the destruction of nature than to place in the hands of the young this powerful plea for a land ethic?” (Carolyn and Lund Leopold Introduction to “A Sand Country Almanac”)

Writing has the value of helping personal development. One of the main its components is writing a composition. Due to composition writing techniques mentioned above students will develop a sense of purpose, a sense of direction and order, a sense of command over the language. As a result their self-confidence , the ability to judge critically and manipulate the language will radically increase.

Reference

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