

*Нагиятова Л.Б.,  
кандидат филологических наук,  
Казахская головная строительно-архитектурная академия  
Казахстан, Алматы*

## **ОБУЧЕНИЕ ПИСЬМУ: ДИКТАНТ НА УРОКЕ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА В НЕЯЗЫКОВОМ ВУЗЕ**

*Аннотация.* Традиционная методика использования диктанта на уроке английского языка была основана на диктовке текста самим преподавателем. Вовлекая студентов в процесс диктовки текста, мы можем дать им дополнительную языковую практику в классе и побудить говорить на английском языке. В статье обсуждаются преимущества ориентированных на студентов типов диктантов в ESL (английский как иностранный) классах. Такие ориентированные на обучающихся диктанты развивают активность студентов по использованию всех четырех видов речевой деятельности.

*Ключевые слова:* изложение, диктант, навыки письма, диктовка, уроки EFL, стратегии обучения, глагольные диктанты.

## **DICTION ACTIVITIES FOR EFL (ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE) CLASSES**

*Annotation.* Traditional teaching method of using dictation in English classes was based on the teacher-led dictations. By engaging students in the process of dictating text to each other, we can give them additional language practice in the classroom and encourage students to speak English. The article discusses the benefits of student-oriented types of dictations in ESL (English as a foreign) classes.

*The article discusses the benefit of student oriented types of dictations in the ESL classes. These kinds of dictations develop students' activity for using all four modalities of language: listening, speaking, writing, and reading.*

**Key words:** *writing skills, dictation, EFL classes, dictogloss, teaching strategies, verb stories.*

Who are English language learners (ELLs) at KazGASA? Our students come from cities and remote regions of Kazakhstan where languages other than Kazakh are used at home or in the community. These bilingual Kazakh, Uzbek, Uighur and Russian monolingual learners of other nationalities represent an increasing proportion of many university populations in Kazakhstan.

English is not widely spoken anywhere and signs are all in Kazakh or Russian. In such non English speaking environment with students of different language levels in the same class, writing activities play a crucial role in language learning process, may help students to convey their messages more efficiently. However, mastering writing skills is not an easy job. Practitioners and researches have always emphasized the importance of teaching writing especially in EFL classes.

Here, in our paper we have considered some ESOL writing teaching strategies as influential tools for accelerating English learning progress.

Writing dictation is an effective teaching strategy for recycling vocabulary items or grammar structures, makes learning faster and better when teachers purposely select a particular strategy, determine where in their teaching and learning process it is best to be used and reflected, decide whether its use can be effective or not. Here are some key technics for everyday classroom writing activities that may accelerate students writing skills.

*Dictogloss.* Dictogloss is a co-operative task where groups of two-four students try to recreate a text that the teacher has read to them. Here's an example:

Imagine you have a few topic questions you want your students to discuss.

You could write them on the board yourself or let them read the questions on the handout or in the course book. At the first reading the students just listen and then they take notes as the text is read twice more. By combining their knowledge the students then try to recreate the written text (not word-for-word) by using full sentences while trying to retain the meaning and form of the original text. Afterwards the students, with their teacher's help, identify similarities and differences between their text reconstruction and the original text. A dictogloss requires the students to use all four language modes and it helps the students to notice their own language gaps. It is particularly useful for providing a focus on grammar.

*How to use dictogloss.* Choose a text that suits the level of the learners. For example, beginners – three to four sentences, intermediate – six to eight sentences, advanced – eight to twelve sentences. Within one class, different language levels can be catered for by using texts on the same topic at different levels. For example, one group could work with a recorded text.

Dictogloss has four stages: Preparation – introduce the topic, the language focus, and the key vocabulary.

Dictation – choose a short text grammatically or thematically corresponding your work plan, read the text at a speed a little bit slower than native speaker's speed. When they listen for the first time, tell them to write down the content words they hear (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs). Let them compare what they wrote down with their partner.

Reconstruction – read the text again at native speaker speed. When they listen for the second time, tell them to write down the content words they missed and compare with their partner. The students work in pairs and individually make very brief notes identifying most of the keywords, then compare notes and write a shared version of the text, editing for accurate punctuation, spelling, and inclusion of the main ideas. Remember that the purpose is to get the main ideas, not every word exactly as it appears in the text. At this stage, the sentences may

not be grammatically correct, so using their existing knowledge of grammar and word order, they reconstruct the sentences they heard.

Analysis and correction -- when they listen for the third time, tell them to see if they can fill in the missing grammar words (pronouns, prepositions, auxiliary verbs, articles etc.). The students compare reconstructions with other groups and with the original. While comparing with their partner this time, they should be able to write down the sentences they heard. Reading a final time they can check their sentences against the originals or it can be written by a student at the blackboard and discussed the differences by the whole class.

What is so useful about dictagloss activities is that they allow learners to identify any recurring errors they make and notice any gaps they have.

Another alternative is to use the well-known '*running dictation*' technique. Used sparingly (in other words, not in every lesson), this can be a very motivating and fun lesson for the students.

First step: take a short text that is appropriate to the level, rich in vocabulary and/or illustrative of a grammar point you are working on. Some teachers like to use lyrics of the song in case if it is used to entertain tiring class and sing a song after the work. Other teachers take the opening paragraph of a text they intend to work on, using this technique as a means of introducing the topic.

Second step: cut each sentence of the text and stick them to the notice-board or on the classroom wall in such a way that the students cannot read them from their desks.

Their step: divide the students into groups and ask each group to nominate a messenger. The task of the messenger or runner is to go up to the text, read it and memorize a chunk of the text. He or she then returns to his or her group and dictates the chunk, the others write it down. The messenger then repeats this process until the whole text has been written down by writers.

You can turn this activity into a race, which adds the fun. When all the groups have completed the dictation, they can check their versions with the original text.

*Verb stories* are skills flow activity so students use all four modalities of language: listening, speaking, writing, and reading. The teacher tells a story while the teacher talks the learners write the verbs on the whiteboard, each verb on a new line. The students then retell the story, using the verbs as prompts. Retelling the story several times they practice speaking. Then they can write the story and compare their versions with the original. In this way a skills flow is used – the students listen, and then speak, and then write, and lastly they compare and notice the language differences.

Verb stories help students to focus when listening, and to notice and use correct verb forms. They also help students to retell stories with appropriate scaffolding orally and to write a retelling of the story using correct verb forms.

Dictation is seen by many teachers as somewhat old-fashioned, a relic of the grammar-translation method that dominated language teaching until the last couple of decades of the 20th century. For many people it brings back unhappy memories of dull, uncommunicative and often difficult lessons, where the focus was fairly and squarely on accuracy of language.

Traditional teaching consisted of teacher-led dictations. By letting students dictate to each other, we are giving them extra speaking training in class and encourage them to develop their ability to speak clearly in English. The benefit of students-led dictation and number of research made on the dictogloss technique has shown that students often focused on more than just the grammatical aspect being emphasized<sup>1</sup>.

Kowal and Swain have found evidence of noticing, hypothesis-testing, and metatalk when using the dictogloss technique with 8th grade French immersion students. The pair work and whole class discussion afterwards did promote student discussion about the links between meaning and form in relation to the

composing process. A follow-up study <sup>2</sup> showed that when students, through dialogue, reached a correct solution (that is, the problem they discuss is solved correctly), there was a strong tendency for them to perform accurately on a posttest on that item 1 week later<sup>3</sup>.

As a teacher using this technique for ESL classes we have found that our students tend to “stick with” vocabulary of the text used and some grammar patterns they had co-constructed collaboratively. Such results strongly suggest that when students reflect consciously on the language they are producing, this may be a source of language learning more effectively.

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