

Розглядається проблема розвитку навичок письма при навчанні англійської мови студентів технічних спеціальностей. Зосереджується увага на важливості навчанню написання есе студентів технічних вузів, оскільки це визнається важливим інструментом для розвитку здібностей мислення студентів, поліпшення навичок логічного висловлювання думок у процесі писемної діяльності. Приділяється увага використуванню візуальних графічних органайзерів при написанні есе та іншіе.

Ключові слова: *навички писання, структура есе, параграф, графічні органайзери.*

It deals with developing English learners' writing skills. It focuses on the importance of teaching essay writing at technical higher school which is considered as a tool for developing students' thinking abilities, improving their organizing skills in writing. It is paid attention to visual graphic organizers in the process of writing and some ideas how to use them in teaching essay writing.

Key words: *writing skills, essay structure, a paragraph, graphic organizers.*

"Life is a foreign language; all men mispronounce it", said Christopher Morley, a famous American writer. You can agree or disagree with the saying or you can express your own; personal opinion. It is considered that opinion essay writing is the most common academic paper works where students can widely use their minds for reasoning about the topic.

Though as it turned out students encounter with the problem of organizing their thoughts in a logic order, most of the students do not have a clear idea how to write an essay, what its structure is, what makes any piece of writing sound smooth and flawless.

The aim of this paper is to make a focus on the fact that most of the engineering students experience the lack of organizing skills in their writing and present some

techniques of improving writing skills which have been worked out and used by English teachers nowadays.

Writing is a good way to integrate language learning and thinking. Some groups of engineering students were asked to write an opinion essay on the saying by Christopher Morley mentioned above. Their writing works were considered to participate in the contest on writing the best opinion essay. We were aware that in the groups of mixed-ability English learners there would be difficulties for some students to express their thoughts in the English language, that's why it was suggested that they should choose the language (English, Ukrainian or Russian) to write and be involved in the activity.

Thus, 110 first- and second-year students who are majoring in programming, shipbuilding and machine building engineering and management took part in writing the essay. The results of the contest as for the language chosen were as following : 44 students chose English for their writing, 36 students chose Russian, 28 students wrote in Ukrainian, 2 students did not cope with the task at all. The fact that just 40% of the students who took part in the contest chose English for writing illustrates the need to teach and develop writing skills of the engineering students.

Also it should be noted that students who wrote the essay in their native language, Russian or Ukrainian, expressed their thoughts in a more vivid and eloquent way. As for the works written in English, it showed that most of the students tended to write texts that did not have a clear focus and did not use logical linking devices, as well they made spelling and grammar mistakes.

To base on analysis of the students' works written in English we have made the inference that it should be determined guidelines for students to follow in order they have an effective tool for writing process, they have to know what to write and how to write.

What to write. To get more familiar with an essay structure students have to know the following terms as a paragraph, a thesis, a topic sentence, a link, an outline.

A paragraph is a group of sentences that develops a single topic. The single topic is known as the main idea. All the sentences in the paragraph must relate to the

main idea and develop it in some way. The sentences that develop or support the main idea are called detail sentences.

A thesis in an academic essay is usually written at the end of an introduction. It is the statement you intend to prove with the rest of the essay.

The topic sentence in a paragraph is the sentence that states the main idea. The topic sentence is often placed at or near the beginning or the end of the paragraph.

Linking words are words and phrases that join different parts of the essay. They can link sentences, paragraphs, or even sections. Such words include however, in contrast, on the other hand, but, or furthermore.

An outline is an organized list of points you wish to make in your essay, in the order they make sense and should be written.

An essay is a piece of writing that must have a beginning, middle, and an end. These three stages can be seen as the introduction, the body, and the conclusion, all essays regardless of their intended purpose have those three basic components.

How to write. The introduction is usually one paragraph long. In a 1500 word essay, this paragraph would contain about 150 words. When writing a thesis statement, consider your purpose and your audience first. What does your reader need to know? Write down information about your subject

The body of the essay will contain a number of paragraphs organized in a logical sequence and linked through a discussion of the focus of the essay identified in the introduction. Each paragraph needs to develop the argument or position put forward in the introduction.

Generally, a paragraph needs to be at least four to six sentences long. A paragraph will often contain the following:

- A topic sentence
- An explanation or supporting evidence from the student's reading
- Further evidence from reading which either supports or differs from the position being presented
- The application of these ideas to a specific situation or scenario outlined in the question or examples from experience or research
- The student's discussion of, comment on, and evaluation of these ideas

- The drawing of implications that link these ideas back to the essay question, to the main idea of the paragraph, or to the next idea to be introduced.

To say in short, the encouraging structure within paragraphs could be as follows: point, example, explanation

You need to organize your material so that it flows from one area, sub-section or argument to the next in a logical order. Each part should build upon, or at least reasonably follow on from the previous parts, and the whole thing should be pulling the reader, clearly and inescapably, to your triumphant conclusion.

The conclusion is usually one paragraph long (about 100 to 150 words). It provides a brief summary of the ideas already presented. All the conclusion needs is three or four strong sentences which do not need to follow any set formula. Simply review the main points (being careful not to restate them exactly) or briefly describe your feelings about the topic. Even an anecdote can end your essay in a useful way. It should contain final evaluative comments on the issues already raised. It is also crucial to link the concluding comments back to the essay question.

As engineering students are mostly technically-minded and most of them are visual learners, it is appropriate to use graphic organizers. They lay out in space all the parts you want to include in your essay. It is easy to see how all the parts fit together. The structure of the essay is shown as a visual picture in which relationships between main ideas and facts, details, examples and illustrations are clearly laid out. You can infer the logical structure of an essay by reading carefully a well-designed diagram.

Fig.1 shows the essay structure and its functional stages are explained and directed. This diagram is adapted from "Essay Writing Materials" by Language and learning Services, Monash University (5, p.228) and could be used as an effective tool for organizing students' thoughts in a logic order while writing an essay.

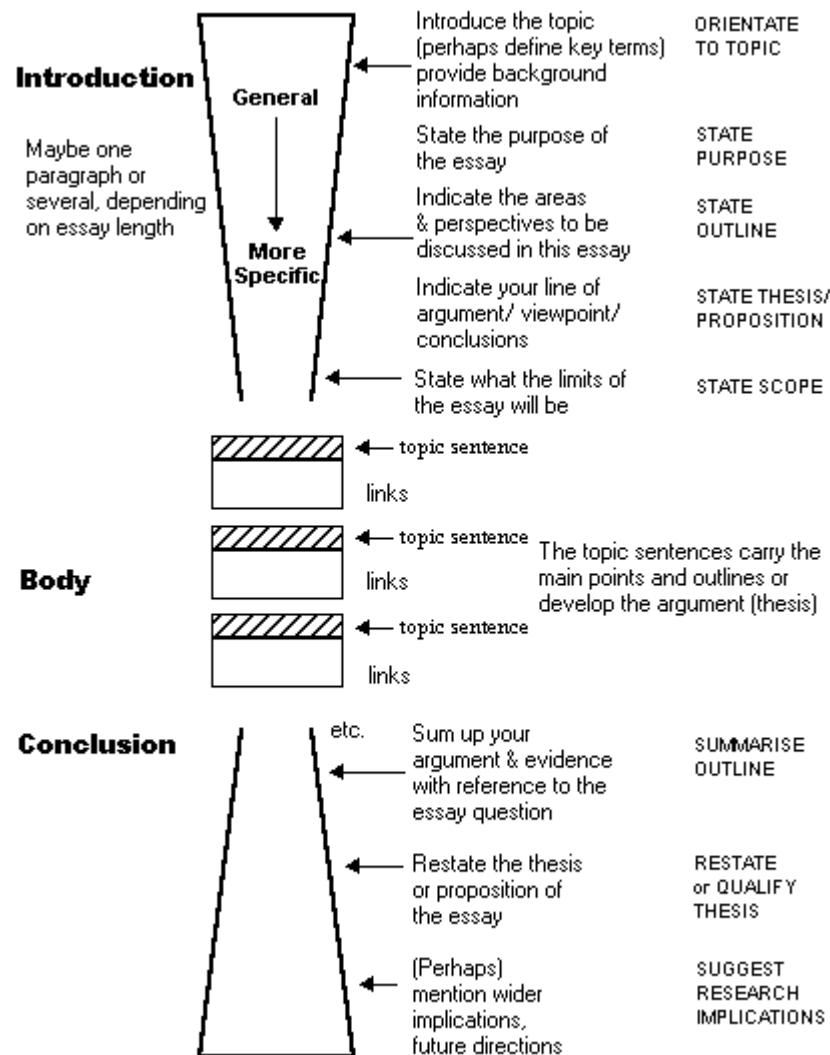


Fig.1 Essay Structure - Functional Stages

To sum up, it should be said that writing essays is one of the most helpful assignments in defining the student's skills when introducing their thinking capability on paper. It lets the teacher evaluate the writer's command of English grammar and sentence structure, if the words are used precisely, how well the essay is organized, if the ideas are presented logically and the examples are pertinent. It is important to teach students how to write in a foreign language, through writing students should learn how to organize their thoughts logically, incorporating writing after the tasks in reading, speaking, and listening makes it be a significant tool for learning a language.

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