

UDC 800:37

INTERPRETING ESSAYS: THE BASIS FOR ELEGANT THOUGHT ARTICULATION

ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИЯ ЭССЕ: ОСНОВА ДЛЯ ФОРМИРОВАНИЯ И ВЫРАЖЕНИЯ МЫСЛИ

Kostyreva S.

Vitebsk State Technological University, Republic of Belarus

E-mail: kostyrevasv@mail.ru

Костырева С.С.

Витебский государственный технологический университет, Республика Беларусь

ABSTRACT

ESSAY, COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGY,
WRITTEN ACCURACY, EXPLICIT
INFORMATION, NON-LINEARITY, IMPLIED
MEANING, PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT

The article highlights the strategy of essay functioning in the terms of artistic thought articulation as one of the basic soft skills listed as a top requirement. The author claims the importance of interpreting other people's works in order to be efficient while writing an essay. It is essential to be aware of possible ways of coding and decoding the message addressed to the recipient.

АННОТАЦИЯ

ЭССЕ, КОММУНИКАТИВНАЯ СТРА-
ТЕГИЯ, АККУРАТНОСТЬ ИЗЛОЖЕНИЯ,
ЭКСПЛИЦИТНАЯ ИНФОРМАЦИЯ, НЕ-
ЛИНЕЙНОСТЬ, ПОДТЕКСТ, ПАРАГРАФИ-
РОВАНИЕ

В статье освещаются вопросы функционирования эссе для решения коммуникативной задачи, с точки зрения стратегии изложения мысли, что является одним из основных навыков, являющихся приоритетными в списке требований нанимателя к работнику. Автор считает важным интерпретацию работ других людей, чтобы повысить качество и результативность собственного эссе. Отмечается необходимость овладения способами кодирования и декодирования информации, адресованной реципиенту.

Our teaching experience has shown that a very good understanding of the theoretical issues of some notion or phenomenon not only greatly increases the students' chance of getting a pass, but also passing it with a very good result.

It is obvious that considering some written papers instead of different samples from the textbooks is much more efficient for producing something new and authentic. Examining a number of realistic papers prior to some written assignment will prepare your students for the actual tasks in the professional sphere they specialize in.

There are many ways of training the students on the example of original written papers. We can interpret some paper in class, so it would be a real practice for them. We can use the whole or parts of each written paper to practice different skills. We can acquire a general impression of the essays by studying them in the frame of one topic under study.

Teachers may focus on some issues under evaluation:

- formal accuracy (Morphology, Syntax);
- written accuracy (Paragraphing, Punctuation and Spelling);
- vocabulary (Range and Activation);
- style (Pragmatic / Sociolinguistic Aspects);
- communicative effectiveness (Appropriate Task Completion).

The most intriguing moment is the following: no complete answer key could be provided, along with the comments and remarks of the teacher. However, students may need the help of a teacher to arrange the essay in the same way as it has been discussed during the preparatory training course. The writing skills required for arranging an essay are quite demanding.

Students are trained and expected to demonstrate:

- confident and varied use of the grammatical structures required at the required level; almost no inaccuracies (syntactical errors) are admitted;
- appropriate organization of text paragraphing; there might be some mistakes with spelling and punctuation that are never confusing;
- precise use of a wide range of well-chosen vocabulary relevant to the topic; repetitions should be avoided; some idiomatic expressions are worth using;
- effective use of cohesive devices; all ideas should be organized in a clear and coherent way following the characteristics of the given genre;
- effective elaboration of thoughts and opinion relevant to the topic; adequate elaboration and coverage of all the bullet points.

The mentioned above criteria for assessing writing should be applied while considering the essays in the class.

In order to make a good start with writing an essay, the teacher needs first

to ask the students to find the theme or topic sentence which summarizes what they are going to write about, and then make a plan. This strategy will enable the students to write quickly and clearly, help them think of a title more easily, and the work will have cohesion.

Using this method gives the topic sentence of each paragraph and connects it to the other paragraphs. These topic sentences can be made into one paragraph and then developed into a whole article. Conversely, these topic sentences, when taken together, can be used to cut down the entire article into a one-paragraph summary of the whole piece.

We have outlined an efficient scheme which helps to satisfy the criteria for assessing students' abilities of elegant thought articulation through interpreting essays. Here it follows:

1. How is the **main idea** expressed?
 - in a single sentence;
 - not expressed explicitly;
 - the author has only implied it.
2. What is the topic (subject)? and the controlling idea?
3. How is the main idea supported?

- by facts;
- statistics;
- reasons;
- observations;
- details;
- examples;
- illustrations;
- explanations.

4. In which sentence does the **topic sentence** come?

Which sentences represent supporting details/conclusion?

Is it the standard paragraph pattern or the delayed topic sentence pattern?

5. What **modes of discourse** does the author employ? With what purpose?

- **narration** – to relate events in chronological order;
- **description** – to paint a picture in words;
- **exposition** – to explain, to make clear, to discuss, to set forth. The author

relies on facts rather than opinions;

- **persuasion** – to convince the reader in smth, to win the reader over to a certain point of view, to get the reader to change his/her mind.

If several modes:

... is used along with...

... appears in combination with ...

... the dominant purpose is ...

... with the elements of ...

What ***inferences*** can you make from the text?

6. What ***methods of paragraph development*** does the writer use to reinforce, develop or support the main idea? With what purpose?

- **examples or illustration** – a series of specific relevant examples or a single, longer illustration;

- **process:**

directive kind – the author explains the steps in chronological order – manuals, how to write books;

informative type – describes a phenomenon – how smth works, or how smth developed. The reader is not supposed to duplicate the process;

- **comparison** – a discussion of similarities between two unrelated or unlike things;

- **contrast** – between two related or like things;

- **definition, definition by negation** – describe the word in an unfamiliar way, define a word, completely new to the reader, define a word with an unusual etymology, explain different interpretations of a term;

- **classification** – to divide a group of things into classes or types in order to describe the distinguishing features of each;

- **analysis** – to examine a single idea by looking at its separate parts;

- **cause and effect** – to find reasons to explain events, problems and issues along with their results; to show a chain of events, resulting from a single cause;

- **analogy** (extended, sustained metaphor) – attention getting device, to provide a more convincing and interesting point of view than a simple description.

7. What ***patterns of paragraph organization*** does the author use?

- chronological order;

- spatial order;

- deductive order;

- inductive order;

- emphatic order.

8. Are there any transitions in the text? What is their function?

9. What are the peculiarities of the language?

- denotation and connotation;

- slanted language (weasel words, euphemisms, doublespeak, jargon, sneer words);

- cliches,

- figurative language.

10. Thesis:

is formulated in the first sentences;

comes in the first sentence;

is located in ... ;

the writer delays stating the thesis until nearly the end of the essay;

expressed in a single sentence; not expressed explicitly, the author has only implied it;

paragraph ... serves to move the author's ideas forward;

the thesis statement can be found in the beginning sentences;

the author saves the main idea by the end;

the supporting paragraphs lead up to a combined thesis and conclusion;

the author doesn't state the thesis at all, preferring to let the supporting paragraphs reveal the main idea (implied thesis).

This thoroughly developed plan has proved its worth while training students for taking international exams.