ПОДГОТОВКА И ПЕРЕПОДГОТОВКА УЧИТЕЛЕЙ ИНОСТРАННОГО ЯЗЫКА

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ДИКТОГЛОС КАК СПОСОБ ПОВЫШЕНИЯ КВАЛИФИКАЦИИ УЧИТЕЛЯ ИНОСТРАННОГО ЯЗЫКА И НОВЫЙ ПОДХОД К ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЮ ДИКТАНТА

DICTOGLOSS AS A MEANS OF TEACHER DEVELOPMENT AND A NEW APPROACH TO DICTATION

Аннотация. В статье рассматривается Диктоглос — альтернатива привычному диктанту, когда учитель читает текст вслух, а также приводятся различные способы и цели его использования.

Ключевые слова: Диктоглос, диктант, чтение вслух, повышение квалификации учителя, экспергиентальный урок, новый подход к обучению.

Abstract. This article describes Dictogloss as an alternative technique to a usual dictation — reading aloud by teachers. It also discusses a variety of ways and purposes it can be used in the classroom.

Keywords: Dictogloss, dictation, reading aloud, teacher development, experimental practice, new approach.

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Introduction

The idea of a dictation does not sound very attractive to many teachers nowadays. Dictogloss is not a new concept in EFL teaching, but is cither not very familiar to teachers or neglected. In the former case, this .nlicle is an opportunity to become aware of this technique, in the letter, и chance to push your own boundaries and experiment in the classroom, as I did not long ago. The real life implementation turned out to be much more attractive than the name suggests. It was beneficial for the students and an excellent opportunity for my professional development.

Origins

Dictations have had a long history in TEFL methodology, especially in Grammar-Translation. Usually the teacher reads the text very slowly several times, and students have to write all the words they hear without putting much thought in what they are writing. Ruth Wajnryb [1990] is credited with developing a new way of writing dictations, called Dictogloss or 'grammar dictation' when learners are asked to reconstruct a short text using their notes after having listened to it. So the only similarity between Dictogloss and a traditional dictation is that the text is dictated to learners, but what they have to do and the aims are totally different.

What is Dictogloss?

Dictogloss is a technique for teaching grammatical structures in context [Richards, Schmidt 2009: 170]. Many authors recognize it as 'a well established dictation-based activity which helps to develop conscious listening skills in addition to an awareness of phrase and sentence structures.' [Marsland 1998: 71]. It is a task-based procedure whose aim is to help learners become aware of their problem grammar areas. The idea is that they will be able to do this while they are trying to reconstruct a text using their own grammar resources and those of their peers.

Dictogloss traditionally follows the same procedure. Teacher reads (twice) a short text at normal speed. Students write down familiar words and phrases as they listen. At the end of the dictation

stage, they start to work in small groups and use their notes to reconstruct their version of the original text. They need to aim for grammatical accuracy and textual cohesion not at reproducing the original text word by word. (In some cases a teacher may decide to ask to replicate the text as close to the original as possible.) In the final stage the various versions that the students have produced are analysed, compared and refined as a result of a discussion. Eventually students create their own parallel texts, which are semantic approximations to the original text. Thus Dictogloss combines four skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking.

Learners have an opportunity to use their linguistic resources to reconstruct the target text. They develop their listening skills as they listen to the teacher reading aloud, their speaking skills in negotiating meaning, their reading skills having to re-read their notes and parts of their own text, their writing skills of note-taking, proof reading and editing. Students also develop their co-operation skills, i.e. peer-checking, peer-correction, and peer-evaluation and promote their autonomy through self-evaluation, self-correction and co-operation.

The four stages of Dictogloss [Wajnryb 1990: 7]
1. Preparation

This stage includes a warm-up which prepares learners for the subject matter and makes them more receptive to the listening in the next stage. Teacher should also pre-teach unknown vocabulary and explain the procedure if learners are not familiar with it. Moreover, it is important to organize learners into groups before the dictation begins.

2. Dictation

As a standard procedure, learners hear the dictation twice. The first time, they do not write, but allow the words to 'wash over them' to get a global feeling for the text. The second time, they take down notes encouraged to write down content / information words that will help them in the later reconstruction stage, not the grammar / function words. The text is dictated at normal spoken speed and as far as is possible the two readings should be identical.

3. Reconstruction

Learners work in groups and use their notes to work on their version of the text. Wajnryb also suggests that each group has a

'«cribe' who writes down the group's text as it emerges from group ilr.cussion. When it is complete, the group checks the text for gramm.ii, textual cohesion, and logical sense. The teacher monitors, does **not** provide any language input, but may unobtrusively contribute to ilin group's 'conferencing' clarifying the language not connected vulli the mam point of the lesson.

4. Analysis and correction

Students compare the various versions and discuss the language ' lioices made, hi this way errors are exposed and analysed.

This can be done using the board (the groups' texts are written up sentence by sentence), overhead projector (the original text is •л rolled forward sentence by sentence after the students' versions Imve been examined) or each text is photocopied and then examined.

There are a lot of variations to the standard procedure. Jacobs |www.jacobs.net], for example, suggests making sure students can follow the text their teacher is reading aloud by periodically stopping Hd checking comprehension:

- The teacher pauses at various points in the text being read aloud.
- Students are in pairs. At each pause, one member of the pair takes a turn to tell their version of what they have heard thus far. This group member is the Teller.
- Their partner checks the recount for anything that has been left out or recalled incorrectly. This group member is the Checker.
- The teacher calls on a couple of the Checkers to recount what their Teller said, incorporating any improvements made by the Checker.
- The roles of Teller and Checker rotate after each pause by the teacher.

Dictogloss aims are [Wajnryb 1990:6]:

• to provide an opportunity for learners to use their productive grammar in the task of text creation.

• to encourage learners to find out what they do and do not know about English.

• to upgrade and refine the learners' use of the language through a comprehensive analysis of language options in the correction of the learners' approximate texts.

As far as the texts that can be used for Dictogloss are concerned, these vaiy in length and complexity depending on the learners' level and may be just one sentence, a song or even quite a long story, etc.

If you do this lesson as an experiment you can develop your own research instruments to evaluate it. I designed two questionnaires: one for the students to be completed immediately after the lesson and another one for observers (peer-teachers I invited to be able to discuss the outcomes and usefulness of the lesson) to be completed during the lessons. The questions in the questionnaires reflected the research hypothesis of my experiment, my teaching to implement it and the experiment as such.

The purpose of my experiment was to find out the effectiveness of Dictogloss amongst higher level learners as a diagnostic tool that helps teachers and learners see what current grammar problems learners have and whether they are able to operate beyond the sentence level to communicate required meaning.

The following are samples you can use to create your own questionnaires.

Sample Student questionnaire:
1. Was this the first time that you did a dictogloss activity?
2. Did you understand my instructions for the dictogloss task?
3. Did you write down most meaningful words while listening?
4. Were you able to reconstruct the text close to the original?
5. Did you have enough grammar to reconstruct the text?
6. What did you like about the experiment?
7. What didn't you like about the experiment?
8. Would you like to do a dictogloss again? Why / Why not?
9. Did you learn anything new in this lesson? If so, what (grammar, vocabulary, anything else?)
10. Did you feel relaxed? Why / Why not?
11. Do you have any other comments?

Sample Teacher questionnaire:

1. Were my instructions for the tasks clear? If not, why?
2. Did students show interest in the experiment?
3. Were the students engaged with the task? How can you tell?
4. Having observed the lesson, what did dictogloss help students most with: grammar, listening skills, writing skills?
5. Did dictogloss help to find out the students' problem areas?
6. Did the students make the impression of feeling at ease?
7. Do you think I should use dictogloss in my teaching further?
8. Do you have any other comments?

Moreover, it is necessary to monitor students throughout the lesson to see if the task is manageable, what their reactions to various stages are and whether they enjoy the new activity and are involved in every stage.

If you collect students' reconstructed versions of the target text after the lesson, you will have evidence of the types of mistakes your students make and will outline areas to work on in the future.

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