

Interactive stories as a tool for improving writing skills and text analyzes

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The article considers the text as an object of a type of work, in which a functional and systematic approach to the study of language is carried out, and interdisciplinary connections are also clearly revealed.

“ ... the process we are interested in is that of producing and understanding text in some context of situation ...”

(Halliday&Hasan, 1985, p. 14).

Abstract

The text-based approach to teaching ESL uses a series of complete texts to teaching writing. Instruction is focused on the three dimensions that create meaning in texts: the ideational, interpersonal and textual dimensions. To be effective writers, students must be aware of the structural, interpersonal and textual features of different text types [1].

The article stresses the need to apply a text-based approach in English classroom within a non-native environment. From a list of web-applications *writeabout.com*, is a tool designed to allow anyone to write and publish interactive stories. It is an affective tool for teachers and students who are willing to combine computer skills and creative writing.

Introduction

In many English as Second Language (ESL) classrooms, writing in the target language remains a challenge for many learners. This is to be expected considering that writing requires not only an abstract knowledge of the language (i.e. structural forms) but, equally importantly, the ability to apply what has been learnt to produce a coherent, and meaningful text. Separating writing from other aspects of language learning (such as grammar or vocabulary) may not help learners make the necessary transition from what they know to how to use what they know in their writing.

Currently text-based teaching is evolving. The focus of this approach is written and spoken genres using authentic examples as models. The grammar of the texts is analyzed as functional for realization of the social purposes of texts. In some applications of genre teaching, the analysis of the linguistic elements comprising texts dominates with a consequent neglect of the social purposes of texts.

Main part

Text training conceptualizes language as the human resource to create values. Learning is characterized by the use of natural language. Teachers choose texts that correspond to the students' goals. They select texts of interest to students and relevant to the achievement of the programme objectives. They discuss and argue about ideas for fun and for work. On the contrary, with meaningless grammar exercises and meaningless dialogues in structural learning, teachers and students make sense with texts. Training projects teach how to respond to texts in order to understand meanings, contribute to the creation of meanings and enhance the ability to express meanings. The approach allows learners of additional languages to use the target language in familiar ways - with texts that are authentic, purposeful, and functional [2].

Authentic text may be thought of as any text that was written and published for the public. Journal articles, blog posts and novels are just a few examples. Authentic texts are written for "real world" purposes and audiences: to entertain, inform, explain, guide, document or convince. In fact, authentic texts need not even be written words. Audio files, virtual tours, speeches, blueprints, photos, video clips and other non-written items that can be read or interpreted are also considered to be text[3]. Purposeful texts are specifically aimed at developing one of the four skills of speech activity: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In accordance with this text, the speech subjects of social, social-cultural and educational subjects are proposed. Functional texts can include everything from the how-to instructions on a do-it-yourself website to the product manual for your fridge. Other examples include brochures, menus, warranties, directories, forms to fill out, signs, recipes, and even public transportation schedules. What makes a functional text so different than anything else we describe as text? Typically, functional texts are consumed by a reader for the purpose of accomplishing something or getting us to the next step of what we need to do [4].

In order to meet today's demands teachers use hypertexts as well.

Interactive Fiction in the Classroom

As a classroom tool, interactive fiction sharpens attentive reading and writing, as well as logical and critical thinking. It also strengthens systems and design thinking skills. In fact, the interactive fiction - a genre of games with roots that predate the Internet. The reader makes a choice that determines the outcome of the story. As the player's choice changes the storyline, interactive fiction can be used to teach empathy, what it is to be in someone else's place.

A great number of alternative interactive fiction (IF) games can be suggested above to improve writing skills working with hypertexts.

1. The *Mission U.S.* educational role-playing games rely on the choice-based mechanic.

2. *Inform*, a "natural" programming language. Inform games are typically single-player - the player types after a command prompt. For example, one might read, "The door ahead of you is open." To advance the story, the player might decide to type, "Open door."
3. *Funenglishgames.com*, site with a wide range of free teaching resources that are perfect for students learning English, ESL classes and teachers looking for ideas online.
4. The website *learnenglish.britishcouncil.org* allows students to use high-quality resources to quickly improve their English.
5. The authoring website *writeabout.com*. Students can write their response and do an audio recording of it. Teachers can create virtual classrooms and provide individual written feedback to student writing. Student creations can be shared publicly or just with their classmates. Teachers can change prompts or upload their own photos.

From this list the most beneficial may be regarded *Write about*. Write About is a site co-founded by educator John Spencer (professor). His co-founder is Brad Wilson.

Using interactive fiction in the classroom sharpens close reading and writing, logical thinking, and other critical thinking competencies. It also supports systems thinking and design thinking skills - in which interconnections are plotted and user practices are considered. The low barrier to entry makes interactive fiction a natural fit for any student-centered classroom [5].

To examine the awareness of language teachers about interactive tools (IT) in English classroom, the questionnaire was conducted among 20 teachers of the local Nurmakov boarding school in Karaganda.

The awareness of teachers about Interactive tools in EFL classes

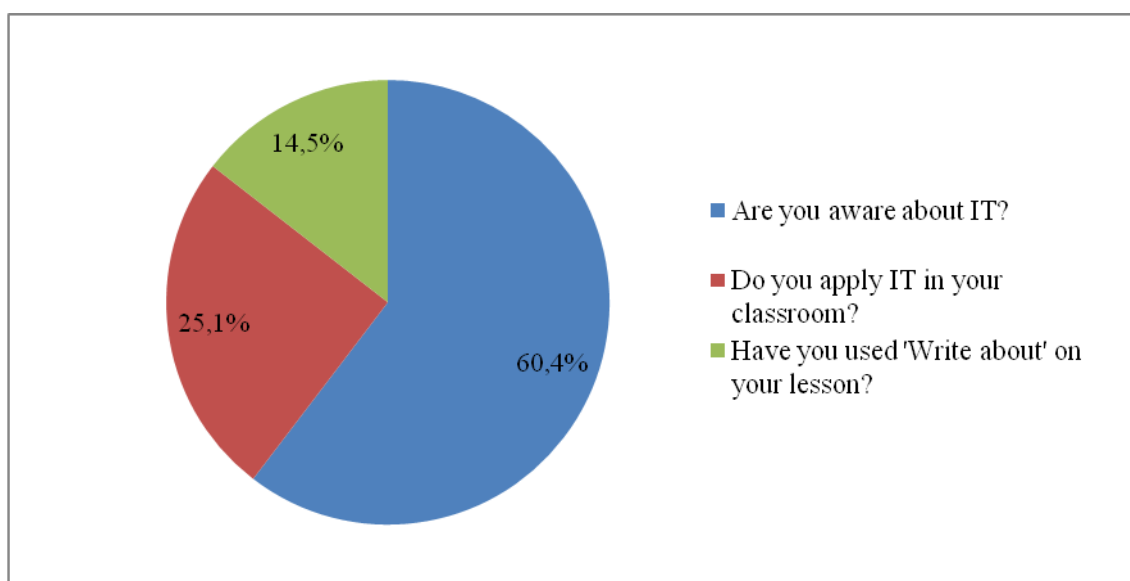


Figure 1.

As the Figure 1 shows, 60,4% of teachers are aware about IT, 25,1% use it in class and 14,5% have experience in working with the Write about tool.

13.02 with class 8 "A" we conducted a lesson, working with *Write about*. Since there are only boys in the class, we decided to choose the category "Science". Choosing an idea 'Using your knowledge of geography and environment, explain what we would have to do to survive on another specific planet (of your choice) in our Solar System', we fixed it to my page. Students receive a special code, register and see the category we have chosen. One can observe what the students are writing: have they started writing, how many words have they written, and so on. Also, this program is convenient for individual work, since in 13 categories (art, technology, sports, literature, hobbies, etc.) many different names are given for writing.

And by the end of the lesson, I looked through everything that the students had written, and was surprised at their fantasies. Also, I noticed in which places they have gaps in grammar and vocabulary.

It is a very useful program for teachers to work with students, as well as students, to develop their writing skills through creative writing.

Conclusion

Hypertext is the writing process used to train students to work with interactive programs. Texts are part of our social environment and human relationships, so students tune in to text recognition, to work with texts, and to study texts, and they expect texts to make sense. The purpose of teaching is to immerse students in the experience of working with texts in order to reflect the richness of students' daily experience with texts. Programming involves the selection of texts for students to participate in targeted language practices specific to the goals of students in language learning. The basic idea is for students to work on understanding relevant texts react to them and express meanings in texts. Also, another idea is to be able to create text yourself. Time does not sleep, which means that the world is modernizing. It affects the economy, medicine, as well as education. Now more and more programs are being created to develop students' writing skills, making spelling, writing, writing, etc. everything is easier and more interesting.

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