



SOUTH-WEST
UNIVERSITY
·NEOFIT RILSKY·
BLAGOEVGRAD, BULGARIA

VOLUME 2
2004

SCIENTIFIC
Research

ELECTRONIC
ISSUE

On the educational tasks in teaching reproduction to second and third grade students.¹

from “Educational Background and Dialogue in the European Pedagogical Space”(symposium, now being published)

Associate Professor N. Chimeva, Ph.D.

Various definitions for the concept “task” exist.² Though defining the concept is not a purpose of the present article, we are obliged to give some theoretical lines, which will be our starting point for further speculations.

In our case, such a starting point is the elucidation of the concept “task” with relation to the concept “action”.³ The task is a goal, which is set in certain conditions. The action is a relatively independent process. It is directed toward reaching that goal.⁴

Such a definition is extremely probable if we discuss the teaching of reproducing texts to primary school students. The main objective of such a teaching is to enable the students to get used to the good speech. And it means at least two things:

- While looking at the text, the students have to define the structure, the content and the text type.
- The reproduction itself enables the children to start thinking productively – building their own texts.

That is why teaching reproduction can be viewed as a preparatory stage for teaching composition.

Bearing in mind the written above, it is obvious how important are the educational tasks in teaching reproduction to the students. The analysis of school materials (textbooks and notebooks in Bulgarian for second and third grade students) shows that the chosen methodology has a major drawback – it doesn’t give the answer to the educational task: How to reproduce texts”. The attention is mainly drawn to the content of the text but that shouldn’t be the central task. The same preference is also shown in many textbooks published lately.⁵

¹ The article is published in: Чимева, Н. (1996): В Начално образование. Благоевград. ЮЗУ. стр. 31-34.

² Балл, Г. А. О психологическом содержании понятия “задача”. – *Вопр. Психологии*, 1970, № 6; Салмина, Н. *Виды и функции материализации*. М., 1981; Фридман, Л. М. *Логикопсихологический анализ школьных учебных задач*. М., 1977 и др.

³ Рубинштейн, С. *Проблемы общей психологии*. М. 1973; Леонтьев, А. Н. *Проблемы развития психики*. М., 1981; Лернер, И. Я. и др. *Познавательные задачи в обучении гуманитарным наукам*. М., 1972.

⁴ Леонтьев, А. Н. *Цитир. произв.*, с. 309.

⁵ Райнова, П., М. Банова и Т. Сотирова. *Умеем ли да преразказваме (Помагало за учениците от I и II клас)*. С., 1993; Райнова, П., М. Банова и Т. Сотирова. *Умеем ли да преразказваме (Помагало за учениците от III и IV клас)*. С., 1993; Цветанова, М., Ел. Сергеева. *Преразказът (Помагало – 2. Клас)*. В. Търново, 1995 и ; Цветанова, М., Ел. Сергеева. *Преразказът (Помагало – 3. Клас)*. В. Търново, 1995.

It is absolutely necessary to ask ourselves the question: Why should the students be taught to reproduce texts? If the task is to reproduce the text exactly and correctly so it's better to ask the students to learn the text by heart. That would be the mere reproduction of the text.

The retelling of the text is not a mere reproduction but presupposes complex abilities of working with text – analyzing its structure and the logical relations expressed in it.⁶

In other words, in order to learn to reproduce texts, it is necessary not only to memorize the content of the text but also to analyze the organization and the realization of that content – the discourse understanding of text.⁷

The educational task: “How to reproduce a text” has to be separated in two.⁸

The first group of tasks is connected with the sentence as an accomplished unit of the language structure.

The main objective of this group of tasks is to reveal the structure of thought. Riddles, put in different ways but with one and the same possible answer, can be used. In the process of finding the answer, it becomes obvious that each of these riddles contains salient features (qualities, marks, etc) of something not uttered. It is easy to guess the answer bearing in mind all the features. The change of just one feature of the riddle can change the thinking. We get a new message with a new meaning.

Proverbs and sayings are very helpful. They possess a tight structure which compresses the folk experience and judgement.⁹ The common feature between the riddles and the proverbs is that the subject of thought is not expressed directly. It can be revealed if we search the logical realizations of the features. Thus students are taught to think in discourse.

The second group of tasks is connected with text – the main communicative unit. A part of these tasks points to the text content. For example, let have several sentences and some models for arrangement. The children have to find the right arrangement of the sentences and to explain their choice. Another possibility is to give the students a few mixed sentences and to ask them to arrange the sentences correctly in a logical text.

Working on such tasks enables the students to understand the correct and strict arrangement of the sentences and the inability of the sentences to switch positions.

The next group of tasks aims at finding the connection between the headline of the text and its content. The students have to choose the right headline of the text bearing in mind the content. Tasks, requiring the students to name the text, can be included. Thus students master not only the ability to generalize the concept “headline” but also its restriction.¹⁰

The third type of tasks is connected with forming the concept for the text parts, their relations and the relations between the sentences. Different texts are introduced for

⁶ Further on we mean the education in written reproduction.

⁷ Дубовис, Д. М. К вопросу об интуитивном и дискурсивном понимании текста. – *Вопр. Психологии*, 1976, №3.

⁸ The examples are taken from: “Да се учим да преразказваме” с автори Н. Чимева, Пл. Ангелова и Л. Лазарова. Варна, 1995.

⁹ *Българско народно творчество*. Т.12. С., 1963, с. 6.

¹⁰ Дубовис, Д. М. Цитираната статия.

that purpose – narrative and descriptive.¹¹ The tasks are: 1) to define the beginning (how the text starts); the middle (how the text continues) and the end (how the text ends) for each of the given texts; 2) to analyze the information of each text part; 3) to compare the narrative text parts with those of the descriptive text; 4) to analyze the type of joining sentences in different text types.

The tasks can include gap texts (missing beginning, middle part or ending) and words from the missing parts. The students have to reconstruct the whole text.

The tasks connected with joining sentences enable the context to be associated with new knowledge. Thus the students find out that each sentence of the narrative text explains the previous one as if they are parts of a chain. The first couple of sentences are about the subject of description. The next sentences reveal the salient features of it. The whole picture resembles a child holding a bunch of balloons. The parts of both texts are joined in such a manner that each reveals the concrete message of the subject.

The way the abilities for working with text have been formed makes the whole process logical – the students reproduce the text in order to find the connections and the relations embodied in it. The text analysis should point out not only the facts (who, when, where, what) but their positioning in the text, their organization and realization. For example, the text has been read with the following objective: Is there a story in the text? Two variants are possible:

A) If there is such a story:

1. What is it? What is it like – real or unreal? Analyzing the story, the students discover the differences in the style of the two genres – real and unreal.
2. Does the narrator tell the story right away?
3. How many actions the story reveals?
4. Is it possible to rearrange the actions in the story? What will be the result?
5. What are the emotional words in the text?
6. What do we understand of its ending?
7. Why the text has this headline?

B) If there isn't a story, the attention of the students is drawn toward:

1. What the text is about? What is the subject of thought?
2. What are the subject's features?
3. How are the features ordered in the text?
4. What is the connection with the subject?

Our analysis shows the following plans for reproducing texts:

Narrative text: Descriptive text:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. What's the story's situation?
(time, place, participants) | 1. What is the subject of
thought in the text? |
| 2. How the story goes? | 2. What are its features? |
| 3. How it ends? | 3. Is there a connection
with other subjects? |
| 4. Why has the narrator told
this story? | 4. What is the significance
of the described subject? |

¹¹ We include these text types because they are the subject of the curriculum.

This methodology has been applied in Blagoevgrad, Stara Zagora and Samokov. The analysis of the results shows that the chosen direction of teaching is correct. This, of course, does not exclude further changes in teaching reproducing texts to students.