



THE BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTING DICTOGLOSS TECHNIQUE IN ESL CLASSROOMS

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ABSTRACT

Dictogloss is an activity involves students engaging in a pre-listening process, hearing a certain text read aloud multiple times, taking relevant notes while listening to a text, then rebuilding the text relying on their memory, finally, correcting the reconstructed version of the text by comparing with the original one. The technique 'dictogloss' serves language learners many valuable functions, developing multiple skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing beyond boosting their grammar and vocabulary, stimulating cognitive functions, simultaneously. This article provides full information about 'dictogloss' strategy, step-by-step procedures of implementing it in language teaching, highlights basic principles, and a detailed analysis of its benefits will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

In every language, there are a variety of methods, strategies and techniques that can help teachers conduct lessons in a more understandable and interesting way, so that students could learn and even progress the new topics or themes in a fast, effective and active way. In modern highly-developing world, it is not easy to make today's students engaged in lessons, focused on what is being taught and would seem difficult for teachers to help students develop multiple skills, at the same time. That is, today's language learners want more than just grammar rules - they need effective and engaging techniques that assist them develop the skills and confidence to communicate in real-life settings. In this case, the implementation of Dictogloss can be the best solution to make students satisfied with studies and improve overall language proficiency. This term was originally introduced by Wajnryb in his book called 'Grammar Dictation', was developed with the hope of creating a tool for improvement on learners' grammar (Wajnryb, 1990). The process of implementing 'dictogloss' technique involves 4 main steps: speedy dictation, note-taking, group reconstruction, analysis and correction. Through this process, students not only improve their cognitive functions and core language skills, but also become more accurate with grammar, learn new vocabulary in the target language, develop important skills, confidence building, to be exact. Unlike some other types of methods, it is active and integrated technique based on ideas from communicative language teaching and how the brain learns, challenges students to do actively instead of just listening passively. It forces them to participate in building their knowledge.

As it has been mentioned above, in 'Dictogloss' strategy, students take notes while the teacher reads the text; then, they work in small groups so to recreate the text; and finally, they analyze and correct their work with the teacher's help. To make it more clear, let's compare it with 'dictation'. Dictation involves students writing down exactly what they hear. Dictogloss, on the other hand, requires students to listen to a short text several times and then collaboratively rebuild it relying on their memory, language level: how to utilize different forms of grammar structures and vocabulary - focusing on meaning rather than writing down the text word-by-word.

Shanshann and Tongshun approve of using texts that are 'neither too long nor too short' (Shanshann & Tongshun, 2007) in dictogloss activities. This is necessary to prevent overloading students' working memory while still offering enough language for insightful analysis and group reconstruction. This means, while a text that is too short might not provide enough complexity to encourage in-depth language acquisition, a work that is too extensive could result in cognitive overload and incomplete notes. Therefore, a one-size-fits-all strategy is not appropriate since text length and difficulty should be properly adjusted to the students' learning proficiency and competence level. It is vital to note that a general rule of 75–150 words might be a good place to start though, teachers also need to take into account the complexity of a language, students' language level, and working memory capacity, and the particular linguistic elements, such as certain theme on grammar or specific vocabulary on any topic they want to emphasize.

According to Nabei, in his book called "Dictogloss: Is it an effective language learning task?", he suggests that utilizing dictogloss technique can make users engage in multiple skills (Nabei, 1996). In other words, it has a significant effect on learners' core language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing beyond just enhancing language components: grammar and vocabulary, and, in the meantime, it could improve memory retention, develop personal skills, namely critical thinking, and confidence building. It is inevitable to judge Nabei's argument that while dictogloss assists learners to evolve many skills, only learners who already possess a firm foundation of basic grammar and vocabulary can take full advantage of this method.

1. Core language skills

- **Listening:** Since 'Dictogloss' involves active listening, students need to focus mostly on the teacher to catch the key elements: key words, phrases, and the whole meaning of the text. With this intense listening, students are likely to identify needed information, filtering out less relevant elements. As a result, they could potentially enhance their listening comprehension.
- **Speaking:** Vasiljevic argued that with the use of Dictogloss method, it is possible to create a learning atmosphere where students can discuss and exchange ideas with their peers (Vasiljevic, 2010). This, in turn, can improve students' speaking skills and help them become confident communicators. It is also arguable that employing this technique does not assure immediate impact towards developing speaking.

As it has been known, taking notes is one of the main steps in using this multifaceted technique which can guide learners to speak in a more clear, accurate, natural way. Additionally, they need to recreate the text as a whole, once they have taken the notes. With complete and accurate notes, they will be able to communicate fluently, accurately, expressing ideas naturally.

- **Reading:** This skill can implicitly be improved by enhancing comprehension strategies. That is to say, once the activity has been finished, the original text is given students who are asked to compare their own work with the original one they have heard. In this way, students

become more aware of the usage of different grammar structures, enhance their ability to guess the meaning, and evolve their general reading skills.

- **Writing:** Writing is vital in dictogloss, since learners reform the text from the notes they have taken. To reconstruct a coherent and accurate version of the original text, they depend on different linguistics options - different grammar structures, vocabulary they know. Although this process can equip students with a full writing process, including planning, drafting, revising and editing, it has also an implicit impact on their writing skills. This is not to say, they can get improved writing, as soon as the activity is accomplished. Admittedly, it is assured when students do it on a regular basis.

2. Language components

- **Grammar:** Dictogloss strengthens grammar learning in a rich context. That is, when they reconstruct a text, they have to actively apply grammatical rules, with the aim of reforming a text's structure and meaning. This process requires them a direct analysis of sentences, choosing correct tenses. As a result, they have a better understanding of how different grammar functions are used in authentic communication beyond just using memorized structures.

- **Vocabulary:** Dictogloss can be powerful tool for users to expand their lexical resource. To be clear, during the activity they come across unfamiliar words, phrases and are likely to infer meaning from context. This, in turn, enlarges their vocabulary, improves accuracy. Addition to this, students not only expand their word list, but also have a chance to engage with new words and their application in an active environment. This is to say, dictogloss can provide learners active lexicon beyond passive vocabulary learning, so that they can use those words and phrases whenever needed, promoting long-term benefits.

3. Additional benefits

- **Memory:** The strategy "Dictogloss" depends heavily on working memory, responsible for cognitive tasks such as learning, reasoning and comprehension, as learners hold information, take notes, and rebuild the text. By doing so, they are likely to maximize their memory capacity and enhance their ability of recalling information accurately.

- **Critical thinking skills:** Dictogloss can be perfect strategy to stimulate cognitive functions, namely critical thinking. That is to say, after taking complete notes, it is time to rebuild a new version of the text that requires students to evaluate different linguistic choices, synthesize their ideas and analyze logically the information: what they already heard - the original text, and what they themselves created. They, as a consequence, develop thinking critically, questioning assumptions, taking into account different perspectives, and, finally, making more informed decisions based on evidence.

- **Confidence building:** This interactive technique 'Dictogloss' can be seen as a confidence-building strategy, when students accomplish the activity. To be specific, a coherent, successful reconstruction of the text can stimulate learners' confidence towards their language abilities. Positive opinions from the teacher and peers, and also, the sense of being satisfied - fulfillment can implicitly activate them a continuous learning and improvement. It is vital to note that the boost in confidence reported by Dictogloss learners once they have successfully reconstructed the text could be an effective motivator, encouraging them not to give up when facing even more challenging tasks.

To summarize we can say that implementing the Dictogloss technique into a language learning process can be powerful approach so as to develop a wide range of language skills, it enhances not merely students' understanding of grammar and vocabulary expansion, but also

significantly makes core language skills better across various proficiency levels. In addition to maximizing language acquisition, this integrated technique encourages learners active participation, promotes confidence-building, improved memory, and critical thinking. Despite those pros, teachers need to take into consideration its principles, potential limitations: students' proficiency level, providing feedback on common errors in order for learners to learn from mistakes, and employing it consistently while implementing this multifaceted technique, as a consequence, both teacher and students could benefit from its effectiveness in different fields of a language.

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