PROFESORES DE ENSEÑANZA SECUNDARIA · INGLÉS · JUNTA DE EXTREMADURA

TEMA

06

Written Communication. Types of Written Texts. Structure and Formal Elements. Rules of the Written Text. Routines and Formulae

La comunicación escrita. Distintos tipos de textos escritos. Estructura y elementos formales. Normas que rigen el texto escrito. Rutinas y fórmulas.

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Material de elaboración propia a partir de las fuentes oficiales que se citan al final del tema. No es un temario oficial ni sustituye a la normativa publicada.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The old Latin proverb says that spoken words fly away while written ones remain: verba volant, scripta manent. Like most proverbs, it is only half true, because a message sent this morning to a group chat is written and yet may be gone by lunchtime, while a speech recorded on video can last for ever. Even so, the proverb points to the feature that makes written communication different from speech: a written text is produced without the reader being present, so it has to carry everything it needs inside itself. The writer cannot see a puzzled face and rephrase, so the text has to be clear, organised and appropriate from the start.

This topic asks for four things and I will develop them in that order. First, I will define written communication and compare it with speech, looking at its processes and at how it is described in the Common European Framework. Secondly, I will present the main types of written text, using the notion of genre. Thirdly, I will analyse structure and formal elements: layout, paragraphs, cohesion and coherence, register and the conventions of punctuation and spelling. Fourthly, I will examine the rules that govern the written text and the routines and formulae that belong to each genre. I will then consider the pedagogical and didactic implications for Secondary Education and finish with a conclusion.

Before moving on, I would like to mention the sources consulted. For the description of English I have used Randolph Quirk, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech and Jan Svartvik's A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language (Longman, 1985) and M. A. K. Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan's Cohesion in English (Longman, 1976). For genre and writing pedagogy I have relied on John Swales's Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings (Cambridge University Press, 1990) and Ken Hyland's Teaching and Researching Writing (Routledge), together with Tricia Hedge's Writing (Oxford University Press, 2nd edition, 2005). The legal framework is the Ley Orgánica 3/2020 (LOMLOE), which modifies the Ley Orgánica 2/2006; the Real Decreto 217/2022, of 29 March, for Compulsory Secondary Education (ESO); the Real Decreto 243/2022, of 5 April, for Bachillerato; and, in Extremadura, the Decreto 110/2022 and the Decreto 109/2022, both of 22 August, modified by the Decreto 242/2023 and the Decreto 243/2023, both of 12 September. The Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001) and its Companion Volume (2020) complete the list.