

COGNITIVE PROCESS OF WRITING FOR SECOND LANGUAGE YOUNG LEARNERS

Abdullah Pamukcu

International Burch University
Bosnia and Herzegovina
pamukcu74@hotmail.com

Dzenan Salihovic

International Burch University
Bosnia and Herzegovina
dzeno19@hotmail.com

Azamat Akbarov

International Burch University
Bosnia and Herzegovina
aakbarov@ibu.edu.ba

Abstract: Writing is a pleasant and seminal task, but writing is used as multi-leveled teaching instruments, but instead difficulties, challenging and cognitively demanding. Writing requires different skills. Students can improve these skills with some outside support. In this paper, we will try to demonstrate that writing is not only self product of an individual, but also an outcome of socio-cultural activity, and a cognitive process. In particular, answers will be sought for the following questions: What factors do affect the cognitive process of second language young learners' writing? How does schema help in cognitive writing process? How can basic writers be helped to improve their writings?

Introduction

Writing is not only an innate skill that comes naturally. It is also an acquired ability learned or culturally influenced in an instructional setting in different environments.

Writing skills need practice and studying with previous experience. Students who write and speak in a foreign language are socially and cognitively challenged. They are cognitively challenged because the language, the means of communication, is different. They are also socially challenged because of lack of adequate skills to build normal social relations with others.

Vygotsky regarded language as a critical bridge between the socio-cultural world and individual mental functioning. (Berk & Winsler, 1995, p. 12)

Vygotsky's (1978, 1986) socio-cultural framework of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and scaffolding writing (Bodrova & Leong, 1995, 1996; Ross, 1976) are used as the theoretical basis to study the development of second language writing.

Naturalistic approach, Krashen's (1982, 1984) theories, the way children learn their first language, and the apparent ease which they are able to pick up other languages with were acknowledged as relevant to SLA in general.

Furthermore, certain social and cognitive factors related to second language acquisition indicate that strategies involved in the language learning process also affect L2 writing. The culture-specific nature of schemata--abstract mental structures representing our knowledge of things, events, and situations--can lead to difficulties when students write texts in L2. Knowing how to write a "summary" or "analysis" in Mandarin or Spanish does not necessarily mean that students will be able to accomplish these in English (Kern, 2000).

Cognitive process of second language learners' writings

Cognitive and psychological developments build the background of the individual knowledge is the first thing that comes to mind when talking about on individual's background. Knowledge was deal with the theory of Piaget's as mind and schema, that how infants function in the world surrounds them, how this influences their mental stability. Learning happens with environmental issues, especially equilibrium. When the infant figure out a problem, that's the infant learns, and the knowledge constructed by the action of that child. Learning comes with the environment, environment brings the knowledge, and then knowledge brings the acquisitions.

According to the behaviorist school, as opposed to cognitive theory, learning happens through observable behaviors. The cognitive theory asserts that knowledge is acquired through communication and mind. Behaviorists come up with a different approach different view stating that learning is a product of stimulus-response and environment. A neutral stimulus is not responded first. Then later on the organism learns to respond to stimuli with the help of reinforcement. If this is a positive reinforcement the response repeats. If the reinforcement is a negative, the response is not likely to repeat. Repetition of this process, that is the response given to stimuli, affects later learning. This is called positive and negative transfer. Effects of phonology and morphology of the first language means transfer. Both negative and positive transfer can help the second language learning. Positive transfer occurs when the rules are used correctly for the second language. Negative transfer, occurs when the rules are used incorrectly for the second language. Transfers affect the whole system of learning acquisitions. Cognitive Factors, acquisition is a product of the complex interaction of the linguistic environment and the learner's internal mechanisms. With practice, there is continual restructuring as learners shift these internal representations in order to achieve increasing degrees of mastery in L2 (McLaughlin, 1988). Children invent, interact, react, and extend writing activities throughout the process of literacy acquisition.

Language transfer is another important cognitive factor related to writing error. Transfer is defined as the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously acquired (Odlin, 1989). The study of transfer involves the study of errors (negative transfer), facilitation (positive transfer), avoidance of target language forms, and their over-use (Ellis, 1994).

As mentioned previously Vygotsky, regarded language as a critical bridge between the socio-cultural world and individual mental functioning. According to, Berk & Winsler (1995, p. 12), language is such an interesting tool that it both provides communication and learning simultaneously. One can communicate while trying to use a foreign language on the one hand and he/she constantly improves language skills on the other. Both social and cognitive factors affect language learning. Exploration of social factors gives us some idea of why learners differ in rate of L2 learning, in proficiency type (for instance, conversational ability versus writing ability), and in ultimate proficiency (Ellis, 1994).

Writing also involves composing, which implies the ability either to tell or retell pieces of information in the form of narratives or description, or to transform information into new texts, as in expository or argumentative writing. Perhaps it is best viewed as a continuum of activities that range from the more mechanical or formal aspects of "writing down" on the one end, to the more complex act of composing on the other end (Omaggio Hadley, 1993).

Much of the research on L2 writing has been closely dependent on L1 research. Although L2 writing is strategically, rhetorically, and linguistically different in many ways from L1 writing (Silva, 1993), L1 models have had a significant influence on L2 writing instruction and the development of a theory of L2 writing. However, a look at two popular L1 models will give us some insight into the problem of developing a distinct construct of L2 writing. [-2-]

Cognitive writing process work

Although it is often said that linguistic "competence" in the sense defined by Chomsky (1965) involves some kind of "knowledge" of the grammatical rules of a language, this "knowledge" is ordinary out of conscious awareness ... nevertheless, some adolescents and adults (and even some children) can be made to demonstrate an awareness of the syntactical structure of the sentence they speak ... even among adults there are large individual differences in this ability, and these individual differences are related to successes in learning foreign languages, apparently because this ability is called upon when the student tries to learn grammatical rules and apply them in constructing and comprehending new sentences in that language. (pp. 7-8).

Young children who learn a second language bring up all of the knowledge about language learning they have acquired through developing their first language. For these children, then, second-language acquisition is not a process of discovering what language is, but rather of discovering what this language is (Tabors, 1997, p. 12).

And also we have to remember the existence of another impact on the L1 and L2 acquisition. The "talent" for learning foreign language consists of three components. The first is verbal intelligence, by which is meant both

familiarity with words (this is measured in the Language Aptitude Battery by the "Vocabulary" part) and the ability to reason analytically about verbal materials (this is measured by the part called "Language Analysis"). The second component is motivation to learn the language ... The third component ... is called "auditory ability" ... (Pimsleur, 1966, p. 182).

There have been many researches that have come up with similar results. Edelsky (1982) analyzed the relationship between first language and second language writing of young writers in a bilingual context. The texts written by the same children in Spanish and English were analyzed. Edelsky found that a young writer knows about writing in the first language forms the basis of new hypotheses for writing in another language. Furthermore Edelsky argued that certain L1 writing processes are used in L2 writing. (Cahyono, B.2001)

Moreover, several studies have looked at the effect of composing in the L1 and then translating into the L2 (Cohen & Brooks-Carson, 2001; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 1994). These studies have found that the lower L2 proficiency writers benefit from composing in the L1 and then translate into the L2, a result that highlights the importance of using L1 composing strategies for lower L2 proficiency writers. (Wolfersberger, M.2003)

Besides, at present some thinkers explain the knowledge with intelligence. Especially they are discussing the concept of multiple intelligence. The capacity of an individual's mind and intelligence at the environment in which person grew up might contribute to person aptitude for literature.

Discussion

Younger children learn grammar of the L2 more slowly than older learners so that although they start earlier with language learning they make slower progress and overall gains are not straightforwardly link to the time spend learning (Harley et. al 1995)

The "problem-solving activity" is divided into two major components: the rhetorical situation (audience, topic, assignment), and the writer's own goals (involving the reader, the writer's persona, the construction of meaning, and the production of the formal text). By comparing skilled and less-skilled writers, the emphasis here is placed on "students' strategic knowledge and the ability of students to transform information ... to meet rhetorically constrained purposes" (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996, p. 116).

Writing teachers should be aware of how the instrumental motivation of their L2 students will influence the effectiveness of their lessons. Common purposes for learners writing in an EAP context include writing a research paper for publication in an English-speaking journal or writing a business report for a multinational company. These learners may be less motivated to write stories or poetry, because they perceive that these tasks are not related to their needs. Even writing a standard research essay may seem like a waste of time for those who will need to write project reports and memos. (Myles, 2002, vol, 2 no 6)

Keeping in mind all these, young learners need to build up a sound vocabulary enriched with ones' culture and background to produce writing, that ways to help basic writers improve their writings. Furthermore, improving writing skills depend on detailed plan and grammatical knowledge.

Cognitive strategies and working memory capacity became the central focus for analyzing how writing expertise develops. It became very apparent that the well-developed writing experience comes with working memory capacity and long-term memory knowledge. Memory capacity improves as writers mature or gain writing experience.

New learners lack experience in understanding reader's purposes, they need the oral language foundation and, rhetorical skills in order to select the most appropriate pattern through which to present their content, young learners face with weird characters, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation or inappropriate content.

Environmental factors may provide a good motivation for one who just begins writing. However, equally importantly, if not more, inner motivation is also a key for writing.

CONCLUSION

Writing is not an instinctive talent; rather it is acquired later on. During this acquisition process several factors come into play. Either the way Piaget explains through the solution of environmental problems or through receiving help, as Vygotsky explains, the most important factors are knowledge and its acquisitions. Acquisition of knowledge is mostly about individual's cognitive process. These primary acquisitions affect the learning process of the first language. These acquisitions also affect the way a person learns a foreign language as the individual bases the second language on them. Therefore, the importance of writing becomes clear in the process of learning a second language.

For those who start writing in a second language, there should be inner and outer factors of motivation are needed along with socio-cultural impacts.

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