

DISTRACTERS OF MOTIVATION IN PRODUCING A WRITTEN TEXT OF STUDENTS IN EFL CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

The transition to writing in academic English is one of the many difficulties Uzbek students at Uzbekistan universities face. Expectations have changed significantly, reflecting both a linguistic and cultural shift.

It is thought that writing is a challenging skill for students to acquire. Many students struggle because they have to consider both the content and the syntactic structure of the second language when they are required to express themselves in writing. The majority of students will not be aware of the conventional essay format or the significance of a well-defined thesis statement. Because of this, educators ought to assist in identifying the obstacles to writing in order to increase students' motivation to write.

Keywords: *distracters, motivation, foreign language learners, difficulties, interference.*

Writing is one of the four basic skills for learning a language. Some linguists have classified writing as an active skill as long as it calls for thinking accompanied by the physical act of writing itself. Compared to speaking and listening, writing is usually learnt at school. [1, 2].

There is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for foreign language learners to master. The difficulty lies not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating these ideas into readable texts. The skills involved in writing are highly complex. Writers of EFL have to pay attention to higher level skills of planning and organizing as well as lower level skills of spelling, punctuation, word choice, and so on. [5, 303].

Writing is a skill, like reading, which has to be taught in L1 schools and, as Nunan [4, 271] points out, producing coherent written discourse is an effort for many English mother tongue speakers. He acknowledges that “for second language learners

the challenges are enormous.” White and Arndt [6, 3] agree, arguing that “proficiency in language does not, in itself, make writing easier.” They add that “people writing in their native language, though they may have a more extensive stock of language resources to call upon, frequently confront exactly the same kinds of writing problems as people writing in a foreign or second language.” Therefore, if writing coherently and clearly is a skill native-speakers find difficult, many L2 users, who have less control of English and its conventions of register and collocation, will inevitably find it a chore that takes time and considerable effort.

Compared to students writing in their native languages (L1), students writing in the target language (L2) is a bit more complicated as they need to acquire proficiency in writing strategies and in following the techniques in the use of the language as well. [8, 5-10].

Committing errors is an inevitable circumstance that occurs in human learning, including language. Errors used to be recognized as the undesirable problems which teachers tried to prevent. The conception of an error as a negative output of language learning was based on the behaviorist theory of learning. The behaviorist theory, lying on Skinner’s model, suggests that learning is a habit formation process, resulting from reinforcement.

Recently, errors are differently considered as the sign of learning progress. This perspective is influentially based on the discussion of Chomsky, indicating that children’s development in the language structures are innate. The current conception of the foreign language learning is that the learners conduct hypotheses about the systematic rules in of the TL, test those hypotheses against the perceived information, and make adjustment accordingly.

As a consequent, an error is perceived as the evidence resulting from the language learning process in which the learners use various strategies in learning a new language as well as test the hypotheses.

Basically, an error refers to an identifiable alteration of the grammatical elements of a native speaker, presenting the learners’ competence in the target language. Errors are viewed as the nonnative outcomes of the learners’ inadequate linguistics knowledge. Corder (1973) defined an error as “those features of the learner’s utterances which differ from those of any native speaker” . Lennon (1991) supported Corder’s definition by referring an error to "a linguistic form or combination of forms which in the same context and under similar conditions of production would, in all likelihood, not be produced by the speakers’ native speakers counterparts". In addition, errors in language learning occur systematically and repeatedly without any notice by the learners. The errors are identifiable only by teachers or others who possess an accurate knowledge of grammatical system.

Writing is considered as a difficult activity for the students to learn. Many students get stuck when they have to express their thought in writing because they must think about the content and the syntactic structure in the second language.

These are considered as factors that cause the difficulty of writing. The difficulty in generating the text and expressing the ideas into written text maybe because of students' limitedness of language competence in the target language. Nunan (1991) also add that students need to think about the appropriate lexical and syntactic choices. As a result, students tend to take an instant way to make good writing. When students are asked to write by their teacher, they often directly transfer their first language to the target language in their writing. It happens because students do not realize that the first language and the target language have distinctly different rules in constructing sentences. Consequently, errors occur as a result of this case.

There are many factors that influence the problems in learning English; one of them is because of the interference of the first language. Chaer and Agustina (1995:158) stated that Interference is the change of language system used in other elements of language which is regarded as a mistake because it deviates from the rules of the language used. Furthermore, Ellis stated that first language transfer refers to the influence of students' first language that exerts over the acquisition of students' target language. This influence is referred to as negative transfer or interference and believed that errors were the result of interference. The error indicates that the students' target language has interfered with their first language.

There are a lot of definitions to interpret what interferences are. Hanna (2009:3) stated that interference is a language produced by foreign learners/students which is influenced and even distorted by the mother tongue of the learners/students. While, Odlin argued that transfer or interference is the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired. Interference may be viewed as an adaptive strategy in which the speaker tries to speak the interlocutor's mother tongue although he has little proficiency in it.

Interlingual transfer is a significant source for language learners. This concept comes from constructive analysis of the behavioristic school of learning. It stresses upon the negative interference of mother tongue as the only source of errors. The construction 'I like to read' is uttered as 'I read to like' by many Uzbek Speakers. In Uzbek, the verb is pre-positioned while in English it is post positioned. This type of error is the result of negative transfer of first language rules to target language system.

There are two types of transfer according to Dulay, positive transfer and negative transfer. Negative transfer refers to those instances of transfer, which result in error because old habitual behavior is different from the new behavior being learned. On the

contrary, positive transfer is the correct utterance, because both the first language and second language have the same structure, while the negative transfer from the native language is called interference.

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