

論文

“Second language composing, we would argue... is not a different animal from first language composing” (Jones and Tetroe, 1987). This essay discusses the arguments for and against this claim.

Gary Littlecott

要 旨

「第二言語の作文は第一言語の作文と異なるものではない…と我々は主張する」(Jones and Tetroe: 1987)。本稿ではこの主張の賛否を論じ、非母語話者に対する教授においてどのようなことが問題になるかについて考察する。

1980年代、研究者は第一言語 (L1) のライティングと第二言語 (L2) のそのプロセスはほぼ同一であると考えていた。しかし、最近の研究ではL1とL2の作文には基本的な類似はあるものの、重要な違いがあることが示されている。これにはL1とL2の作文の相違に関わる認知的、言語学的、談話的、ジャンル、読者の違いが含まれている。これらの違いはL2のライティング教師の教育的な様々な問題と同様に考察されるであろう。第一言語のライティングと第二言語のそれとの相違は第二言語学習者の特殊な必要性に合わせたライティングの指導法を採用することが必要になることが論じられる。プロセスアプローチと社会構造主義者の手法が推奨される。彼らはL2の書き手が英語を書くときに直面する特有の難しさについて最も本格的に取り組んでいるからである。

Abstract

“Second language composing, we would argue . . . is not a different animal from first language composing” (Jones and Tetroe: 1987). This article discusses the arguments for and against this claim, and considers the implications for teaching to non-native speakers.

In the 1980s, researchers assumed the first language (L1) writing and second language (L2) writing processes were almost identical. However, contemporary research indicates that although there are basic similarities between L1 and L2 composing, there are also important differences as well. These include fundamental cognitive, linguistic, discourse, genre and audience related differences between L1 and L2 composing. These differences will be explored as well as the pedagogic implications for L2 writing teachers. It is argued that the differences between first and second language writing necessitate the adoption of writing instruction to suit the special needs of L2 learners. A process and social constructionist approach is recommended, as they best address the unique difficulties L2 writers face when composing in English.

Keywords: Writing process (ライティングプロセス), Social constructionist approach (社会構造主義者のアプローチ), Discourse transfer (談話転移), Schemata (スキーマ), Genre analysis (ジャンル分析), Feedback (フィードバック), Audience (読者)

1. Introduction

In their article ‘Composing in a Second Language’ Jones and Tetroe conclude that ‘second language composing is not a different animal from first language composing’ (Jones and Tetroe 1987:55). In other words, they believe L1 and L2 (English) writing process are, to all intents and purposes, the same.

Jones and Tetroe’s supposition can be criticised in a number of ways. Their study

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was based on a very small sample – only six students – so there is a likelihood of ‘premature generalisations being made’ (Kroll 1990:50). When their article was published in 1987, research into the L2 writing process was in its infancy. Contemporary research indicates that although there are basic similarities between first language and second language composing, there are also important differences as well. According to Kroll, ‘it should not be presumed that the act of writing in one’s first language is the same as the act of writing in one’s second language’ (Kroll 1990:2). Due to the cultural and educational distance between native and non-native writers, some researchers have suggested that there may be more differences than similarities between L1 and L2 writing (Grabe and Kaplan 1996:142). L2 writing research findings have important pedagogical implications for L2 teaching. The challenge for teachers is to determine how and what extent it differs from L1 writing in order to make intelligent decisions about adopting and adapting L1 instruction. To achieve this goal, Kroll asserts ‘for those engaged in teaching second language [writing], what is needed is both a firm grounding in the theoretical issues of first and second language writing and an understanding of a broad range of pedagogical issues that shape classroom writing instruction’ (Kroll 2003:25).

2. L2 Writing Research

Until the 1980s, L2 writing teachers have relied on L1 research findings and theories. They reasoned that the theoretical issues and concerns in L1 writing were also relevant in L2 composing. (It should be noted that important L2 research was being conducted at the time but only in three main areas: contrastive rhetoric, assessment research and English for Specific Purposes). L1 writing research generally paid little attention to L2 writing and stressed the similarities between native and non-native writing. However, L2 writers and teachers intuitively felt that second language composing was different to first language composing. According to Raimes, ‘all of us who have tried to write something in a second language . . . sense that the process of writing in an L2 is startlingly different from writing in our L1’ (Raimes 1985:243). Reliance on L1 research caused concern among L2 teachers who raised doubts about ‘the applicability in the L2 context of pedagogical instruction that had been developed for L1 writers’ (Kroll 2003:21). Initiated by Zamel (1983), L2 researchers

began to turn their attention to what non-native writers actually did as they wrote (cited in Grabe and Kaplan 1996:28). Researchers, therefore, focused on the writing process rather than the finished product – the dominant approach of L1 research at the time (Raimes 1991:409). Since then a large amount of new and sometimes contradictory information on L2 writing has been gained through research. However, researchers and writing teachers are aware that there is still a lack of understanding of the L2 writing process. Kroll argues that ‘we [still] have very little information on how people actually learn to write in second languages or how teaching might influence this’ (Kroll 2003:6). More studies are needed before researchers fully understand the L2 composing process and can recommend the most efficient pedagogic methodologies. At present, there is no coherent and comprehensive theory or model of L2 writing that ‘adequately explain learning to write in a second language or precisely . . . how [L2] writing should be taught’ (Wong and Weng 2002:226). Many researchers and teachers voice the need to develop a comprehensive theory of L2 writing as L1 theories are ‘largely monolingual, monocultural, ethnocentric and fixated on the writing of native speakers in North American tertiary education’ (Silva 1993:657). The inability to characterise L2 writing owes to the relative newness of L2 writing research and the traditional belief that L1 and L2 composing were, more or less, the same.

3. The composing process

The main similarity between L1 and L2 writing are the composing process patterns. L1 and L2 writing processes are recursive and involve planning and revising to develop ideas and ways to express them (Silva 1993:657). L2 writers are able to discern goals, consider organisational possibilities and deal with concerns about gist. In general, therefore, L2 writers can function in a similar way to L1 writers (Leeds 1996:28). However, there is a fundamental difference – unlike monolingual L1 writers, L2 learners can cognitively switch to another language.

4. L1 to L2 transfer

Whereas L1 writers work in one language, non-native learners can apply to L2

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writing what they have acquired in L1. Writing protocol studies have shown L2 writers reverting to their L1s as they compose in English (Leeds 1996:30). L2 writers are thinking in different languages at different times and are translating while composing (Fulcher 1997:16). Researchers are not sure exactly how much of their L1 ability is available to L2 writers but they are certain that transfer occurs (Leeds 1996:28).

Research has indicated that students' proficiency in L1 seems to have a positive impact on their L2 writing. In other words, L2 students who are skilled writers in L1 are able to transfer composing strategies over. Therefore, students who have good writing skills in their native language tend to be better at writing in L2 than learners who do not (Sasaki 2000:262). For example, L2 students may be able to transfer planning strategies and use sophisticated words and expressions translated from their L1. The L1 therefore represents a resource, reflecting what the writer already knows about the composing process (Grabe and Kaplan 1996:240).

In summary, researchers have found that L1 writing skills and strategies, especially among writers proficient in their L1, transfer over to their L2 (Hyland 2002:213, Leeds 1996:28). Whereas L1 writers work in just one language, proficient L2 writers utilize both their L1 and L2 cognitive processing resources when composing (Wong and Weng 2002:225).

5. L2 writing characteristics

Although L1 and L2 writing processes are considered similar, non-native writers tend to experience more difficulty when composing (Silva 1993:660; Grabe and Kaplan 1996:141). L2 writers are likely to be less fluent, less accurate and be less effective writers than L1 writers. L2 writing tends to be a more laborious process for most non-native students with more attention paid to sentence construction and less to generating ideas, planning and goal setting (Wong and Weng 2002:239). They are also likely to be less productive than native speaker writers with fewer words of written text. In addition, they are likely to make more errors than L1 writers, use more undefined terms and are less able to paraphrase. Furthermore, L2 writers tend not to have the same command of vocabulary that most English L1 writers do (Silva and Matsuda 2001:44). L2 writers are likely to spend more time in choosing words and

expressions to convey their ideas. Arndt, for example, notes a lack of lexical knowledge and the need for more word-choice revision in L2 (Arndt 1987:265). Unlike L2 writers, English L1 writers seem to rehearse word choices more and listen to how chosen words resonate with the intended meaning and perhaps even develop a different perspective on the intended meanings as a result (Leeds 1996:29).

Jones and Tetroe state it is 'obvious . . . that the level of performance in the second language will be less than that in the first (Jones and Tetroe 1987:36). They base their conclusion on the simple fact that L2 writers tend to have limited exposure and practice of composing in English. Most L2 writers therefore, have not had the same amount of writing practice as native learners. Less exposure to the target language means less linguistic knowledge of the L2 when they begin to write. From birth, native learners implicitly acquire grammar and lexical knowledge before they start formal writing instruction at primary school. This is not the case for L2 students who usually begin writing at beginner or intermediate levels and are, in addition, studying the other main skills of speaking, listening and reading at the same time. Therefore, the efforts in learning to write a new language are compounded by the complexities and difficulties inherent in mastering a new language (Leki 1992:8, Kroll 1990:2).

Research concerning information processing suggests that cognitive resources become more limited in L2 writing. If processing capacity is being used for one function, other functions can only make use of whatever capacity is left over (Leeds 1996:29). Therefore, if students must use part of their cognitive capacity to focus on language because they are not familiar with that language, other functions, perhaps higher functions of organisation cannot be engaged at full capacity (Leeds 1996:29).

6. Discourses and Genre

In many cases, English native speakers can intuitively distinguish an L2 writer's text from that of an L1 writer. Culture affects the use of language in many ways and contrastive rhetoric research has discovered that each culture has its own patterns of discourse. Therefore, L2 students are likely to transfer their native schemata to L2 writing situations (Hyland 2002:214). Schemata, according to Johns are 'the prior knowledge that individuals bring to current writing situations' (Johns 1997:10). The

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likely transfer of native schemata may be due to the social and cultural distance of L2 students from the educational norms and values of English speaking cultures. Since learners from different cultures present written ideas in different ways, the L2 writer audience sense may be culturally different from L1 students (Silva and Matsuda 2001:45). L2 schemata may be unsuitable in an L1 context, as it may not match the expectations of the native speaker audience. In other words, L2 learners may fail to develop a sophisticated understanding and concept of audience requirement (Leeds 1996:32, Leki 1992:102). English speaking discourse cultures emphasise critical thinking, logic of argument, originality, creativity, cogency, individual voice and audience. These are fundamental considerations when L2 writers ‘encounter the academic curriculum beyond the L2 writing classroom’ (Leki and Carson cited in Silva and Matsuda 2001:44).

7. Pedagogic implications

As a result of researchers’ traditionally stressing the similarities between L1 and L2 writing, second language teachers used to accept the idea that teaching techniques recommended for native speakers would also be suitable for non-native speakers as well (Leeds 1996:27). However, with contemporary writing research highlighting the differences between L1 and L2 composing processes, writing teachers have been obliged to reassess teaching methodologies.

Although teaching English to L2 learners may not be wholly different from teaching native speakers, it is different enough to warrant adjustments to writing instruction (Leeds 1996:32). Raimes was the first to acknowledge that the differences between L1 and L2 writers justified the adaption not the adoption of L1 writing instruction (Kroll 1990:44). Raimes advised that [L2 writing teachers] should neither use the same pedagogical strategies for ESL students in writing classes as for native speakers nor should we treat our students simply as learners who need large doses of language instruction to improve their writing’ (Raimes 1985:250). Researchers tend to agree with Raimes’ contention that ‘the academic success of L2 writers of English may be negatively affected by the uncritical application of L1 writing pedagogies’ (Land and Whitley (1989), Santos (1992), Silva (1993), cited in Leki (1996:43)).

8. Teaching discourse and genre

Since contrastive rhetoric researchers have identified L1 discourse transfer in L2 writing, writing teachers should be aware of the potential problems L1 rhetorical style can cause in English L2 writing (Leki 1992:92). Although it may be difficult to shift the influence of L1 schemata from the L2 writing context, a social constructionist approach may assist students to familiarise themselves with the discourse and genres of English writing. A social constructionist approach to discourse and genre instruction has been advocated by Dudley Evans and St. John. Johns also advocates this approach which she labels 'socio-literate' (Johns 1997:14). According to Dudley Evans and St. John, the social constructionist approach is 'closely related to the development of genre analysis . . . and encourages writers to consider their role as members of a discourse community and what this implies in terms of the style and stance they would adopt' (Dudley Evans and St. John 1998:118). The approach helps students to understand how knowledge is represented in different cultures and to successfully produce and process texts within certain genres (St. John 1997:15). According to Johns, the constructionist approach 'expands the concept of schemata to include not only the readers' and writers' prior knowledge of text content and form but of the situations and communities for which texts from a genre serve identified purposes (Johns 1997:15).

In English tertiary level education it is important that writing teachers highlight the 'culturally driven English L1 assumptions that differentiate L1 and L2 writing' and teach the expectations of an English speaking audience (Silva and Matsuda 2001:44, Leki 1992:102). Non-native speakers may need explicit instruction of what is socially and culturally appropriate in terms of the writers' roles, audience expectations, rhetorical patterns, stylistic conventions and contextual features in L2 written discourse. Furthermore, L2 teachers should highlight the rhetorical options available to them; including explicit instruction in L1 rhetorical and cultural preferences for essay organisation and argument structure (Silva and Matsuda 2001:44). Exposure to academic essays, letters and reports for example, may help L2 students to become aware of the rhetorical differences in discourse and genre.

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9. The learning environment

A debate has raged within L2 writing circles about the most appropriate classroom environment for L2 English writers. Some L2 professionals favour mainstream classes mixing native and non-native speakers as the best introduction into the L1 academic discourse community. Others, however, favour the more narrow English for Academic Purposes (EAP) approach as the most appropriate way to teach writing to non-native speakers (Leki 1992:8). Researchers and writers who prefer the EAP approach believe L2 writers have special needs and should be given the option of taking writing classes designed especially for them and not forced into main-stream composing classes (Silva 1993:670). Perhaps what is more important than the debate about general or specialist classrooms are the professional qualities of the writing teacher. If the teacher has the experience, skills and knowledge of L1 and L2 theory and practice, it is more likely that he or she can make appropriate adjustments to suit L2 students (Santos et al 2000:17).

10. The L2 writing teacher

The experience, knowledge and skills a teacher brings to the writing classroom are key if L2 learners are to be treated fairly, taught effectively and given an equal chance to succeed in their writing (Silva et al 1997:401/2). Writing teachers should have a clear understanding of the nature of L2 writing and be sensitive to, and be able to deal positively with the needs and concerns of non-native learners. Knowledge of student L1 backgrounds can help to inform and guide L2 writing pedagogy (Sasaki 2000:283). Teachers need to talk and listen to students as individuals to discover and understand their particular situation. Teachers can provide more individualised and effective teaching for their students if they are familiar with students' cultural, educational and linguistic backgrounds and attitudes to L2 writing. Furthermore, knowledge of the students' literacy in L1, understanding of English speaking cultures as well as experience of composing is only of benefit to teachers. For example, many L2 researchers and teachers agree that it is difficult to predict L1 to L2 transfer of rhetorical styles in writing. In some cases, L2 students may not use L1 rhetorical styles. For instance, L2 students with extensive exposure to English, access to English

resources and current contacts with English speakers may have a better command of the nuances of rhetorical structure than those who do not. In this case, a teacher's knowledge of an L2 student's cultural, social and educational background would help in the writing classroom.

L2 teachers should remember that different teaching approaches to writing suit different individuals and there is no one best method that every student should use. According to Fulcher, L2 teachers must be even more versatile than L1 teachers in adapting teaching strategies to individuals (Fulcher 1997: 18). As Johns writes 'we are in a post methodological era and thus to imply that there is one way to teach or learn . . . would be irresponsible (Johns 1997: xi).

11. More time for everything

L2 research has shown that non-native students share a need for more time for completing writing tasks (Leeds 1996:35). What might be a reasonable length of time for a native English writer to complete a writing assignment may not be so for non-native writers. Raimes argued that L2 writers might need 'more of everything, more time, more opportunity' to address the lexical, rhetorical and linguistic concerns. L2 writers, for example, may need more time to master 'vocabulary to make their own background knowledge accessible to them in their L2' (Raimes 1985:250). Writing teachers, therefore, should make time available in class for L2 students to compose in English. As Silva and Matsuda point out 'people improve in activities that they regularly practice, particularly in . . . complex processing activities such as writing' (Silva and Matsuda 2001:44).

According to Silva, the need for 'more time' casts doubt on the reasonableness that L2 writers will perform as well as L1 writers on writing tests and that L2 writers will be able to meet standards developed from L1 writers (Silva 1993:670). This is a difficult issue because it raises the question of whether L2 students should be assessed differently from L1 writers. The repercussions could include L2 students feeling that their writing has been devalued in the minds of other people and possibly allegations to of unfairness from L1 students if they are assessed from non-native learners. Nevertheless, it is doubtful that many L2 students would want to be treated differently than L1 students in the first place.

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12. Feedback

Raimes makes the claim that revision is the main difference between L1 and L2 writers (Raimes 1987:439). This is because research has discovered that L2 writers have less concern for making language errors than L1 writers. The findings suggest that specific feedback from the teacher helps improve the writing of the L2 student (Ferris 1997 cited in Silva and Matsuda 2001:44). However, revision seems to have little effect on L1 writing improvement. Native writers on the other hand sometimes misinterpret the teacher’s commentary as a personal attack on them and fail to appreciate why the comments were written in the first. The opposite appears to be true for L2 writers. L2 writers are likely to welcome feedback from teachers and incorporate comments and ideas when they revise text. L2 writers may seek teacher feedback because of their relative lack of practice in L2 composing – ‘limited-practice over a lifetime’ – which tends to disadvantage L2 writers in their command of written English (Silva and Matsuda 2001:44). In short, concrete feedback from teachers is expected and required from non-native writers.

13. Conclusion

In the 1980s, researchers such as Jones and Tetroe believed that L1 and L2 writing processes were the same. This is true at a basic level since first and second language composing are both recursive in style and require planning, editing, redrafting and so on. However, the fact L2 writers can switch to their L1 while composing and have unique culturally derived schemata highlight significant differences between native and non-native writers. In addition, research into the L2 writing process has discovered fundamental cognitive, linguistic, discourse, genre and audience related differences between first language and second language composing. We can conclude, therefore, that first language composing is a ‘different animal’ from second language composing. The differences between L1 and L2 writing necessitate the adaptation of writing instruction to suit the special needs of L2 learners. For example, providing genre and discourse pattern awareness raising strategies and giving more time ‘for everything’ in and outside the writing classroom. Furthermore, teachers should familiarise themselves with the L2 learners’ cultural, social and educational

backgrounds to inform and guide tuition. Finally, a process and social constructionist approach is recommended to teaching L2 learners as they best address the unique difficulties non-native students face when they write in a second language.

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