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Review

Best practices in L2 English source use pedagogy: A thematic review and synthesis of empirical studies

Gi-Zen Liu [a, *], Vivien Lin [a], Xiaojing Kou [b], Hong-You Wang [a]

[a] Department of Foreign Languages & Literature, National Cheng Kung University, 1, University Road, Tainan City 701, Taiwan
[b] Center of Language Technology, Ballantine Hall 120, 1020 E. Kirkwood Avenue, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405, USA

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ABSTRACT

There is an urgency to improve source use among non-native speakers of English in the globalized era. This review examines problems and causes of second language (L2) English source misuse in the English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) environments, and proposes remedies for the problems. Thematic analysis resulted in issues related to L2 English misuse under the categories of (a) source use norms, (b) source use acquisition, and (c) ethical practice in L2 academic writing from 53 empirical studies. Furthermore, nine recommendations for L2 English source use pedagogy were derived to (a) ensure transparency in definitions, guidelines, and expectations, (b) build source use knowledge, and (c) engage L2 English writers in continuous practice and autonomous development of plagiarism avoidance. Finally, the authors provide an inter-relational network among the nine themes as well as suggestions for enhancing L2 source use policies and education among institutions and practitioners aiming to improve source use for L2 English writers.

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* Corresponding author.
E-mail address: gizen@mail.ncku.edu.tw (G.-Z. Liu).

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1. Introduction

Second language (L2) English practitioners located in English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) settings have endeavored to increase academic writing competence among non-native English speakers' (NNES) who act as new members into the academic community (Chen, Shih, & Liu, 2015; Lin, Kang, Liu, & Lin, 2016; Lo, Liu, & Wang, 2014). With the high rate of NNESs studying in ESL (e.g., U.S., U.K., Australia) and EFL (e.g., Continental Europe, Asia) higher education contexts (Kaypak & Ortactepe, 2014), L2 English writing has become an important area for research pursuit (e.g. Atkinson, 2003; Lin et al., 2016; Silva, 1993; Woodall, 2002). An important aspect of L2 English academic writing is source use, which refers to the process of reading and comprehending a source text and then integrating its relevant content into one's own text through paraphrasing and conventional citation practice (Davis, 2013). The distinction between ESL and EFL source-based writing should also be noted. In ESL settings, issues are related to how international students adjust themselves to Anglophone writing norms in an Anglophone academic culture, whereas in EFL environments, L2 English writers remain in their first language (L1) culture, which is a non-Anglophone academic context, and try to adopt Anglophone academic writing norms. Although source use has long been a problem among native speakers of English, the task of writing with sources poses far more challenges for L2 English writers due to cultural and language differences (e.g. Johns & Mayes, 1990; Lei & Hu, 2013; Zhang, 2013). Scholars have attributed the seemingly plagiaristic behaviors of L2 English writers to cultural influence (Howard, 1995; Pecorari, 2003; Pennycook, 1996). In particular, Asian and Middle Eastern writers are traditionally trained in their L1 to imitate others in their writing practice (Hu & Lei, 2012; Rezanejad & Rezaei, 2013; Wheeler, 2009). To this end, some researchers have claimed that cultural identity and experiences should not serve as a disadvantage to L2 English writers' academic endeavors (e.g., Pennycook, 1996), while others argue that it is the lack of relevant knowledge and skills, rather than cultural influence, that causes source misuse among L2 English writers, especially for those in EFL contexts (Lei & Hu, 2013; Sun, 2009).

In both ESL and EFL settings, higher education institutions have tried to bolster their competitiveness by fostering global citizens of the knowledge economy and thus creating a great demand of English works (Barrett & Liu, 2016; Lee, 2004; Liu, Lo, & Wang, 2013; Lo et al., 2014; Matus & Talburt, 2015). Under this phenomenon, L2 English writers have attempted to socialize into their target disciplinary discourse as apprentices who engage in actual text production. Meanwhile, the easy access to journal publications on the Internet (Geravand & Ahmadi, 2014; Liu, Liu, & Hwang, 2011) has blurred the boundaries between authors and original text owners (Parra, 2013), which led to higher scrutiny of plagiarism among term papers, theses, and journal submissions (Liu et al., 2013; Sun, 2013). In summary, L2 researchers need to be aware of issues that L2 English writers face as they are engaged in source-based writing and implement appropriate English for Academic Purposes (EAP) pedagogy in ESL or EFL contexts.

1.1. Source use pedagogy in L2 English education

Spivey's constructivist model outlined L1 reading and writing operations in stages of organizing a new structure from the source texts, selecting content that varied in importance, and connecting relevant ideas from multiple origins during discourse synthesis writing (Spivey & King, 1989). Reading and information seeking abilities are therefore necessary for L1 synthesis writing (Risemberg, 1996).

In L2 English writing, *reading-to-write* has championed as a comprehensive approach (Barks & Watts, 2001; Connor & Kramer, 1995; Gebril & Plakans, 2014). Barks and Watts (2001) proposal on developing effective English for Academic Purposes (EAP) pedagogy on source use highlighted the concept of authorship (Western *vs.* non-Western), different educational practices in various locales, and language learning through the reading-to-write method. The approach includes the writer's engagement in reading and interpreting source texts in search of specific information, and fitting that information into their

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