



THE EFFECT OF SOME LEARNER VARIABLES AND THE USE OF COHESIVE DEVICES ON TURKISH NONNATIVE WRITERS' WRITING QUALITY

(ÖĞRENCİYE BAĞLI BAZI DEĞİŞKENLERİN VE BAĞLAYICI
SÖZCÜKLERİN KULLANIMININ İKİNCİ DİLİ İNGİLİZCE OLAN TÜRK
ÖĞRENCİLERİN YAZMA BECERİSİ ÜZERİNE ETKİSİ)

Kenan DİKİLİTAŞ¹

ABSTRACT

The study examines 26 nonnative narrations in relation to whether there is a relationship between the quality of L2 writing and some other learner variables such as the amount of reading and writing in both languages, and the social and political attitudes towards English and English speakers. For the sentential level, factors such as the number of words, the number of T-units, the number of T-units per sentence, and the number of words per clause were analyzed, whereas for the textual level cohesive devices such as *reference*, *substitution*, *ellipsis*, and *conjunction* were analyzed. The study concluded (a) that at sentential level L1 and L2 writing samples differ and those who tend to write long in L1 do so to in L2, (b) that at textual level NNWs used pronominals and definitives significantly more than NNWs, (c) that social and political attitudes of NNWs towards English and English speakers and writing quality are not statistically related, (d) that the amount of general writing and reading practices are also not statistically related to the writing quality.

Keywords: Cohesion, coherence; L2 writing; Turkish non native writers.

ÖZ

Bu çalışma, ikinci dili İngilizce olan 26 öğrencinin anlatılarını, ikinci dil yazma kalitesi ve her iki dilde okuma ve yazma sıklığı, İngilizceye ve İngilizlere karşı sosyal ve politik tutumu gibi diğer bazı değişkenler arasında bir ilişki olup olmadığı bakımından inceler. Cümle bağlamında, sözcük sayısı, t birimi sayısı, cümle başına t birimi, tümce başına t birimi gibi faktörler analiz edilirken, metinsel boyutta gönderge (reference), değiştirim (substitute), eksiltlilik (ellipsis) ve bağlaç (conjunction) gibi bağlayıcı sözcükler analiz edilmiştir. Çalışmanın sonucunda, (a) cümle seviyesinde öğrencilerin birinci ve ikinci dilde yazdıklarının farklı olduğu ve kendi dilinde uzun yazanların İngilizce yazarken de uzun yazdığı, (b) metinsel boyutta bir İngiliz yazarın önemli ölçüde daha çok zamir ve tanımlayıcı (the) kullandığı, (c) ana dili Türkçe olan öğrencilerin İngilizceye ve İngilizce konuşanlara karşı sosyal ve politik tutumları ile yazma kalitesi arasında önemli bir ilişki bulunmadığı ve (d) öğrencilerin kendi dilinde yazma ve okuma yapma süreleri ve yazma kalitesi arasında istatistiksel önemde bir ilişki olmadığı ortaya çıkmıştır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Anlam bütünlüğü; bağdaşıklık; ikinci dilde yazma; ikinci dili İngilizce olan Türk yazarlar.

¹ Teacher Trainer Department of Foreign Language School, Gediz University, İzmir, Turkey.

E-mail: kenandikilitas@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

This paper investigates the text structure of L2 writing to find out whether there is a significant relationship between the use of sentential and textual level features, and the quality of writing as determined by one native and one nonnative speakers' scores based on a likert scale evaluation rubric adapted from Chiang (1999). The analysis will be at two levels: sentential and textual. The analysis at sentential level structure includes surface grammatical features of syntax and semantics. This analysis requires counting the number of words, of sentences, of words per sentences, and T-unit and T-units per sentences as well as the number of errors. The analysis at textual level, on the other hand, includes functional features of cohesion and coherence, which requires counting cohesive devices such as reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunctions. The results from these two analyses may yield information about what makes nonnative writing qualified. The findings from these two diverse levels may also provide insight into the abilities of nonnative writers (NNWs) to convey their ideas into written forms. To the best of my knowledge, there has not been a single study investigating the Turkish students' narratives from a textlinguistic perspective considering both the sentential level and the textual level as well as from some other variables likely to be influential in the writing performance of the L2 writers such as the amount of reading and writing in both languages, and the social and political attitudes towards English and English speakers in line with the Grabe & Kaplan (1996: 248). To be able to interpret the findings from the L2 writers, the authors also collected narratives from native writers of English (NWs) to see what cohesive devices are frequently reported in monolinguals' narrations. The following sections will provide a brief account of issues in text linguistics.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Cohesion

Cohesion occurs where the interpretation of some elements in the discourse is dependent on that of another (Halliday & Hasan, 1976: 4). A text is then only meaningful when some elements referring to one another across the text set up a relation. This relation can be set up through reference, substitution, and ellipsis and conjunction which are grammatical and lexical cohesion. Therefore, the grammar and the vocabulary are two forms of cohesion. These cohesive devices used by the language speakers and writers to express meaning based on the interpretations of the listeners and readers therefore provide semantic relations for the semantic units whose interpretations they facilitate.

Text and Texture

A text is regarded as a semantic unit: a unit not of form but of meaning. However, the concept of texture expresses the property of “being a text” as noted by Halliday & Hasan (1976: 7). This reveals that all languages have texts and also have certain linguistic features that create texture. Being a texture can, therefore, be understood from two levels: (a) the sentential level and (b) the textual level. The sentential level is grammatical features of syntax at surface level representing semantics at deep structure. The textual level is functional features of cohesion at surface level leading to coherence at deep structure.

The Sentential Level

The fundamental building blocks from which all texts are constructed are four independent components on two levels. On the sentential level are syntax and semantics. On textual level are cohesion and coherence (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996: 63). Syntactic component involves types of phrasing, types of clause constructions and types of passive structures and clausal combinations and word order within a sentence. Semantic component involves the senses and mappings from word meanings to sentential meanings. Chomsky’s groundbreaking theory of language in 1950s and 1960s led to the view that syntactic features of the texts may determine writing development. Grabe & Kaplan (1996) argue that some degree of syntactic maturity seems to be prerequisite to discourse ability. This maturity is crucial because the ability to use syntactic structure of a language to express meaning that would meet the linguistic need of the writer may lead to a better expression of the ideas. However, Ortega (2003) suggests three reasons why syntactic complexity should not be misunderstood in the interpretation of language ability of L2 writers. First, “more complex” may not mean “more developed”. Second, “more complex” does not necessarily mean “better”. Third, it could be wrong to equate more linguistically complex writing with good or expert writer. There are studies that also contradict a positive relationship between the syntactic complexity and writing quality. Hillock (1986), for example, found no consistent relationship between the syntactic complexity of written products and holistic ratings of good writing.

The Textual Level

This level is the underlying structure of the surface structure achieved through the use of grammatical elements to form the sentence. This is the first stage to the formation of the text through cohesion and coherence constructed on the basis of the textual cohesion through the readers’ efforts to interpret. At this level the relations between the sentences play a major role in the achievement of coherence. These relations can also be defined as the topic – comment relations as well as the grammatical relations established through

cohesive devices in question. There are therefore various means whereby cohesion can be established. These include reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical relationships.

Based on the classification of the sub-parts of these categories by Halliday & Hasan (1976), reference can be grouped into four categories: pronominal, demonstrative, definite article 'the' and comparative. Again, substitution has four sub categories: one/some/ones (as substitutes of noun phrases), do so/it/that (as substitutes of predicate), here/there/then (as substitutes of adverbials), so/not (as substitutes of clauses). Another category is ellipsis, which has three sub categories: noun phrases, the predication and a clause. The fourth category is conjunction, which can be subcategorized into five: additive, adversative, causative, temporal and continuative.

Learner variables

The study also attempts to explore the effect of some learner variables on NNWs' writing quality. To this end, the learners were asked to write in their own language to reveal a good account of the writing performance of the learners. In fact, this aspect of the research originated from Grabe & Kaplan (1996: 248) who suggest some considerations for writing research in EFL context. These include: 1) the country of origin, 2) the length of prior English study, 3) the extent of access to English, 4) linguistic typological distance of L1 from English, 5) social and political attitudes towards English and English speakers, 6) training and expertise of English teacher, 7) the extent of L1 literacy training, 8) social practices and expectations in L1 literacy, 9) the major field of study or educational track in school, 10) potential economic opportunities, 11) cultural expectations for learning. Grabe & Kaplan claim that all these factors could be related to the quality of writing by NNWs and therefore this study seeks to reveal whether this is the case for Turkish NNWs.

PREVIOUS STUDIES

There have been a number of studies investigating the relation between the use of cohesive devices and the quality of L2 writing. One such study was carried out by Meisuo (2000) who investigated how cohesive features were used in the compositions of 107 Chinese undergraduates through both quantitative and qualitative methods. The research found that lexical devices were the most frequently used, followed by conjunctions and reference devices. Another finding was that certain cohesive features included ambiguity in reference, overuse and misuse of conjunctions, and restricted use of lexical cohesion. On the other hand, Ho & Waugh (2008) in Hong Kong examined the use of three types of cohesive devices namely reference, conjunction and lexis in essays of 150 foreign language learners referring to their narrative and descriptive essays. Students found that the three easiest writing devices used

were remote cohesive ties, immediate cohesive ties and mediate cohesive ties. The three hardest writing devices used were temporal conjunctions, causal conjunctions and adversative conjunctions. In addition, Meihua & Braine (2005) investigated the use of cohesive devices in 50 argumentative compositions created by Chinese undergraduate non-English majors. They found that among a variety of cohesive devices were the lexical cohesive devices that were the most frequently employed, followed by references and conjunctives. The number of lexical cohesive devices was significantly related to the quality of writing. However, they revealed that there were certain problems in the use of reference and lexical devices. Another study was carried out by Chiang (2003). One of the results of this study was that native and nonnative raters groups predicted the writing quality of the texts based on the cohesion and coherence employed in the compositions. This shows that cohesive devices, when used accurately, can contribute to the overall quality of the writing samples. In one another study, Chiang (1999) investigated the relative importance of various grammatical and discourse features in the evaluation of second language writing samples and found that raters heavily depended on cohesion in evaluating the overall quality of the essays. This also points to the idea of considering cohesive devices in judging the quality of essays. Lee (2002) carried out a study with 16 ESL students to reveal whether explicit teaching of coherence-creating devices may contribute to the coherence in writing. He found a positive relation between the pedagogical materials based on promoting the cohesive devices and the improvement of the student writing. There are some other studies on the applicability of cohesion theory in the teaching. One such study is that of Zhou (2007), who investigated cohesion theory by Halliday & Hasan to see whether it could be applied in the teaching of writing. She found that teaching activities that are designed to teach cohesive devices may enhance students' ability to write composition. Wu & Chen (2008) found in their study on cohesion on oral English that substitution and ellipsis are neglected and are less used forms of cohesive devices. They also indicate that foreign language learners tend to use such devices less even in their oral performance, which is in contrast to what is commonly thought. Another study by Olateju (2006) investigated how much ESL learners achieve cohesion in written texts by examining students at different writing sessions. The study revealed that the students lacked competence in their use of cohesive devices.

Research Questions

1. Is there a quantitative difference between the L1 writing samples and L2 writing samples at the sentential level?
2. Is there a difference in the L2 writers' use of cohesive devices compared to those of native writers?

3. Is there a relation between the social and political attitudes of L2 writers towards English and English speakers and their writing performance?
4. Is there a relation between cohesion-oriented rating scores and the total scores of the nonnative writers?

METHOD

Subjects

The subjects of the study were 26 junior class students attending department of English Language and Literature at tertiary level. They have a long English background with preparatory class at high schools as well as at tertiary level. Therefore, they are advanced level students. In addition, they study literature in an English-medium department. They are extensive readers of literature and have been writing assignments in English for about three years.

The Task

The students were first given a questionnaire in which they would find three different sections and an additional writing section where they were asked to write a story in the narrative style that they experienced to a native speaker of English as well as another in their own language, namely Turkish. They wrote each task in about 15 minutes though they were not confined to time limit.

Instrument

The questionnaire consisted of four sub-sections, each collecting data on the extent of access to native English, on the amount of reading and writing in both languages and on the social and political attitudes towards English and English speakers respectively. In the final section, the nonnative learners of English were asked to write two different narrations, one is in English, the other is in Turkish. The primary goal of asking the learners to write in their own language as well is to reveal a good account of the writing performance of the learners. In fact, Grabe & Kaplan (1996: 248) suggest some considerations for writing research in EFL context. These include: 1) the country of origin, 2) the length of prior English study, 3) the extent of access to English, 4) linguistic typological distance of L1 from English, 5) social and political attitudes towards English and English speakers, 6) training and expertise of English teacher, 7) the extent of L1 literacy training, 8) social practices and expectations in L1 literacy, 9) the major field of study or educational track in school, 10) potential economic opportunities, 11) cultural expectations for learning. In line with the suggestions above, a questionnaire was designed to measure 1, 3, 5 and 8. Additionally, the nonnative speakers

and the native speakers of English were asked to write a story that they experienced in a narrative style as part the questionnaire. They were given no limitation of time or of length of the narration they were going to write. In addition, they were also asked to write in their native language.

The Raters

Two raters were collaborated in this study. One was a native speaker of English from Australia, who has been teaching English in Turkey for about 3 years. He has a CELTA Certificate. He specializes in teaching speaking. The other rater was a Turkish teacher of English, who has been teaching language skills as well as English literatures for about 14 years. They were given a rubric by Chiang (1999) for evaluating cohesive features of foreign language writing samples created for advanced level of students.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed with SPSS 13.0. In the analysis of the first research question to reveal whether there is a relation between different variables about the syntactic features of the writing samples of the NNWs, Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used. To see if there is a relation between the writing samples of NNWs in L1 and L2 in terms of their use of words, phrases, clauses and sentences in number, independent two samples T-Test was used. In attempt to answer the second research question, ANOVA was employed to see which cohesive devices were preferred by NWs and NNWs. In addition, in order to see whether there are differences in the use of cohesive devices by NWs and NNWs, in terms of the total number of cohesive devices, independent T-test was employed.

RESULTS

Results for the Research Question 1

Table 1. Correlation Matrix for 9 Syntactic Features

Variables		X1	X2	X3	X4	X5	X6	X7	X8
X2	R	,642**							
	P	,000	1						
X3	R	,718**	,372						
	P	,000	,061	1					
X4	R	,491*	,611**	,648**					
	P	,011	,001	,000	1				
X5	R	,234	,026	,378	,115				
	P	,249	,900	,057	,576	1			
X6	R	,025	,108	,010	,278	,147			
	P	,903	,600	,962	,169	,475	1		
X7	R	,795**	,548**	,914**	,638**	,366	,006		
	P	,000	,004	,000	,000	,066	,976	1	
X8	R	,101	,451*	,069	,575**	,130	,707**	,145	
	P	,625	,021	,737	,002	,526	,000	,479	1

X9	R	,329	,308	,396*	,196	,111	,176	,422*	,084
	P	,100	,126	,045	,336	,590	,390	,032	,682

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

X1 Number of Sentences in English, X2 Number of Sentences in Turkish, X3 Number of Content Words in English, X4 Number of Content Words in Turkish, X5 Number of Function Words in English, X6 Number of Content Words in Turkish, Number of T-units in English, X8 Number of T-units in Turkish, X9 Number of Mistakes in English

The analysis of syntactic features of language in L1 and L2 in nonnative narrations shows that there is a statistically significant relation between the number of sentences in Turkish narrations and that in English narrations. More specifically, as the number of sentences in Turkish data increases, so does the number in English data. It seems that the NNWs transfer their ability to write longer in their own language to their writing performance in English. In addition, the ability to use content words in narrations is related to the potential vocabulary knowledge and function words are related to grammar competence. Therefore, both can be an indication of how the NNWs express their ideas through their competence in vocabulary and grammar. The high number of the content words in the data is also correlated with the high number of sentences by the NNWs. Similarly, the number of the content words in Turkish data is also related to the high number of sentences in English data, which indicates that the competence in the use of content words may help the NNWs to create more sentences.

Table 2. The Number of T-Units per Sentence in Native Language and Foreign Language

NNW	N	Mean	S.D.	T	P
English Average	26	2,4408	,62595	-2,023	0.048
Turkish Average	26	2,9158	1,02038		

The NNWs created more T-Units in their Turkish narrations and the difference between them is found statistically important. However, this does not necessarily mean that the NNWs with high T-Unit production in Turkish have high number of T-Units in English. Such a relation was not found in the statistics.

Results for the Research Question 2

To answer this research question, the cohesive devices were hand counted and the frequency of their use was identified for the narrations of the NWs and NNWs. The results were compared by ANOVA to see the differences and quantify them. One of the findings was that there is a

significant difference between the NWs and NNWs in the use of pronominal reference as well as of definitives as cohesive devices. However, it should be noted that this difference should not be interpreted as an indication of better performance of NWs. The results of NWs are only used to see and show the different preferences of using cohesive devices. More specifically, they are quantitatively identified to show whether the NNWs employ similar to or different strategies from NWs' connecting the sentences to create cohesiveness or coherence. The other devices such as ellipsis and substitutions and conjunctions were not used significantly differently by NNWs and NWs. However, this does not mean an identical success achieved by the two groups. Rather, these devices were not used as they were not contextually needed to use.

Table 3. Results for Cohesive Devices by NWs and NNWs

Cohesive devices	NWs N=12 [mean] (S.D.)	NNW N=26 [mean] (S.D.)	P
Reference: Pronominal	14.58 (8.76)	5.307 (4.19)	0.001 ^{xxx}
Reference: Demonstrative	1.41 (1.13)	0.58 (0.809)	1.0 ^{NS}
Reference: Definitives	4.41 (4.29)	1.38 (2.041)	0.002 ^{xx}
Reference: Comparatives	0.417 (0.90)	0.0 (0.0)	1.0 ^{NS}
Substitution: one/ones	0.66 (1.15)	0.15 (0.46)	1.0 ^{NS}
Substitution: do so/it/that	0.58 (0.66)	0.038 (0.19)	1.0 ^{NS}
Substitution: Here/there/then	0.92 (1.31)	0.54 (0.86)	1.0 ^{NS}
Substitution: so/not	0.42 (0.67)	0.38 (0.19)	1.0 ^{NS}
Ellipsis: noun phrases	1.67 (2.30)	0.11 (0.33)	1.0 ^{NS}
Ellipsis: the predication	0.25 (0.45)	0.0 (0.0)	1.0 ^{NS}
Ellipsis: a clause	0.5 (0.67)	0.0 (0.0)	1.0 ^{NS}
Conjunction: Additive	0.5 (0.67)	0.46 (1.54)	1.0 ^{NS}
Conjunction: Adversative	1.0 (1.28)	0.65 (0.93)	1.0 ^{NS}
Conjunction: Causative	0.58 (0.79)	0.23 (0.51)	1.0 ^{NS}
Conjunction : Temporal	2.25 (2.17)	0.42 (1.67)	1.0 ^{NS}
Conjunction: Continuative	0.91 (0.90)	0.0 (0.0)	1.0 ^{NS}

It is also understood that there is no statistical difference in the way and the frequency of using other cohesive devices. However, this does not mean that they have the same ability to employ such devices at the same accuracy and appropriateness. Table 4 demonstrates that cohesive devices employed by both groups differ in number and in variety, which is not supported by ANOVA statistical process.

Table 4. Comparative Analysis of the Cohesive Devices of NWs and NNWs

Cohesive devices	N	Mean	S.D	T	p
NW Reference	12	20,8333	13,90770	3,304	0.006
NNW Reference	26	7,2692	4,35943		
NW Substitution	12	2,5833	1,97523	3,05	0.009
NNW Substitution	26	,7692	,86291		
NW Ellipsis	12	2,4167	2,67848	2,966	0.013
NNW Ellipsis	26	,1154	,32581		
NW conjunction	12	5,2500	4,90130	2,374	0.034
NNW Conjunction	26	1,7692	1,96586		

Independent T-test was employed to see whether there are differences in the use of cohesive devices by NWs and NNWs, referring to the total number of cohesive devices. Here, as it can be seen in Table 4, the scores of NWs are higher in all types of cohesive devices. This means that NNWs tend to follow different preferences of cohesive devices while constructing a narration, which could be due to the linguistic difficulties posed by the structures of certain referential devices, substitution, ellipsis and particular conjunctions.

Results for the Research Question 3

The third research question was to demonstrate whether there is a relation between the social and political attitudes of L2 writers towards English and English speakers and their writing performance measured by whether the texts are cohesive. To do that, firstly the rating scores obtained from one native and one nonnative rater were calculated by taking the mean of the scores given to each NNW became the average score. Then, these scores were compared to the data coming from the questionnaire measuring the social and political attitudes of L2 writers towards English and English speakers.

The first part of the questionnaire measuring the attitudes of the NNWs towards English language, was found highly reliable (Cronbach's Alpha=0.933). The corrected Item-Total Correlations was found positive. The smallest correlation was 0.388, which means that the items in the questionnaire were all necessary. In addition, the same result was obtained with Cronbach's Alpha if item deleted, which means there are no items that increase the reliability when omitted. On the other hand, the grand mean was found 1.82, which means the NNWs answered the questions in the questionnaire referring to "agree" item in general.

The second part of the questionnaire measuring the attitudes of the NNWs towards native speakers of English was composed of 16 questions. The reliability of this section was 0.684 when the question 21 was omitted. This score is statistically quite reliable. The grand mean was found 2.70, which means that there is a positive attitude towards native speakers of English. Therefore, the average scores obtained from this questionnaire were correlated with the rating scores using Pearson Correlation Coefficient, but no statistically significant relation was found ($p>0.05$). Therefore, one can say that having positive attitude towards native speakers of English may not contribute to the writing quality of nonnative writers.

Results for the Research Question 4

The fourth research question investigated whether there is a relation between how long the NNWs read and write daily based on their self report and their writing performance. However, no relation was found according to Pearson Correlation Coefficient ($p>0.05$).

DISCUSSION

The study concluded that some cohesive devices were more preferred than some others for a variety of reasons. This changing variety in the use of cohesive devices could be related to the nature of the data collection methodology because some cohesive devices are peculiar to the conversational data in oral performance. Another reason might be limited knowledge and necessary discourse in which to use such structures. One another could be that they lack the ability to use syntactic and lexical tools to enable them to produce competent written text as also indicated by Hinkel (2008: 160). There are cross linguistic differences in the use of cohesive devices by NWs and NNWs. For example, in this study NNWs resorted more to pronominal rather than other cohesive devices to create textuality between the sentences.

Ellipsis and Substitution

It seems from the results of the narrations that both NNWs and NWs used *here/there/then* substitutions more than the other categories. Similarly, both groups used noun phrase ellipsis more than the other categories. This may indicate that these categories are more easily accessed and they are also functional in establishing cohesion in texts. This similarity in the preference of the same cohesive ties more than the others could give clues on the NNWs' performance.

However, NNWs did not use the other two ellipses at all (predication and clause ellipsis). One of the reasons why even proficient learners hardly employ ellipsis is that the permissible structural omissions are complicated

and therefore the learners need to be trained for the features of the target language. However, native speakers resort to it naturally without thinking about what to omit (Scarcella & Brunak, 1981). It may be difficult for Turkish learners of English on account of the typological differences between Turkish and English. In Turkish, for example verbal ellipsis is produced using the main verb without any complements that follow unlike English, where auxiliary verbs stand for all omitted verb phrase. Therefore, the extent to which ellipsis was used by the NNWs was quite low, indicating poor understanding of their use as cohesive devices whether a noun phrase, a predication or a clause. This finding is supported by the conclusion of McCarthy (2005: 43) that ellipsis within the verbal group may cause greater problems. Hinkel (2008: 159) also report that lexical substitutions as well as ellipsis are not readily accessible even to advanced and trained NNS.

Pronominal and Substitution

Another similarity in the data was that both groups chose to use pronominals to connect the sentences. Pronominals in the form of reference words were abundantly used in both nonnative and native writing samples, which show that they constitute the easiest category that can be used to connect the sentences. This is probably because of the learners' exposure to the common use of pronominal in language learning materials since the very beginning of the learning of English. In addition, Genç (2006) found, in her study on oral narrative discourse, that the use of anaphoric reference forms in the narratives of Turkish participants and native speakers demonstrate two major points: (a) there are no great differences between native speakers' and Turkish participants' narratives in terms of anaphoric reference usage; (b) pronouns are the mostly employed anaphoric reference forms. This study supports the same finding in written narrative discourse, where Turkish NNWs used appropriate anaphoric references quite similar to the way NWs did.

On the other hand, Turkish is a language which, far less than English, requires using subject and object pronouns, which are represented by other linguistic mechanisms such as the obligatory inflection of subject pronoun on the predicate of the sentence. Despite this contrast, they are well aware of the obligation to use pronouns in the text to bind the sentences together grammatically and textually. The NNWs also underuse demonstrative pronouns in their writing sample as cohesive devices. This could be because they belong to the class of determiners and play a prominent role in text cohesion and have indexal, referential, deictic, and experiential functions in written English (Halliday & Hasan, 1976).

Another difficulty for the foreign language learners is that the similarity between the function of substitution and pronominal. However, it should be explicitly instructed that substitutions are used as reference to an indefinite antecedent (Do you need *a pen*? Yes, I need *one*), while pronominal refers to a

definite antecedent (Do you need *the pen*? Yes, I need *it*) (McCarthy, 2005: 46). However, from cross linguistic perspective, in Turkish this contrast does not exist because Turkish is an object drop language, which is determined by the pragmatic factors.

The Definite Article

There was a significant difference between the two groups in terms of using definite article *the*. Though some NNWs seem to be proficient to use this category, these uses were not as effective as it should be. One reason for this limited use is that there is a sharp contrast in the way definiteness is conveyed in both languages. For example, in Turkish definiteness is governed by the word order phenomena, while in English there are forms such as *the*, *this*, *that* such to represent definiteness. Learners from articleless languages such as Turkish may pose productive difficulty even for advanced learners. Dikilitaş and Altay (2011) found that learners at all proficiency levels experience most difficulty in learning and using cultural use of English definite article *the* and show diverse learning performance in learning other uses of this article. Therefore, high proficiency may not guarantee appropriate and accurate use of this article to create cohesion.

Conjunction

Another conclusion is that Turkish NNWs used conjunctions in their narrations quite infrequently. This is in contrast with Hinkel (2008: 159), who indicated that NNW texts overrely on sentence-level conjunctions such as “however”, “therefore”, “similarly” and “then”. The most frequently used conjunction by NNWs is adversative, while it is the temporal conjunctions in NW data. Narrative style writing focuses on the occurrence of events and sub-events in the real life and normally requires using addition and temporal more than the others, which is the case for NWs but not for NNWs. It might then be due to the limited understanding of the functions and meaning of different conjunctions.

Reasons for the Infrequent Use of Ellipsis, Substitution and Some Conjunctions

There might be three reasons for the distinct differences between the NNWs and NWs in the use of certain cohesive devices on account of cross-linguistic differences. First, it could be because of the lack of English language proficiency, more specifically, because NNWs may lack knowledge of what makes a text an English text. This may be partly due to little exposure to or insufficient focused feedback on the ways followed by NWs, thus leading to little knowledge of how NWs connect sentences and create textuality. Therefore, they become a weak language user in being linguistically sufficient to create a text that conveys the information appropriately and accurately as

well as coherently. Second, it could be the language-specific constraints of Turkish that impose on the linguistic preferences of Turkish NNWs. In fact, Turkish language is a pro drop and object drop language, which is governed by syntactic and pragmatic factors. A Turkish learner of English does not have to or cannot use a pronominal because of pragmatic factors where an English NW has to syntactically. Another difficulty arises in ellipsis. To illustrate, English allows the verb phrase to be omitted and to be represented by auxiliary verbs instead if mentioned previously, while Turkish does the same using the verb itself. Finally, these difficulties could also be due to the linguistic knowledge of English they have been offered so far. They may have been instructed by incompetent teachers who had limited discourse knowledge and limited experience in teaching cohesion and coherence.

The Relation between Cohesive Ties and Writing Quality

Witte & Faigley (1981) claim that cohesive relationships may ultimately affect writing quality, while it is also controversial whether a large number of cohesive ties will positively influence writing quality. In fact, this result is supported in this study because no relation was found between the use of cohesive ties and writing quality based on the cohesion-oriented assessment.

CONCLUSION

It turned out in the research that NNWs use a limited variety of cohesive devices in their narrations. They mostly resorted to pronouns and some conjunctions to create cohesion in the text. However, there are other richer and more complex ways of creating textual bonds between sentences through grammatical relations such as ellipsis and substitution. It could however be more difficult to use these in the texts. Ellipsis requires omitting particular piece of information parallel to the previous context, while substitution requires substituting previously mentioned information for grammatical coders such as one, ones etc. Even advanced learners have difficulty in using these grammatically complex cohesive devices.

It seems that NNWs should develop discourse competence to better write in English. Teaching of writing in nonnative settings is quite different from that in native setting because when native speakers of a language start to create a written text, they are already aware of the grammatical relations peculiar to their own language in oral discourse. However, nonnative speakers should be instructed for discourse competence when they start. This does not mean they start from scratch, but they start with knowledge of discourse, only some of which can be found in the target language. Therefore, it seems to be the teachers' job to teach their students these differences that may end up with failures when not made explicit because nonnative learners cannot alone discover many crucial differences between both languages. Another job that

should be undertaken by nonnative teachers is that they should first develop their own knowledge of written discourse in English and understand the natural ways of creating an English text, thereby contributing to the students' knowledge of discourse and writing ability. For example, what is expressed by anaphoric references may be expressed with cataphoric references in the target language appropriately. Teachers should first feel that they are competent enough to instruct the students on the subject in question.

The study found no statistical relation between L1 writing and reading practices and writing quality, but teachers still should always consider this a potential contributive factor to the writing process. The analysis of L1 writing samples showed a partial influence on the writing quality. Those who wrote long and used more content words in L1 were found to be related to the writing success, which also leads us to think that successful L2 writers could be taught and encouraged to write first in L1 and then in L2. This result highlights the need to make L2 learners linguistically competent enough to write in their own languages, which could contribute to L2 writing.

This study also has many classroom implications in the teaching of writing skills. First, nonnative learners should be exposed to authentic texts in different rhetorical types to better perceive how grammatical relations are constructed in a text. In addition, when they produce a text, the teacher should provide focused feedback on the mistakes in grammatical relations between the sentences. Similarly, NNWs of English should be allowed to analyze written conventions in essays written by NWs in order to raise awareness. This also requires a good amount of reading in English. The more they read in the foreign language they learn, the more grammatical and textual features they will observe and possibly put them into use in their own essays.

Turkish nonnative learners of English should be taught substitution and ellipsis in a way that they see them as cohesive devices that enhance the quality of text. They should also be provided with instruction about how these cohesive devices are realized in English as different from Turkish to eliminate the negative L1 interference.

Limitations

The study collected data based on the written discourse from NNWs, expecting that this could reveal the cohesive devices they choose to use in their narrations. However, the uses of cohesive devices vary in the mode of communication. Some cohesive devices are used in verbal communication while some others are in written communication. Therefore, data could have been collected from oral performances of NNWs to provide better picture of the ways cohesive devices are used by NNWs. Another limitation is the limited number of the raters judging about the cohesion quality of the sample writings. More raters could yield a more reliable result of the use of cohesive devices. Further, the study did not investigate the fifth cohesive device

described by Halliday & Hasan (1976), the lexical cohesion. The main reason for excluding this category is that its production by writers considerably depends on the quality and competence of the vocabulary development. And the vocabulary potential of each nonnative learner may vary remarkably depending on many differing factors. The relations achieved at grammar and discourse interface could better be described when this category is excluded. However, when the individual factors are controlled, lexical cohesion could also be studied.

Further Research

In investigating nonnative learners' corpus, only written discourse may not be adequate in describing the linguistic features of learners. The obtained data from written discourse should be complemented with analysis of oral discourse as well as written discourse for the reason that the learners use both modes-writing and speaking- in expressing themselves. Their preferences in different modes of communication are to be made explicit, which may demonstrate the ways nonnative speakers use textual features in their communication. Writing alone seems to be the half of the whole picture.

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