WRITING A RESEARCH PAPER IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE: A CASE STUDY OF CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES

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Abstract

Writing a research paper in English as a foreign language for the first time is a challenging task for many international doctoral students. This study explores the challenges experienced and strategies utilized during the academic socialization process through research paper writing and within the framework of sociocultural theory. The results indicate that limited experience in research paper writing and personal writing style with cultural influence are the most challenging aspects. The utilized strategies suggest that dialog within the academic community is crucial for the success of graduate students.

Keywords: *Academic writing, Challenges, Strategies, Academic socialization, Dialog.*

YABANCI DİLDE MAKALE YAZIMI: GÜÇLÜKLER VE STRATEJİLERİN DURUM ÇALIŞMASI

Özet

Birçok uluslar arası öğrenci için ilk defa yabancı dilde (İngilizce) makale yazmak zorlu bir iştir. Bu çalışma, sosyo-kültürel teori çerçevesinde makale yazma yoluyla akademik sosyalleşme sürecinde karşılaşılan zorlukları ve kullanılan stratejileri incelemektedir. Bulgular göstermiştir ki makale yazmadaki sınırlı deneyim ve kişisel yazma tarzı ile kültürel tesir en zorlayıcı yönleri oluşturmaktadır. Kullanılan stratejiler akademik camiada diyalogun lisansüstü öğrenciler için çok önemli olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Akademik yazım, Zorluklar, Stratejiler, Akademik sosyalleşme, Diyalog.*

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WRITING A RESEARCH PAPER IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE: A CASE STUDY OF CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES

1. INTRODUCTION

There are many studies done to proffer suggestions as an answer to various questions second (L2) and/or foreign language (FL) researchers and L2/FL writing teachers have. Among those questions are how second/foreign language writing is acquired (e.g., Harklau, 2002), how academic writing skills develop (e.g., Aimes, 2001; Armengol-Castells, 2001), what role assessment and feedback have in skill development in L2/FL writing (e.g., Ferris, 2004; Goldstein, 2004), how much role culture and cultural thought patterns play in the success of second/foreign language writers (e.g., Kaplan, 1966; Kubota, 1998), and what perspectives, expectations, and goals second/foreign language learners, L2/FL writing teachers, and content course faculty have and share (e.g., Basturkmen & Lewis, 2002). There are also studies that reveal the difficulties international students at undergraduate and/or graduate levels have to deal with while writing papers required for content classes (e.g., Braine, 2002; Spack, 1997) and at PhD level writing for publication (e.g., Gosden, 1996) and/or dissertation (e.g., Cadman, 1997; Dong, 1998). Moreover, there are studies carried out on multilingual scholars and their struggle to publish in English to get recognized in their fields (e.g., Curry & Lillis, 2004, 2006; Flowerdew, 1999).

However, there is a missing link in L2/FL academic writing research as no attention has been paid to the process an L2/FL doctoral student goes through when he is writing a research paper in the second/foreign language *for the first time*. There is a need to understand the process and reveal insights which will help L2/FL graduate students and bilingual/multilingual scholars become better writers in the second/foreign language. There is also need to help L2/FL teachers modify their advanced academic writing classes as well as to guide researchers of the field of L2/FL education for further research. Thus, the purpose of this study is to describe the process an L2/FL doctoral student goes through while writing a research paper in the L2/FL by attempting to present a more complete and thorough picture of the nature of advanced L2/FL writing. The difficulties encountered and strategies applied during this process are the main focus of this paper.

The study aims to fill an important gap in the literature by addressing the following research questions: What is the process an L2/FL doctoral student goes through when he is writing a research paper in English as a foreign language? What are, if any, the challenges he experiences during this process? What are, if any, the strategies he makes use of when he encounters those challenges?

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are three key concepts which underlie the theoretical framework for this study: advancedness in second/foreign language learning/acquisition, academic socialization, and intertextuality.

Shohamy (2006) asserts that "There are multiple ways to 'know' and a variety of ways of being an 'advanced' language user; their totality represents the richness and complexity of language. These multiple ways of languaging and, therefore, of knowing are embedded in diverse contexts and goals … which highlight the close interdependency between language and content, especially when both are defined and geared to local and immediate needs of specific populations" (p. 194). Thus, "advancedness" in FL learning can be defined as being able to communicate, in either written or spoken form, accurately and appropriately with specific participants in a given context.

Acquisition of FL does not stop even at the very advanced levels as the L2/FL learners/users keep moving into different contexts which require them to learn new communication patterns and genres, acquire rules of those genres, and communicate accordingly. Academic socialization, socialization *into* language and *through* language within a specific academic discipline, is one of the challenging steps of advancedness in L2/FL. Ivanic (2004) defines academic socialization as a process during which "[the] students need to learn the specific characteristics of academic writing and of the disciplinary culture into which they are entering" (p. 222). Thus, it is clear that it is a must for the L2/FL doctoral students to go through this process and become socialized in their academic community if they wish to succeed in their programs.

Spack (1988) states that "to learn to write in any discipline, students must become immersed in the subject matter; this is accomplished through reading, lectures, seminars, and so on. They learn by participating in the field, by doing, by sharing, and by talking about it with those who know more" (p. 40). It is clear that to reach the goal, the students need to be in dialog with all the agents available to them in their academic community: their instructors, peers, and academic texts (such as books and journal articles). Only by engaging in a dialog with those agents and ourselves, we learn and have our own voices. It is through dialog and intertextuality in Bakhtinian theory which shapes the framework of this case study as Bakhtin "places the individual firmly within a social context" with all the agents (Freedman & Ball, 2004, p. 5) and asserts that no individual voice in any text is meaningful without its history and present. In the case of advanced academic writing in second/foreign language which is the focus of this study, Braxley (2005) interprets Bakhtinian dialog and intertextuality as:

> "In the genres of academic writing, especially in academic writing for publication in journals, dialogue is an essential part of the process a writer goes through to write an article. Often it is the author's reading

of previous research that provides the impetus for conducting new research. Moreover, in writing an article, the author will almost certainly review the literature and, by doing so, will allow others to speak through his or her work and will add his or her voice to theirs, thereby adding another link to the chain. Even the format of the typical research article has a kind of internal dialogism built into it"
(p. 13)

Thus, in this case study, through a deeper understanding of what kind of difficulties the participant encounters while writing his research paper, how he engages in dialog with the agents in his academic context and thus what strategies he uses to overcome those difficulties will be clearly pictured.

3. CULTURAL FRAMEWORK

Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) define culture as "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others". It consists of learned values (e.g. notions of modesty), patterns of behavior (e.g. gestures), and meanings (e.g. concept of beauty) which are shared by members of one group and used as a guide to organize lives. The culture that one individual represents is influenced by a number of factors like family background, environment (the area or the city he was born in and raised), friendships, education, etc.; that is, all the relationships (with people, places, institutions, etc.) he has gone through and had throughout his life.

Cultures are identified by and examined under different dimensions which can be put into table as follows:

Dimension	One Extreme	The Other Extreme
Context (The degree to which communication is explicit and verbal or implicit and nonverbal)	Low Context Directness and freedom of speech are core values.	High Context Indirectness and silence are core values.
Identity (The degree the society reinforces individual or collective achievement and interpersonal relationships)	Individualism Individual freedom is the core value.	Collectivism Group harmony is the core value.
Power Distance (The degree of equality or inequality between people in the country or society)	Low Power Distance People's equality is the core value.	High Power Distance Respect for the status is the core value.
Gender (The degree of traditional gender	Femininity Caring for others is the core	Masculinity Material success is the core value.

role of achievement, control, and power)	value.	
Uncertainty (The degree of avoidance or tolerance of uncertainty and ambiguity within the society)	Uncertainty Avoidance Core value is the certainty: what is different is dangerous.	Uncertainty Tolerance Core value is exploration: what is different causes curiosity.
Immediacy (The degree of closeness, intimacy, and availability for communication)	Low Contact Core value is that public and body contacts are not comfortable.	High Contact Core value is that body contacts are signals for friendliness and communication.

Adopted and modified from: Samovar, Porter, & McDaniel (2006, p. 250-266)

According to Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), Turkish culture is a collectivist (1) and feminine culture (2) which has high power distance (3) and strong uncertainty avoidance (4) angles. Compared and contrasted with the descriptions of "context" and "immediacy" dimensions, it can be affirmed that Turkish culture is also a high-context and high contact culture. However, we see that US culture is highly individualistic and masculine which has low power distance and weak uncertainty avoidance angles. US culture also falls into the category of low context cultures where direct communication is preferred and valued. As seen, Turkish culture and American culture is quite different from each other. These dimensional differences should be reflected in education and styles in writing as well.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

In her grounded theory study, Braxley (2005) conducted interviews with five Asian graduate students studying at a US university to reveal the problems of academic writing in English as a second language and to determine how these students struggle to master the academic genre through dialog with their friends, tutors and instructors, and academic texts using a Bakhtinian framework. The first difficulty those international students faced is their lack of familiarity with the conventions of academic writing. In addition, some of the participants who were taught how to write academically in their home countries reported differences between what they were taught and what was expected from them here at a US university. Thus, they sought help from friends, writing tutors and/or instructors, and academic texts to meet the writing demands of their degree programs.

In their case study of four international graduate students who struggle to learn to write according to the requirements of their academic disciplines during their first year of studies at a US university, Angelova and Riazantseva (1999) found out that the problems their participants were experiencing and their coping strategies were multiple. The difficulties were classified as attitudinal problems (e.g., expectations), cognitive problems (e.g., differences in rhetorical style, academic register), social problems (e.g., interaction with professors), and other problems such

as computer use and mechanics. They suggest that problems should be identified and treated earlier in the international students' studies by addressing them more directly and offering support.

Li (2007) offers a case study of a non-native English speaker and a 3rd year PhD student of chemistry studying in a non-Anglophone context (i.e., China) who attempts to write for publication in English-medium journals. The study explores how the participant engages in dialog with the local research community and global specialist research community to get his paper published. The study shows that the participant's key strategy was his engagement with the published articles in his field while he was writing his own paper.

In short, a thorough and extensive literature review suggests that most of the studies conducted on advanced levels of academic writing in L2/FL focus on the transition from ESL/EFL courses to undergraduate studies or from undergraduate level studies in the home country to graduate level studies at North American universities. However, there is still lack of thorough understanding of the process of academic writing and/or academic socialization at the doctoral level. For example, there is no research done to understand the process during which an L2/FL doctoral student writes a research paper in the second/foreign language *for the first time*.

This study is unique in three ways: 1) it focuses on one single process (i.e., writing a research paper in the second/foreign language), 2) this process is being experienced for the first time by the participant and, 3) it is a case study which offers an in-depth understanding.

5. METHODOLOGY

It is argued in this study that writing a research paper for the first time during the academic socialization process is a very challenging task for an L2/FL doctoral student and that the case should be presented thoroughly to draw a more complete picture of advanced academic writing in L2/FL. Thus, this study was conducted as a case study so that "an in-depth description and analysis of" the case could be developed and "an in-depth understanding" could be provided (Creswell, 2007, p. 78).

5.1. Participant and/or Participants

It was important for the purposes of this study to find a participant who did not have much experience in conducting research projects and writing research papers. Thus, the primary participant in this study, whom I call Efe, was an international (Turkish) doctoral student who was studying at a US university and who was in the first year of the doctoral program. It is important to note here that this was the first time for Efe to take a research methods course, to conduct a small-scale research project, and to write a research paper.

The secondary participants' voices reported in this account are those of his senior peer, Sedef, to whom Efe extensively consulted for guidance and feedback and the instructor of the course, Dr. Z, in whose class Efe was enrolled in.

5.2. Site and Sociocultural Context

The site for the research was a qualitative research course taken by the participant during spring 2008 semester at a US university.

6. DATA COLLECTION

The main sources of the data for this study are a variety of documents provided by the participant and interviews that I conducted with him. The documents include the course syllabus, eleven weekly reflections on the required readings, one critique assignment, one research proposal, written feedback by the instructor on the critique assignment and research proposal, five observation and interview reports, thirty-six pages of MSN messenger messages between the participant and a senior student he extensively asks for help and guidance, and five drafts and final version of his research paper.

Interviews were conducted before and after Efe started writing his paper as it was aimed to picture the difficulties he was encountering and the strategies he was applying to overcome those.

7. DATA ANALYSIS

The interviews were audio-taped and transcribed on the same day when the interview took place. What was said by the participant was transcribed word by word including the pauses, hesitations, coughs, or laughs. Nothing was excluded or changed (e.g., grammatical inaccuracies).

Documents provided by the participant and interview transcripts were read several times over and over again to cluster challenges and strategies under common headings. The process resembles a spiral model (Creswell, 2007, p. 151). Excerpts from documents and interviews were underlined, highlighted, annotated, cross-checked, and categorized according to those clusters.

In order to ensure credibility of the findings of this study, I applied member-checking technique (Ely, 1991). I asked my participant to go through my annotated notes on data collected and to tell me if the findings I identified were accurate or not. Fortunately, he confirmed the findings.

8. FINDINGS:

Writing a research paper in L2/FL for the first time by an L2/FL doctoral student might be an exciting but also a very challenging phase of academic socialization. Efe voices his excitement by indicating the importance of his first experience of writing a research paper as:

> I will be very careful with this paper because it is not like the [Dr. A]'s class paper or the other one.. this is the one that should be academic. This should be the one that we should prepare it in a way that we can publish it. So I really need to think about what I am going to write, how I am going to organize my ideas.. (Interview#1, L141-145)

He is aware of what is expected from him: a paper which is academic and which is publishable as it was indicated clearly in the course syllabus. Although excited, Efe was also challenged during the process. The major challenges he was experiencing were two: His limited experience in writing a research paper in the second/foreign language and his writing style which was defined as "wordy, unclear, and repetitive" by his instructors.

Difficulty 1: Efe's limited experience in writing a research paper in the second/foreign language challenged him in two specific areas: organization and content of his paper.

> The thing that I am confused here is the order of the steps. According to [the author] it goes like The Research Topic, Review of Literature, Theoretical Context, … Don't you think the research question should come before? (WReflection#2)

Efe was not sure about the order of the sections that he should follow in his paper. Thus, he raised the question on the discussion board in his second weekly reflection before he started writing his paper. The second difficulty for him to overcome was to decide what to include under each section as content.

> I am worried about the lay out of the paper. Like what to include under each topic like what to include under findings, what to include under conclusions. I am not clear about them … (Interview#1, L60-64)

This difficulty was also voiced clearly when Efe asked for guidance from Sedef. Cross-checking with the messenger messages between Efe and Sedef proves his difficulty as he was asking such questions as "What do you talk about in introduction/under data analysis?" and "What is the difference between findings and discussion?" It is clear that deciding what to include and talk about under each section and organizing the sections in an order appropriate to his academic discipline were one of the two main challenges. However, he could find ways of overcoming the difficulty caused by his limited experience in writing a research paper.

Strategy 1: One of the most frequent strategies Efe was applying to overcome the first difficulty mentioned above was referring to the articles published in the field.

> I wasn't.. sure about the contents, what to put under each setting but then .. during while I was writing my paper, I was going back and forth between different articles and try to make sure what they put under their headings so.. that I.. I.. organized my paper in that format. I'm.. I'm writing my paper and those articles that I read helped me to be.. more.. sure about the content.. and the format (Interview#4, L24-29)

Here, Efe clearly explains how he makes use of the academic texts as a source of reference and sample model for the construction of his paper in terms of content and organization. Whenever he could not decide how to present his ideas and findings under each section or how to order those sections, he would go back and forth between the journal articles and his own paper and thus overcome the challenge.

Strategy 2: Whenever he could not find answers he was seeking for in the academic texts, Efe was consulting with Sedef and asking for guidance and feedback. The MSN messages between Sedef and Efe show how Sedef gives explicit feedback and helps him to overcome the difficulty he was experiencing with the order of the sections in a qualitative research paper and the content of each section. When cross-checked with the drafts and especially the final version of Efe's paper, it is seen that he actually used the feedback he received from Sedef. He also confirms by saying:

> She gave me very useful feedback and she.. is more qualified than me. ... And.. she knew how to include, what to include under each.. topic. So.. like the feedback I got from her changed the way I wrote (Interview#4, L107-110)

Strategy 3: The third strategy Efe was applying was to use the feedback he got from his instructor. Dr. Z gave him explicit and clear written feedback on his critique assignment and research proposal but Efe did not receive feedback on his research paper much as the students were not required to submit drafts of the final research paper. Instead, Dr. Z gave Efe oral feedback after his class presentation.

> ... also I did my presentation yesterday and I presented mostly my findings. She told me she liked my findings and she gave me some feedback which I.. uhm.. couldn't quite understand which was kind of.. vague.. and I wasn't quite sure what she wanted me to do. … Also she wanted me to look at the.. dynamics ... I don't know what she means by dynamics but she wants me

> to look at the interaction between the peers, between the participant and the teacher and how these dynamics affect his participation. … I will just add some paragraphs.. ... I will just try to.. make it as she wanted me to do.. (Interview#4, L50-80)

Efe was not quite sure about what Dr. Z suggested him to look for and include in his paper as he thinks her feedback was "kind of vague". However, he still took Dr. Z's feedback seriously and included subsections in his paper as suggested. It is seen that he added sections titled "effect of teacher-peer relations in classroom participation" and "strategy applied to deal with classroom participation difficulties" as suggested by Dr. Z.

Difficulty 2: The second major challenge Efe experienced while he was writing his research paper in the second/foreign language was his writing style which was characterized as "wordy, unclear, and repetitive" by his instructor/s:

> Comment [XCW4]: I'd also suggest that you make efforts to write in a clean/concise way. You current writing is very wordy and long-winded. (Research Proposal)

> Comment [XCW5]: This paragraph is way too long with too many ideas. Consider breaking into several sections. (Critique Assignment)

The comments above indicate that Efe's writing style does not match the conventions of advanced academic writing and the expectations of his instructor who stands as an expert in the field. Efe was aware of his problem as he says:

> My instructors.. tell me that my writing style is very wordy which means I use a lot of words ... I mean I tempt to write in beautiful and complex like sentences but which is not something … they prefer … (Interview#1, L105-108)

Although he knows that his writing style is a challenging factor while he is writing his research paper in the second/foreign language, he also knows that it is not something he can change easily as it may be culturally inherited (Kaplan, 1966). Efe says:

> I think it can be related to being a Turkish student because you know.. our culture is.. not as direct as American culture. And writing complex sentences means being very indirect. … when I wrote long papers.. like using different words and.. you know using a beautiful language.. I would always.. you

know.. be praised by my teachers. Maybe that's something what I got used to in my country but it's not something appropriate here. You should be clear … give the best of your ideas in the shortest way possible.. (Interview #4, L-138-148)

The difference between what was preferred in terms of writing in his culture and what was actually expected of him in the US context challenged Efe. While his writing style was "praised" in Turkiye, he was warned and criticized in the US by his instructors.

Clearly, Efe needed help to overcome this difficulty caused by his writing style and thus he chose to apply three different strategies.

Strategy 1: A cross-check between Sedef's written feedback on the third draft, the MSN messages where Sedef and Efe discuss her feedback in detail, and changes done by Efe afterwards in the fourth draft proves that Efe's major strategy was to consult Sedef and ask for feedback on his drafts. On the top of page 1 of the third draft, Sedef writes as feedback:

➢ Giriş paragrafları bana çok uzun geldi. … biraz daha kısa tutarsan daha iyi olur bence. *(I think introductory paragraphs [of each section] are too long. ... it would be better if you could shorten [those])*

➢ Subheadingler koyarsan sanki daha iyi olur. Okumayı ve takip etmeyi kolaylaştırır bence. Daha akıcı ve clear olur. *(I think it would be better if you have subheadings. It would be easier to read and follow. It would be smooth and clear)*

The following passages give samples of Sedef's feedback (written in bold) on the third draft. It shows that she not only suggests subheadings or starting a new paragraph but also corrects grammar and spelling mistakes and suggests different choices of words.

Excerpt 1 (page 4): As seen above, before anyone tells him that he has written wrong, he sees it and erases the word and waits for a help. **(develop your interpretation to directly connect it to classroom participation)**

(Consider beginning a new paragraph here as you are going to give another claim and evidence below) This pattern of behavior was observed in both social studies and math class a lot.

Excerpt 2 (page 19): **Subheading.** … While Marcia was explaining a problem and giving hints, she was

using these mathematical expressions **and** terminologies ...

Moreover, the excerpt below that is a part of MSN messages pictures the discussion on Sedef's feedback on both third and fourth drafts.

Efe	You said shorten the introductory paragraphs
Efe	Are they too long
Efe	Can I not give claims in introductory paragraphs
Sedef	For me they were too long
Sedef	It feels like you loaded everything at the beginning and there is no need to read further
Sedef	No, what I wanted to say about claims was: if there is a strong claim you can use later, why waste it in introductory [paragraph]
Efe	Ok but each paragraph has a claim
Efe	So like every paragraph has a claim
Sedef	I know
Sedef	Anything else
Efe	… I will do something according to [what you wrote]
Efe	I will use subheadings
Efe	… What you wrote is very true

Again, she revises everything in detail: from paragraphs to individual sentences, from headings to word choice, and even the use of APA style.

Strategy 2: The second strategy for Efe to use to overcome the difficulty caused by his writing style was to use the feedback he got from his instructor. The written feedback provided by Dr. Z made Efe realize what he needed to do:

> She just told me I am writing hugely and what I need
> to do is to separate them into paragraphs so that it
> could be smooth and understandable. ... (Interview#4,
> L162-168)

Efe is aware of the fact that his instructor asks him to write in a more clear and concise way. Thus, he tries hard to meet Dr. Z's and thus the field's expectations in advanced academic writing. He was very concerned about the feedback he got from Dr. Z and wanted to please her with his writing style.

Strategy 3: The third strategy for Efe to follow was revising and writing multiple drafts. He wrote five different drafts, although not required, before he came up with the final version of his paper. He spent about a whole month working on only this paper. When I asked him why he wrote multiple drafts, Efe said:

> Revising and writing drafts.. yeah.. like writing a lot of
> drafts is a strategy to make good paper so.. that's
> basically a strategy.. (Interview#4, 210-211)

The final version of his paper suggests that all three strategies Efe used to overcome the difficulty caused by his "wordy, unclear, and repetitive" writing style were very helpful for him.

9. DISCUSSION

Research suggests that international graduate students experience challenges while they are trying to adapt the conventions of and expectations in their academic disciplines. Writing in L2/FL either as a requirement of graduate courses and/or degree conferrals or for publication is one but a crucially important aspect of those challenges. Thus, this study aimed to understand the process of writing a research paper for the first time by an L2/FL doctoral student to reveal the difficulties encountered and strategies applied and help to improve the quality of instruction not only in advanced academic writing classes but also in research methods courses offered in PhD programs.

The findings of this study were enlightening in that it revealed the most challenging difficulties encountered by an L2/FL doctoral student and also the strategies he used to overcome those. The first major difficulty was having a limited experience in writing a research paper. He was challenged by issues of content and organization of his paper. Greenleaf and Katz (2004) state that "Individuals must wrestle, in appropriating language that is inevitably preshaped by prior histories and ideologies, to convey their own meanings and nuances through and against the meanings and forms of utterances available to them" (p. 173). What Efe needed to do is to appropriate the voices of others in his academic community and to learn how to organize his paper and arrange its content.

He followed three strategies to compensate for his limited experience. The most frequent one was using the articles published in the field as a reference and a

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sample model for his paper. Bazerman (2004) suggests that "texts provided a structure of role relationships that corresponded to disciplinary identities and that provided pathways for development of disciplinary forms of thought" (p. 61) which leads us to improve our scientific language in our writing and appropriate our style with the authoritative discourse of our academic discipline (Braxley, 2005) both in content and form.

The second mostly applied strategy was consulting to a senior student and asking for her feedback and guidance. Morson (2004) suggests that "we not only learn, we also learn to learn, and we learn to learn best when we engage in a dialogue with others and ourselves" (p. 331). Efe was engaging in a dialog with Sedef and he was learning how to organize his paper according to the conventions of his academic discipline and how to own his voice in content of his paper.

The third strategy was using the feedback provided by the instructor of the course. Dr. Z was the voice of the authority and thus her expectations were to be met. Orr (2005) states that "what one says, and how one writes, link directly to one's epistemological, ideological fiber, fiber that all the while is socially situated" (p. 56). The fiber for Efe was Dr. Z's feedback. That's why he changed the content of his paper according to the instructor's comments and added new sections in his final draft.

The second major challenge for Efe was his own writing style which was defined as "wordy, unclear, and repetitive" by his instructors. While he was praised for using a beautiful and complex style in his culture, he was warned and criticized for not being clear and concise enough in the US context. Efe realized the difference between expectations in academic writing in two cultures (Kaplan, 1966) and tried to adapt to the conventions of the new rhetorical style.

Hyland (2003) states that "What is considered good writing, appropriate engagement, convincing argument, effective persuasion, and creative expression does not depend on mastery of universal processes, but varies from one community context to the next" (p. 25). Realizing the fact, Efe chose to consult Sedef again to overcome the challenge caused by his personal writing style. Sedef changed the way he wrote as she provided very clear and explicit feedback not only on content and organization and presentation of ideas but also on grammar, spelling, and word choice.

Dr. Z's feedback was also useful for him to avoid writing "huge" paragraphs filled with so many ideas. Efe was careful to divide ideas clearly into different paragraphs and to be reader friendly as suggested by his instructor.

The last strategy for Efe to write in a clear style was writing multiple drafts and revising. He also wrote five different drafts based on all the feedback and help he got from various sources before he came up with the final version of his paper.

This study extensively and clearly reveals the difficulties encountered and strategies applied by an L2/FL doctoral student who, for the first time, wrote a research paper. This study fills an important gap in the literature of second/foreign language writing as its focus is on one unique process of academic socialization which is writing a research paper. Moreover, the findings are more valuable and insightful as the process observed in this study was experienced by the participant for the first time. They are also significant as they were detailed through triangulation and by following a case study approach. These all led to important implications.

10. IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

It is very clear that dialog within the academic community is very important for L2/FL doctoral students to adapt to the rules and requirements of their academic discipline. The more dialog is utilized and facilitated, the more helpful it is for the L2/FL doctoral students to overcome the difficulties they encounter during the process. As seen above, the dialog between Efe and Sedef changed the way Efe wrote his paper and helped him to come up with a better one. Thus, L2/FL doctoral students should be encouraged to form support groups (Ely et al., 1991) with their peers and/or senior students and help each other through dialog.

It may not be always possible for the instructors of doctoral research methods courses to spare ample amount of time to facilitate dialog within their classes or to meet individual needs' of students. Still, they need to, at least, make use of small group works so that students can hear different perspectives and learn from each other by sharing experiences. Or they can encourage the use of online discussion board to seek for guidance and feedback from peers.

Research suggests that L2/FL doctoral students mostly use articles and other academic texts as a resource for help when they need guidance. However, it is clear from the findings of this study that the most powerful source of help is to engage in dialog with someone who knows more (i. e., senior student in this case). The important point is, though, the clarity and explicitness of feedback and help provided in these dialogic discussions. For example, Efe could easily use the explicit feedback he received from Sedef but he struggled to figure out what was expected from him by his instructor as her feedback was vague. Thus, instructors should pay special attention to the feedback they provide to their L2/FL doctoral students and to try to be as clear and explicit as possible.

As experience makes everything better, more research methods courses should be provided by PhD programs. Thus, L2/FL doctoral students could gain more experience and knowledge, become better researchers and writers in the second/foreign language, and get more skilled for publication on the multinational level.

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