

Chapter 2

From Error Analysis to Effective Writing Outputs: An EAP Process-Oriented and Social-Constructivist Perspective

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This chapter investigates the overlap between error analysis, process-oriented writing, and a social constructivist approach to teaching and their effects on foreign language technical writing. The study is significant for its unique emphasis on the coalescence of these three domains, which is natural yet rare in research. Data collection tools included interviews, document analysis, and random participant observation. Error analysis was also used as a methodological approach to examine longitudinal data from a cohort of B1-level English language learners. The initial technical writing work revealed a failure to adopt the nature, structure, and content of technical writing. Yet, later-produced works exhibited better development over time after the interventions, which were full of specific strategies. By validating the synergy in error correction between process writing, which clears clouded minds with its precise step-by-step layout, and social constructivism, which helps generate meaning and cooperate, the study concludes the necessity of such integration into technical writing classes.

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INTRODUCTION

When learning a new language, progress might be quick or sluggish, challenging or simple, depending on a variety of factors (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017; Selinker, 1972). One of the most challenging aspects of learning a language is developing proficient writing skills, which is more of a process than a quick one-time action (Hyland, 2003; Sarwat et al., 2021). Because writing is used as the major form of evaluation from primary school through graduate studies, this skill is significantly crucial. Besides, writing, according to Berninger and Winn (2006), is an intellectual struggle that involves testing memory, thinking about ideas (cognitive), communicating them (linguistic), and acting in a confidential way (psychological), and therefore necessitates multiple steps before ideas are put down on paper (or digital platforms) in a meaningful and coherent way (Galbraith, 2012).

Undoubtedly, students in higher education must have strong writing abilities since their written work accounts for a significant portion of their overall grades, which leads us to address English in academic contexts (Sağlamel & Aydoğdu, 2021). English for academic purposes (EAP) emerged from the larger field of English for specific purposes (ESP) and is characterized by its emphasis on teaching English to support those studying or researching in English, primarily in higher education (Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002). EAP and ESP may be distinguished from other studies in English by their strong emphasis on the need to recognize and resolve student concerns related to academic work (Rao, 2020). Among the four macro-skills within the scope of EAP that students need is perhaps writing, given the faculty's high demand on students as part of the learning and assessment process (Flowerdew, 2016). To convey messages within this challenging academic context, foreign language (L2) learners should take into consideration content, organization, originality, fluency, accuracy, and the utilization of discursive rhetorical forms and style, which takes the lead over other components of writing (Richards & Renandya, 2002; Saito & Hanzawa, 2018). Thus, any help in the improvement of technical writing tasks is much appreciated given the difficulties in comprehending the produced works and creating effective outputs. Technical writing is getting more and more important to businesses, and skilled writers are in high demand (Priya & Divya, 2016). A company that keeps useful documentation sees more sales, more trust from customers, more value added to the product, and less time spent on product support. Without clear, precise writing that clearly sets out the product's specifications and how to use it, it can become, at best, useless and, at worst, dangerous. Thus, technical writing courses should deliver products and processes as a frame of reference (Larissa & Valeria, 2019).

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