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BOOK REVIEW: TECHNOLOGY IN SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING: ADVANCES IN COMPOSING, TRANSLATION, WRITING PEDAGOGY AND DATA-DRIVEN LEARNING



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Abstract
This book provides a comprehensive exploration of the integration of technology in second language (L2) writing instruction. It examines the evolution of technology's role in L2 learning, particularly in writing, where individual practice is crucial. The book consists of 11 chapters encompassing research and development reports on the application of technology, especially machine translation (MT), in the L2 writing learning process. While 90% of the content focuses on research results, a conceptual review in one chapter highlights the limitations of MT in English as a foreign language (EFL) writing. The book caters to L2 teachers and language learning researchers, offering valuable insights into using MT and wiki writing as effective learning instruments. Additionally, it presents novel strategies, such as using Wikipedia to hone critical thinking skills, and introduces handwriting automation for L2 writing assessment. Despite its merits, the book's structure, content balance, and limited readership accessibility are areas requiring improvement. Nonetheless, its research findings and practical implications make it a valuable resource for L2 educators seeking to harness technology in writing instruction.

Keywords: EFL writing, L2 writing, machine translation, second language learning, technology

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The use of technology has been penetrating second language (L2) learning in many ways. At first, technology in L2 learning played a passive role, but in its development, technology has become very massively used and, let's say, difficult to avoid. In the L2 learning process, especially writing learning, the intense use of technology is justified because the writing process is carried out individually. The need for instruments in writing, such as search engines, translation engines, grammar checkers, and plagiarism checkers, can be met by using technology.

This book is a summary of the phenomenon of teaching writing in L2 in the context of using technology. The composition of this book consists of 11 chapters which include; 1) Introduction: advances in writing technology over eons; 2) Interactive academic EFL writing assisted by GT for Chinese non-English major students; 3) The use of Google Translate and complementary resources by Chinese students: a case study writing in Catalan; 4) Using machine translation in EFL writing: a scoping review; 5) Repeated academic writing with synchronous and asynchronous teacher electronic feedback: how are macro and micro aspects affected?: 6) Wiki writing in medicine and students' perception: the case of an English-in-the-Discipline course in Hong Kong; 7) Multimodal resemiotization: examining one L2 writer's interactions with equity videos; 8) The dialogical conception of beginning L2 writing via social networking and telecollaboration; 9) Examining directness with corpus tools in Iraqi EFL writing; 10) L2 handwritten assignments for automated writing evaluation: a text recognition study; and 11) Using computer keystroke logging in the second language composition.

This book is a collection of research results that focus on the role of technology in learning L2 writing. In short, the composition of this book consists mostly of research and development reports on the use of technology in learning L2 writing and one chapter that contains conceptual reviews. Chapter one is an introduction to the contents of the book, which begins with the history of the development of machine translation (MT) since the 1950s. Chapter four of this book is a conceptual review of the limitations of using MT in EFL writing. The other parts of the book are reports or results of research and development on the application of technology, especially MT, in the L2 writing learning process.

Comparison of the percentage composition of this book is 90% research results, and 10% is a theoretical study in the context of limitations on the use of MT. This shows that research with a focus on MT is still being carried out and developed simultaneously by teachers and researchers. One of the main contributing factors is that MT is an artificial intelligence (AI) product based on an algorithm, so there are still many deficiencies, and it requires refinement to achieve perfect translation (p. 29). Therefore, the application of MT needs to be continuously researched and tested so that it can synchronize and accelerate with the human neural system, which performs the mental translation process (p. 156). On the conceptual study side, the composition of the book's contents, which is still very minimal, is proof that, theoretically, MT still has a very large opportunity to be reviewed both in terms of implementation and conceptual basis. Until now, the theoretical basis of translation is mostly still referred to the interference of L1 to the use of L2 (p. 10), even though it is clear that the use of MT is a multidisciplinary phenomenon that must have, at the very least, theoretical references such as concepts of communication, language learning, and computational language.

Based on the composition of the content, this book is implicitly intended for readers among L2 teachers and language learning researchers. Teachers will be greatly assisted by the material presented in this book, especially in selecting and using L2 writing learning instruments. In this book, it is found that two assisting instruments that are highly recommended for teachers to use in teaching L2 writing are MT and wiki writing. Until now, even though technology has developed and become friendly in education, the use of MT is still considered a 'dishonesty' in the learning process (Correa, 2011). The teacher does not permit dishonesty in the L2 writing process for various reasons, the most dominant of which is that MT will make students tend to be independent in constructing writing in L2. The general opinion of these teachers cannot be blamed either. On the contrary, it must be proven by systematic and continuous scientific studies that MT can be used legally by students, and its use can be synchronized with integrated processes, materials, strategies, and other L2 writing learning models. This book presents various research results with a focus on the use of MT, which is morally permissible in L2 writing lessons, to answer teachers' concerns regarding the use of technology that is considered unfriendly. Various research results on the application of MT in L2 writing learning also guide teachers on how to use MT and technically synchronize it with curriculum settings and make necessary adjustments such as student conditions, pedagogical abilities (p. 45; 63), and accessibility (p. 45; 82).

Second, chapter six of this book is one of the new findings in L2 writing learning strategies. This chapter contains the results of research on the use of Wikipedia as a learning medium that aims to hone students' sense of critique by countering the sources and accuracy of the information contained therein. The L2 writing learning method illustrates that the sources of information presented by technology are not always accurate and credible. Therefore, it is necessary to confirm and test the true content of the information in a conventional way that involves students' pedagogical abilities (p. 83-86). This part of the book is very useful for teachers in understanding the limitations of the information source technology used so that it can be used as an L2 writing learning strategy. Apart from being a variation, this strategy is also very appropriate for honing students' critical thinking skills in using technology in the learning process. The information received is filtered, confirmed, and revised if irregularities are found. This finding is a contribution to language learning, especially in L2 writing.

Third, there is an element of novelty in this book, which is considered a contribution to the L2 writing assessment and can be used as an option in the L2 writing assessment. Chapter 10 of this book contains the role of handwriting in the learning process and assessment of L2 writing. The author of this section conveys the results of his research that handwriting contributes to students' comprehensive understanding of the material, which has an impact on independence in the learning process and stimulates students' pedagogical abilities. About technology, a new finding from research conducted by the author is handwriting automation, which can make it easier for teachers to conduct L2 writing assessments. Student handwriting is recorded and used as a database of individual writing models, which then becomes a reference in the assessment of L2 writing written by students. These findings are very new and have benefits in the context of the L2 writing assessment. In terms of limited student technology facilities, teachers will be facilitated in assessing students' L2 writing. Student handwriting that has been recorded can be

used as data-driven in the next assessment. This will also minimize 'jockeying' among students.

This book also has several limitations that require input in the form of criticism and suggestions for improvement and development in the future. There are at least three important points that are critical notes for this book. The structure of the contents of the book is the first thing that needs to be revised. At first glance, the three major sections of this book consist of research results on the use of MT in L2 writing learning, conceptual reviews, and critical L2 writing learning strategies, which refer to technology as a source of information. The composition of the contents of this book is still irregular, with the discovery that the construction of the parts of the book is random and does not match the grouping of topics. The editor should categorize the contents of the book based on their respective concerns so that readers can easily grasp the sequential ideas of what is contained in this book and fulfill the focus of this book, namely advances in composing, translation, writing pedagogy, and data-driven L2 writing assessment.

Furthermore, content factors should also be considered when reviewing this book. Most of the contents of this book are the results of research conducted within the scope of using technology as a means, strategy, or L2 writing learning model. Only 10% of the contents of the book contain scope reviews in the field discussed. The need to present a theoretical study of the use of technology in the L2 writing process aims to provide a complete perspective to the reader. In addition to understanding the findings, readers also have an understanding of the theoretical basis for the issues discussed. This will stimulate readers' responses, especially those of teachers and researchers, by conducting further research and development and implementing learning strategies or models using technology in the L2 writing teaching process. Theoretical reviews are very important for teachers and researchers as a frame of reference in implementing various L2 writing learning strategies that use technology and conducting R&D in the field of technology utilization. At least there is a balance between the theoretical perspective and the implemented-practical perspective that can meet scientific standards, which can be used internally as a validation reference for each content, namely between research results and their theoretical basis.

Finally, the readership of this book is only teachers and students who have access to technology and its instruments. For teachers and students studying L2 writing in areas with low technology accessibility, this book might be useful in the next few years, even if technology does not develop rapidly and requires a lot of adjustments. Thus, the affordability aspect of the readers of this book is not evenly distributed.

In conclusion, this book is highly recommended, given the benefits and novelty of its contents. Teachers will be facilitated in the process of teaching L2 writing with reference to various research results in the context of implementing strategies and using technology such as MT, automated data-driven, and critical thinking such as reviewing and revising information sourced from the internet. This book can be recognized as one of the scientific works that contribute to the implementation of L2 writing learning by involving technology in the process both as a strategy and an instrument. Apart from that, this book also has limitations, which the editor notes in terms of 1) the structure of the content, which still needs to be adjusted according to the category of topics discussed; 2) the balanced

composition of the contents of the book - theoretical and practical; and 3) limited readership aspect.

Reference

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