

ผู้ใช้ภาษาที่สองและการนำไปประยุกต์ใช้ในการสอน ภาษาอังกฤษ

วรลักษณ์ บัญชา

อาจารย์

คณะวิเทศศึกษา มหาวิทยาลัยสงขลานครินทร์ วิทยาเขตภูเก็ต
woralak.b@phuket.psu.ac.th

บทคัดย่อ

บทความนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์ เพื่ออภิปรายแนวคิดและ การใช้คำว่าผู้ใช้ภาษาที่สองในฐานะผู้ใช้ภาษาที่มีความสามารถ หลายภาษาแทนการใช้คำว่าเจ้าของภาษาหรือผู้เรียนภาษา ที่สองและเพื่อเสนอแนะการประยุกต์ใช้แนวคิดเหล่านี้ใน การสอนภาษา ผู้ใช้ภาษาที่สอง (L2 user) เป็นคำที่สร้างขึ้น เพื่อกล่าวถึงบุคคลที่ใช้ภาษาที่สองในชีวิตประจำวันไม่ว่าจะ เพื่อจุดประสงค์ใดในการสื่อสารหรือในระดับความสามารถ ใดก็ตาม (Cook, 2002, 2016) คำนี้ถูกนำมาใช้แทนที่คำว่า เจ้าของภาษาที่เกิดและล้อมรอบด้วยภาษานั้น หรือผู้เรียน ภาษาที่สองซึ่งมีเป้าหมายสูงสุด คือ มีความสามารถใกล้เคียง หรือเหมือนกับเจ้าของภาษา การมีความสามารถใกล้เคียง หรือเหมือนกับเจ้าของภาษานั้นเป็นเรื่องยากมากและมี เพียงไม่กี่คนที่สามารถทำได้ (Cook, 2002) ดังนั้น จึงอาจ ไม่ยุติธรรมที่จะกำหนดเป้าหมายที่เป็นจริงได้ยากให้กับผู้เรียน ภาษาที่สองหรือภาษาต่างประเทศ ดังนั้นคำศัพท์ที่ใช้ภาษา ที่สองจึงเหมาะสมกับผู้เรียนภาษาที่สองมากกว่า เนื่องจาก เป็นเป้าหมายที่สามารถทำให้เป็นจริงได้และสามารถบรรลุผล ได้มากกว่า บทความนี้ใช้คำว่า ผู้ใช้ภาษาที่สองเพื่อสะท้อน

ถึงบทบาทของภาษาอังกฤษที่เปลี่ยนแปลงไปในยุคปัจจุบัน และเพื่อสร้างความตระหนักต่อครูสอนภาษาเกี่ยวกับสถานะที่เปลี่ยนไปของภาษาอังกฤษเมื่อมีการเปลี่ยนแปลงแนวคิดมาเป็นผู้ใช้ภาษาที่สองผู้ควรได้รับการพิจารณาว่าเป็นผู้ที่มีความสามารถในการใช้ภาษาหลายภาษา การสอนและการประเมินควรได้รับการพิจารณาหรือการปรับใหม่เช่นกัน เพื่อที่จะเข้าใจแนวคิดได้อย่างชัดเจนคำนิยามได้อภิปรายไว้เป็นอันดับแรก ตามมาด้วยการบรรยายการประยุกต์แนวคิดในการสอน วิธีการสอนและการประเมินผล

คำสำคัญ: ผู้ใช้ภาษาที่สอง; ผู้เรียนภาษาที่สอง; ผู้เรียนภาษาต่างประเทศ; ผู้เรียนที่มีความสามารถในการใช้ภาษาหลายภาษา

Second Language (L2) User and Its Pedagogical Implication on English Instruction

Woralak Bancha

Lecturer

Faculty of International Studies,
Prince of Songkla University, Phuket Campus
woralak.b@phuket.psu.ac.th

Abstract

This article aims to discuss the concept of and the use of the term L2 user as a multicompetent language user instead of the use of native speakers or second language learners and how these concepts could be applied in language teaching.

Second Language User (L2 user) is a word created to refer to ones who use the target language in everyday life, regardless of the purpose of communication or at any levels of competence. (Cook, 2002, 2016). This term is proposed in the article to replace the terms, native speaker who is surrounded by the target language or second language learners whose ultimate goal is to be close to or similar to native speakers. This goal is very difficult and only a few can do (Cook, 2002); therefore, it may not be fair to set a goal that is difficult to achieve for second/ foreign language learners. Thus, L2 user is more suitable as the goals can be fulfilled and can be achieved more.

This article used the term L2 user to reflect the changing role of English in the present era and to raise awareness of language teachers regarding the changing status of this language. When a concept is changed to a second language user who should be viewed as a multi-lingual user, teaching and assessment should be considered or adjusted to as well.

In order to clearly understand its concepts, definitions were first discussed. Then, pedagogical implications and methods in teaching and assessment were described.

Keywords: second language (L2) user; second language learner; multi-competent language users

Introduction

Second language (L2) user is a coined term to refer to a person who uses a second language in daily life no matter what the purpose of the communication or the level of their proficiency is (Cook, 1999, 2002, 2016). This term is supported in this article instead of the terms native speakers who were born and surrounded by the language, or second language learners whose ultimate goal is to sound like native speakers (Cook & Singleton, 2014; Cook, 2016; Scott, 2016).

This article employed the term second language to refer to both English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL). EFL refers to learning English in a country where English is not the native language and the official language. According to Marckwardt (1963), EFL is defined as English which is not used as the main means of instruction at school and students are required to take English courses for the purpose of knowledge of a foreign language proficiency. ESL refers to a situation where English is used in instruction at school or between speakers of different native languages (L1) as the main means of communication which is called English as Lingua Franca. Second language learners in this study refer to ones who study another language apart from their mother tongue to avoid the confusion.

Attaining the native speakers' competence is very difficult, and only a few can reach this goal (Cook, 2002; Cook, 2016). Regarding this fact, the L2 user which is defined as one who has one his or her rights to use the second language to communicate effectively for one's purposes in his or her ways is introduced and employed with a more positive and motivated sense (Cook, 1999; 2016). Additionally, it seems unfair to set the unrealistic or unattainable goal to second

language learners.

Apart from the positive sense of the term use, it seems unfair to judge L2 learners with the same standards as native speakers. English employed by non-native speakers should not be compared to or evaluated with the same norm of the English exploited by native-speakers (Zareva, 2010; Scott, 2016). Labov (1969 as cited in Mahboob, 2005) supports that the language of one group should not be measured against that of another. Furthermore, L2 learners' knowledge cannot be the same as monolingual native speakers (Cook, 2002, 2016). Therefore, using the same standard of English native speakers can cause discouragement or demotivation to L2 learners. Instead, L2 users should be viewed as multi-competent language users who possess "the knowledge of more than one language in the same mind or the same community" (Cook, 2012, p. 3768).

Apart from this, the role of English nowadays has change from the standard norm of native speaker's English to variation of English or Global Englishes including English as Lingua Franca (ELF), English as an international languages (EIL) and World Englishes (Galloway and Rose, 2015). Considering these changes in the concepts of L2 users as multi-competent language users and the role of English at present, teaching and assessment should be reconsidered or readjusted.

Before applying the concepts of L2 users in teaching, it is essential to understand the concepts clearly. The following section illustrate the concepts of L2 users.

Concepts of L2 users

It is vital to understand and to have clear concepts of L2 users by first looking at the different meanings used by a native speaker. The term native speaker is defined by many scholars or researchers. One definition given in a Cambridge online dictionary (2018) is that native speaker refers to “someone who has spoken a particular language since they were a baby, rather than having learned it as a child or adult”.

This definition is concurrent with many researchers (such as Davies, 1991; McArthur, 1992; Phillipson, 2013) who define native speakers as individuals who acquire the language in early childhood. Regarding this definition, it is impossible for the ones who did not use the second language since they were born to speak like a native speaker of that language.

Some features of native speakers or nativeness are highlighted by many scholars (such as Chomsky, 1965; Stern, 1983; Mahboob, 2003; Moussu, 2010). These features include subconscious knowledge of rules (childhood acquisition, an intuitive grasp of meaning, ability to communicate within various social settings, a range of language skills and creativity of language use (Davies, 2004). The recent studies by Braine (2010); Kirkpatrick (2010); Wang (2012) have highlighted the advantageous features of native speaker teachers in South East Asian students’ perceptions as the standard of language production, grammatical correctness and perfect pronunciation. Considering these features, it is not debatable that L2 users cannot reach the level of native speaker’s competence or near native-like proficiency as L2 users have different ways of acquiring a second language.

Comparing L2 users to monolinguals, L2 users are different from monolingual native speakers in many ways.

First, the ways of acquiring the language are different. While native speakers acquire their mother tongue unconsciously or implicitly since childhood in the environment of the target language surrounding them, L2 users learn a second language explicitly (Lightbown & Spada, 2013), and most of them normally learn through formal education, such as in schools or educational institutions, especially in EFL contexts.

Second, Cook (1999) adds that L2 users' knowledge of their L1 and L2 is different from one of native speakers. L2 users as multi-competent language users can use more than one language and possess knowledge of more than one language in one mind (Cook, 1999; 2012). The knowledge of different languages on one mind does not work separately but works as a whole system (Cook, 2016). Thus, the knowledge of L1 and interlanguage or the knowledge of L2 language can co-exist (Cook, 1994). However, this explains why many L2 learners encounter failure in not being able to speak like native speakers and why they act differently because they are influenced by the target language.

Third, their perceptions of the world are not the same. An example given by Cook (2005) reveals that Japanese students learning English as a second language perceived shades differently from monolingual English native speakers. To illustrate, Japanese students see many colors of blue but monolingual native speakers see only one blue. Another study conducted by Bassetti and Cook (2011) shows that L2 users think differently from monolinguals. L2 users are aware of the differences between their native language and the second language.

They have a positive attitude towards the target language culture. They also use language differently from monolinguals, such as with translating and code-switching.

Finally, their brain functions differently. Monolingual native speakers have only a particular set of learning skills, whereas L2 users have the ability to learn more than a language and have two sets of learning skills in their minds (Cook, 2016). Accordingly, considering the natures of native speakers and L2 users, it does not seem right to set the goal for L2 users to become native-like competent users.

The following sections suggest some reconsideration in language teaching and learning.

Pedagogical implications

Understanding concepts of L2 users can lead to some pedagogical implications as shown below.

1. Language used as a means of instructions

If L2 users are considered as multi-competent language users whose cognitive system can process at least two languages in their mind at the same time, users' native language (L1) should not be banned or prohibited in homogenous classrooms. Teachers should not have to feel guilty to use the students' L1 in teaching a monolingual homogeneous class. According to Krashen (1985, 2003), a comprehensible input is significant and essential in learning, and students do not acquire a new language if they lack understanding. Therefore, if teachers notice that their students cannot comprehend the contents or meanings they are attempting to convey, it is not a bad idea to use L1 for explanations. In doing so, teachers may have

to code-switch between L1 and L2. Code-switching is defined by Scotton & Ury (1977) as the use of two or more languages in the same conversation. Considering the use of L1 as a means to foster comprehension to students, code switching in language classroom can be considered a common practice.

However, one of the on-going debate issues is whether L1 or L2 should be used in language teaching and learning. It can be argued that in some contexts or in some countries where the second language or target language is not required, teachers' input may be very significant as a prime source of L2 knowledge for L2 learners learning the target language in a formal context.

MacSwan (2017) and Otheguy et al. (2015, nevertheless, underline the role of multilingual competencies which can be developed in all speakers of any languages including monolingual speakers. This means ones can use a particular register or language variety to convey and construct meanings through languaging (García, Ibarra Johnson & Seltzer, 2017; García & Wei, 2014) for communication in different circumstances. Thus, the use of L1 and L2 in the same classroom is possible.

To compensate for the lack of L2 exposure, some other options might be used to facilitate more English input to L2 learners. For instance, the internet which is accessible nationwide and worldwide can be a good source of knowledge for L2 learners to strengthen their language proficiency whenever and wherever they would like to.

Even though L2 should be promoted as much as possible in class, L1 should not be a taboo. When students have difficulties expressing complicating ideas or concepts, L1 might replace L2 to reduce affective barriers (Cook, 2001; Kang, 2008). Prohibiting

students to use L1 in class may cause discouragement and frustration especially for beginners who have inadequate language competence in the target language. A study conducted by Liao (2006) shows that when Taiwanese students were allowed to employ both L1 and L2 for discussion, more participation and meaningful communication were observed. Following Gardner and Lambert (1972), motivation is one of significant factors facilitating success in language learning. Consequently, too much ambiguity and frustration may lead to their giving up learning a new language.

Knowing how and when to use L1 appropriately is helpful for students. The following part suggests how to use L1 in a language classroom (Pan & Pan, 2010). First, teachers may give instructions about tasks in L1. If there are many steps of how to complete the task or the task seems to be too complicated for students, then L1 may be utilized to save time (Schmitt, 2008). Second, L1 may have an appropriate role in explaining something complicated to the students. After presenting complicating ideas or concepts, especially explaining syntax or grammar, L1 translation might be employed to check or confirm their comprehension. Grammatical rules or structures are quite complicated; therefore, using L1 makes students clearly understand it (Greggio & Gil, 2007; Chang, 2009). Third, L1 can be used when the teacher wants to give feedback. It is very important for students to clearly understand feedback because it can help improve their language use and to gain insights of what they are learning. Fourth, it can be exploited to maintain disciplines. If teachers have to discipline students through L2, it may not be practical and natural to use L2 (Chang, 2009). Some students may not even get the sense of what teachers are trying to convey.

Another example of where the role of L1 can be used is in teaching vocabulary. L1 translation is not time-consuming and easy for learners, especially beginners with limited knowledge of vocabulary. The use of L1 translation is seen in L2-L1 word lists which are useful for learning a large number of words in a short time (Nation, 1980). The study of Joyce (2018) also supports the role of L1. His study compared the use of L1 translations and L2 definitions and the results indicated better scores of L1 translations than L2 definitions on vocabulary learning. In essence, it is not necessary to cease the use of L1 in classroom; however, teachers may encourage the use of L2 to allow students to gain more input whenever possible.

2. Roles of native teachers and non-native teachers

The roles of native teachers and non-native teachers should be taken into consideration. L2 users should not be considered the same standard as native speakers.

Cook (1999; 2005) points out some advantages and disadvantages of studying with native speaker teachers and non-native speaker teachers. To begin with, native speaker teachers can provide a model of native speaker's use, speak fluently and naturally, and know the culture of the target language. However, they use the language subconsciously resulting in not knowing how language works or not knowing how to explain and may lack teaching knowledge.

Medgyes (2001) and Walkinshaw & Oanh (2014)'s studies reveal some disadvantages and advantages of being non-native teachers. The main disadvantage of non-native teachers is that they are not as

fluent as native speakers and know less of the culture of the target language. In contrast, most non-native teachers have experience encountering the obstacles related to learning a second language. They used to be second language students before; therefore, they know what the difficulties are, how to tackle those problems, and eventually, they can apply those strategies to help their students cope with the obstacles. To elaborate, as they know their students' mother tongue, they can be more aware of students' problems in syntax, vocabulary, pronunciation, and so on, and they are able to see if the mistakes are a result of the influence of their mother tongue or of some other factors. Furthermore, non-native teachers learn the second language explicitly; therefore, they are aware of the linguistic features of L2 which enable them to explain L2 to students better than native speaker teachers could do.

Additionally, non-native teachers can be a real role model of successful language users to students (Cook, 2016). Students can see that successful L2 users do exist and that this goal is achievable. For example, Thai students will see a Thai teacher being able to use and teach English (L2) effectively. Thus, they will believe that they can be successful, too. This indirectly motivates them to learn a target language and become effective language users like their teachers. Measuring L2 users with the same standard of native speakers' competence does not motivate them to move towards success in language learning; as a result, realistic goals of language learning should be set instead of unattainable goals (Cook, 2012).

Nevertheless, it can be argued that learning the target language with native speakers yields better benefits than learning with non-native speaker teachers as they were born using the language in their

daily life. It is true that native teachers can use the language more naturally; however, after taking many pedagogical aspects into account, L2 user teachers possessing both teaching and language knowledge seem to outweigh monolingual native teachers (Kirkpatrick, 2010). Therefore, L2 teachers make some contributions to language teaching by being role models for L2 students and by being able to identify and overcome L2 students' problems and interference with their native tongue (L1). L2 teachers show and prove that learning English can be successful, which will positively affect students' motivation in learning. The important roles of teachers; thus, may shift from native speaker teachers to non-native speaker teachers.

3. Materials

Teaching and learning materials in L2 should show that L2 users are capable groups of people. Materials used in language teaching always reflect L2 learners who fail or are not capable of using the target language (Cook, 1999). Following Cook (1999), most published materials portray L2 users as low-proficient language users. This in a way discourages L2 students as it can be inferred that they are deficient or fail to use the target language. L2 users have their own right to use the second language in their own way; thus, it is not necessary to imitate only the native speakers. Current evidence apparently shows that native speakers' standard is not a must because English is a lingua franca. English as a lingua franca is defined as the English language used for communication among speakers whose L1 is not English (Seidlhofer, 2005). It is broadly accepted that non-native speakers of English communicate through English

outnumber the native speakers of English (Alatis & Straehle, 1997; Graddol, 2003). In other words, interlocutors use English as a means of communication with both native or non-native speakers purposefully. It is, therefore, a very distinctive example of L2 users using English in their own ways.

To apply this notion into pedagogical practice, teaching materials do not need to be taken only native speaker' standard norm and teaching should be adjusted to 'World Englishes'. Teachers may have students listen to news in a target language but read to by non-native speaker of news reports, learn about cultures of other countries which are not native English-speaking countries or read news or magazines produced in the second language but written by non-native writers and editors. Instances of successful role models create positive attitudes towards the students themselves and boost their motivation to become successful L2 language users instead of imitating native speakers or trying to reach the unattainable goal of native speakers' competence level.

4. Appropriate goals of teaching

Relating the concept of L2 users to pedagogy, the objective or goal of second language learning may not be to have students attain native-like competence but aims at reaching the proficiency level of successful L2 users who are able to communicate effectively in a particular purpose and circumstance.

Language teaching should serve the goals of learning. L2 users have different purposes or goals in learning, such as to get a job, to travel, to do business, etc. These goals can be categorized into 2 types: external and internal (Cook, 2007). The first one refers to

language students who want to use the language outside the class, and the latter means the mental development of individuals, such as having a positive attitude towards the second language, learning the culture of the target language, and having cognitive learning strategies (Cook, 2007). Similarly, Gardner (1985) proposes two types of instrumental and integrative motivation essential for language learning. The instrument motivation refers to some practical reasons to learn a target language, and the integrative motivation is significant for learners who have motivation to use the target language in communication or become a member of the target language community. To serve students' external goals or instrumental motivation, teaching may emphasize communication to allow students to practice using language relating to real life, such as task-based language teaching using tasks as the center of teaching with the focus on meanings and relevance to real-world activities (Ellis, 2003; Willis & Willis, 2013), communicative language teaching (CLT) which is an approach promoting language learning through communication using the target language (Nunan, 1991; Spada, 2007; Banciu & Jireghie, 2012). Focusing on communication in language teaching should prompt students to be able to use the language outside the classroom or in the real world effectively.

However, Cook (2002) argues that teaching a language does not aim only at the external goal of students' communicative ability but also at other factors concerning their internal goals. What teachers can do to facilitate the reaching of internal goals in individual students' minds is to insert the knowledge of the culture of the target language into contents to be taught, raise their awareness of the differences between both languages, and promote cognitive strategies.

Furthermore, as the role of English has been changed to ‘Global Englishes’, introducing cultures of other countries is essential for L2 users, too.

To illustrate, an example of a lesson combined both external and internal goal objectives relating to food and drinks should aim to enable students to order food and drinks appropriately in L2, to describe dishes, to know dining etiquettes of the target language and to compare the differences between foods or dining manners of both language cultures including other cultures. By doing this, both goals are served because students will be able to use the language to order a meal or to describe the food they want (external goal) and at the same time, understand the culture of the target language and be able to share their own culture. It should enable students to integrate the target language culture which will eventually enhance their positive attitude towards the target language, and they will be proud of being able to talk about their own culture. Therefore, teaching should aim to promote both goals in students.

Methods in Teaching and Assessment

Since the change of the ultimate goals of second language learning results in some implications, teaching methods and assessments should be set based on the goals of teaching and learning. If successful L2 users are measured at the level of effective communication to serve a particular purpose in a certain circumstance, an appropriate way to assess L2 students’ competence is to check if they can communicate or express ideas effectively. To put it simply, students should be assessed on their comprehensibility and ability to express meanings in L2. Moreover, Brown (2013) proposes that it might not be

logical for multi-competent L2 student users to be graded or assessed with the same standard norm as monolingual native speakers because they cannot perform like them, whether in language comprehension (listening and reading) or language production (pronunciation, vocabulary use, grammar, pragmatics, and rhetorical style). However, if a native speaker is regarded as a standard, or as a multi-competent (near) native-like competence should be deemed as the standard which seems to be more realistic and attainable.

To apply the concepts of L2 users into teaching and assessment, task-based language teaching may be one of appropriate instances in real classroom settings because tasks promote opportunities for students to communicate or practice a language for a specific purpose. There are many teaching methods or approaches promoting communication, such as CLT, problem-based learning, and so on. However, this article used task-based teaching as an illustration to clearly show how to apply the concepts into practice.

Task-based language teaching focuses on task as the center of teaching and learning. Task is a work plan with a primary focus on meaning, relevant activities that can be found in the real world, any language skills, cognitive processes, and obvious communicative outcomes (Ellis, 2003; Willis & Willis, 2013). Task allows meaningful communication because performing a task permits students to use their linguistic resources to communicate in order to reach their task outcome goals (Harmer, 2001; Willis & Willis, 2013). Students are assessed on the meanings they employ to complete the task instead of on the accuracy of the language they use.

Regarding the definition of task given by Bachman and Palmer (1996), task is defined as “an activity that involves individuals in using

language for the purpose of achieving a particular goal or objective in a particular situation” (p. 44). This definition is directly related to performance assessment. This assessment focuses on tasks which should be as authentic as possible, and the outcome is the main goal of success or task completion. This way of assessment directly tests whether students can perform a language task under a particular communicative setting (Brown, 2004; Willis & Willis, 2013; Long, 2015). To illustrate, the outcome of the task is to choose the best place in which to hold a farewell party for a teacher, and students can find out the best place based on the limitations of each place and give reasons to support their choice. This means students are successful in terms of completing the task or reaching the task outcome.

Therefore, task-based language teaching promotes communication to occur in real classroom settings, and an appropriate way to assess students’ communicative competence is to employ performance tests to see students’ performance when performing tasks. If they can attain the task outcome, it means they are successful in communication.

Conclusion

The L2 user term seems to better suit L2 learners as the goal is more realistic and attainable, and the role of English has changed to ‘Global Englishes’. Since L2 users have their right in using the target language in their own ways, the language taught by L2 non-native speaker teachers is a sensible option for L2 users. L2 non-native teachers are in an advantageous position when compared to native English speakers since they are well aware of the students’ difficulties related to the interferences with their first language, and they will

know how best to tackle them. Feedback given by an L2 teacher will probably be more accurate because of the L2 teachers' ability and knowledge of the students' mother tongue. Their having been a student of the target language is also very advantageous as it gives them first-hand experience of how it is and of how it feels to be an L2 learner. Task-based language teaching has a very significant role because it allows communication to take place in different classroom settings. As the teaching emphasizes the success of communication, assessment has to be shifted to suit the teaching and learning goals.

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