

The Role of a Writing Center in Academic Writing Socialization of Second Language Graduate Students

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Abstract:

Introduction: The present study aims to investigate second language graduate students' academic writing socialization in relation to their experiences at writing center in North American higher educational context. The study documents how graduate students are socialized to use academic language in order to participate effectively within their academic communities by employing Weidman, Twale, and Stein's (2001) framework for Graduate and Professional Student Socialization.

Methods: The data is collected through semi-structured interviews with five graduate students who had experience visiting writing center to receive support for their academic writing. The data was analyzed based on the tenets of thematic analysis, which followed an iterative process.

Results: It was revealed that second language graduate students' reasons for visiting the Campus Writing Center included their educational background, field of study, and their first language(s). It was also shown that all participants expected revision on their grammatical errors as well as feedback on global areas such as idea development and organization during their visits. Furthermore, the analysis indicated that the participants gained both positive and negative experiences from the tutoring sessions, while it was found that writing center was not the only resource our participants relied on for the development of their academic writing.

Discussion: There are various factors influencing and contributing to second language graduate students' development of writing socialization within academic community. It is a challenging task for students from other educational and cultural backgrounds to adapt and socialize into new environments, especially in the academic community of higher education. Therefore, the support from writing service and writing development programs/workshops that are tailored to the specific needs of second language graduate students would be one helpful resource to help them go smoothly through the process of second language academic writing socialization. Given that second language graduate students generally

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benefited from a strong supervision and supportive feedback, and appreciated them as reported in the literature, it is also important to survey international students' academic enculturation experiences periodically in terms of areas such as writing, speaking and participation in scholarly activities, faculty mentorship and offer feedback-support to overcome issues reported by students.

Limitations: The number of participants and the lack of students' academic text investigation were noted as limitations of the study. It is suggested that further research incorporates various sources of data collection such as tutor's perspectives and the analysis of participants' texts.

Conclusions: It was concluded that writing center played an important role in academic writing socialization experiences of the participants, and there were various factors influencing and contributing to their academic writing socialization. Overall, it was concluded that the developmental processes into academic writing in second language were non-linear, dynamic, and multimodal.

Key words: language socialization, academic writing, second language graduate students, writing center.

The View of Student Teachers on the Teacher's Profession

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Abstract:

Introduction: In recent years, teaching is no longer perceived only as a job, but as a profession. The study focuses on student's view on the teacher's profession, which is important in the context of becoming a teacher. During their university studies, student teachers are at the beginning of their professional careers. Their attitudes, values and principles are still evolving.

Methods: Building on previous studies, qualitative methodology was applied. The main goals of the research were to describe the changing views of student teachers on the teacher's profession, and to compare their views in the first and third years of study. Therefore, thematic writing was chosen.

Results: The results show that the student teacher's views change significantly during their university studies. While in the first year, student teachers focus more on the importance of childhood, their own practical experience and the teacher's influence on a child's life; in the last year of bachelor's study, the emphasis is on the teacher's personality, teaching professionalism and on the teacher as a learner can be observed. This paper can provide evidence that university education for kindergarten teachers is important and it most likely influences their future work.

Discussion: The research findings show that it is appropriate to pay attention to how views about the teacher's profession change. This could broaden the view of the development of the teacher profession concept and could also be a useful tool for modifying the content of future teachers' education.

Limitations: A certain limit of research can be seen in using one method. It would certainly be appropriate to supplement the research with interviews with participants. In my future research I will focus on this issue.

Conclusion: 1. The student teachers' views change significantly during their university studies, 2. The focus moves from their practical experience to the didactic theory. 3. There is a shift from focusing on personality of teachers to their abilities.

Key words: teacher's professionalism, student teacher, professional view, kindergarten teacher.

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Different Types of Subitizing Activity: A Teaching Experiment with Preconservers

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Abstract:

Introduction: Subitizing, a quick apprehension of the numerosity of a small set of items, is consistently utilized to support early number understanding. Perceptual subitizing is the innate ability to recognize less than five items without consciously using other mental or mathematical processes. Conceptual subitizing, which requires higher-level abilities, means perceiving the quantities as groups and performing a mental process on them. Research on conceptual and perceptual subitizing indicates some limitations about the activities regarding the children's early number development. So, MacDonald and Wilkins (2016) developed a framework that explained the types of activities that young children used while subitizing. In this framework, five sets of perceptual subitizing activity were described to explain how young children's perceptual subitizing activity changed. Besides, two types of conceptual subitizing activities were defined to explain how children's limited or flexible number understanding related to their subitizing activity. These seven different types of activities characterize the changes in children's subitizing actions. The study aims to investigate the relationship between children's number understanding and subitizing activity.

Methods: A teaching experiment was conducted with two preschool-aged children to analyze what perceptual and conceptual processes children relied upon when subitizing. The teaching experiment consisted of twenty-six sessions. The interviews were conducted to determine whether children are able to conserve numbers or not, and whether they rely on a variety of different types of subitizing activity or not. After the interviews, 26 teaching sessions were carried out with two preconservers children.

Results: In the experimental process, it was observed that the children rely on the color of items, the gap between items, and symmetrical aspects of items when perceptually subitizing. However, they could not manage to transition their subitizing activity from perceptual to conceptual subitizing. The study indicates that children's subitizing skills were closely related to their number conservation development.

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Discussion: Based on the findings from this study, for Eren and Beren, subitizing activities were found to be perceptually limited. Specifically, it was found that four types of perceptual subitizing emerged to explain how symmetry, the gap between items, color of items, and canonical patterns promoted strategies that children relied on when constructing number understanding. During the teaching experiment, although these children carried out the activities that required the separating and combining numbers and seeing the relationship between the subgroups and the composite groups, they used perceptual units in this process. The relationship between the number conservation activity and the conceptual subitizing activity requires the coordination of thinking structures related to both ordering and classification. However, it was found that the children could not move from perceptual to the conceptual subitizing.

Limitations: As all studies have some limitations, this study has, too. One of the limitations of the study is the sample size/number of participants. But teaching experiments aim to get a deep understanding, studying with a small sample is an obligation. Secondly, this study focused on some compounds of subitizing such as perceptual and conceptual ones.

Conclusion: In order to make the transition from perceptual subitizing to conceptual subitizing children should have more experiences with subitizing activities. When designing mathematical games and assessments for young children, being aware of different types of subitizing categories may provide better support children's number understanding and subitizing.

Key words: subitizing, number conservation, early math, teaching experiment.

A Scoping Review on Intergenerational Learning in Urban China

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Abstract:

Introduction: The ageing world gives rise to changing family structures, as well as the way different generations interact with each other. While research on intergenerational relationships and intergenerational learning have started as early as in the 1960s and 1970s in North America and Europe, little is known about scholarly discussions in this field in China.

Purpose: This paper presents an overview of the published journal articles in Chinese on the topic of intergenerational learning in urban China, with the goal of identifying the common themes under discussion, the theoretical frameworks adopted in these studies, and empirical research in this field.

Methods: A scoping review was conducted to look for relevant journal papers published in Chinese between the years 2006-2020. We identified 117 journal papers that fit our criteria and a majority of them were found by using the key words *gedai jiaoyu* (education in skip-generation situations).

Conclusion: The overall quality of the published research is poor in that most authors only provided personal observations and opinions. Almost all studies set their focus on grandparenting and emphasis is often placed on how grandparenting affects young children's growth, with little attention given to its influences on grandparents. Research on intergenerational interactions beyond family settings is almost non-existent. A number of recommendations for future studies are offered at the end of the article.

Key words: intergenerational learning, grandparenting, urban China.

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Making the Pedagogical Elements Used by Prospective Mathematics Teachers Visible in Teaching: Scenario Writing Activities

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Abstract:

Introduction: In the reflective writing process, teachers make identification, information, explanation and evaluation activities (Spanneberg, 2009). It is thought that the scenarios written by the teacher candidates in order to teach a certain subject can give them an opportunity to think deeply. However, these teaching scenarios can be a valuable tool for reflective thinking in terms of educational matters such as teaching methods, pedagogy, and beliefs.

Methods: In this study, it was investigated whether script writing is an effective tool to make pedagogical elements visible in the prospects of mathematics teachers. Case study pattern, which is one of the qualitative research patterns, was used in the research. For this purpose, thirty prospective mathematics teachers who participated in the study were asked to write two scenarios. The first one is called as "car travel" and the other one is called as "triangles and similarity" scenario. Before the study, some basic frameworks were defined for both scenarios. These are explained to prospective teachers. The "car travel" scenario in this research was given within the scope of the theme which includes only two people and a limited environmental interaction. The second scenario is the triangles and the similarity scenario. In the second scenario, the role of a teacher who conducts applied and real-life education outside of school is defined.

Results: In general, it is concluded that script writing activities are very useful in training teachers. The data obtained from both scenarios reveal that the pedagogical elements constructed during the scenario writing activities become concrete in the minds of the prospective teachers.

Discussion: It is observed that prospective teachers often include the structure of teaching related to real life in their scenarios. It is stated that teaching in the context of real life increases academic success and students' interest in the lesson, and thus, the content is learned perceptibly by the students (Acar & Yaman, 2011). Another cognitive element that prospective teachers include in their scenarios is the use of available

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materials. It is noteworthy that the prospective teachers used real-life tools and materials as materials in the place chosen for the scenarios of their scripts.

Limitations: This research is limited to script texts written by thirty prospective teachers.

Conclusions: Thanks to this visibility, feedback can be given on the pedagogical elements that the prospective teacher will use in the future.

Key words: mathematics teacher education, scenario writing activity, script writing, feedback to pedagogical elements.

The Attitudes of Parents towards the Introduction of Compulsory Pre-School Education in Slovakia

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Abstract:

Introduction: This empirical study discusses the issue of compulsory pre-school education in the Slovak Republic from the viewpoint of the parents of children attending nursery school. The goal of the research is to establish the attitudes of presents to compulsory education a year before the child begins school. The research therefore works with two key concepts, this being the obligation of educating children before they begin primary school and “attitude” as a relatively stable assessment of the object to which it applies.

Methods: A rating scale questionnaire of our own design was used to collect data. It was administered through a web interface. A five-level scale was used to apply a Likert scale and statements were classified into five dimensions. The research tool had 36 items following validation. The available sample was used to create the research sample. Data was collected in the Czech Republic and in Slovakia; the sample of parents from Slovakia consisted of 162 respondents. Each of the respondents had to have at least one child of pre-school age. When processing the research data the basic statistical characteristics were used, along with a non-parametric Friedman test. Calculations were executed in STATISTICA and SPSS software.

Results: The surveyed parents attributed the appropriate importance to compulsory education a year before children begin primary school, they did not believe that implementation of this obligation would have any significant impact on the family’s life and appreciated its importance for their child’s subsequent education. They rated potential interference in the organisation and assurance of pre-school education, related to the newly originating obligation, as suitable and appropriate. They disagreed slightly with the academic focus of pre-school education.

Discussion: The consensual opinion of the surveyed parents in regard to implementation of the obligation to educate children a year before they start primary school seems a good basis for realisation of this legislative

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amendment. In their attitudes, the parents incline towards the fact that compulsory education before starting primary school could help their children start their subsequent educational career, or could enable a smoother transition between the two levels of education. The structure of the research sample focused more on middle-class parents. Parents, due to whom this obligation was chiefly implemented, were not surveyed. It can be assumed that the situation will be similar in relation to attendance of nursery school.

Limitations: The main limiting element in the presented research is the available sample of respondents for the research sample. Likewise, validation of the questionnaire, which passed through all the necessary phases, but ran up against the obstacle of the available time and personal availability of researchers and respondents during one phase.

Conclusion: The results can be considered positive and no strongly disagreeing standpoints by middle class parents towards compulsory education at nursery school were registered. It would be very useful for further research to survey parents who are not mainstream and children who appear disadvantaged when starting nursery school, chiefly due to the attitude of these parents.

Key words: importance of pre-school education, compulsory attendance of nursery school, parent, attitude to education.

The Illusions on Digital Citizenship: What We Know and What We Do?

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Abstract:

Introduction: The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship between the digital citizenship levels of information and communication technology teacher candidates and their user behaviours and habits in the digital world. The experimental work presented here provides one of the first investigations into a deeper understanding of misconceptions, problems, and deficiencies in digital citizenship and its sub-dimensions. Also, the study offers some important insights to bring solutions to the problems encountered in teaching the concept to individuals.

Methods: To reach the goal, a mixed-method approach was utilized. Participants of the study were 74 information and communication technology teacher candidates enrolling at a public university in Turkey. Data for this research were collected using Digital Citizenship Scale (Kocadağ, 2012) and the e-Citizen mobile application. A combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches was used in the data analysis.

Results: According to the research findings, it was established that the participants did not have sufficient awareness of the concept of digital citizenship in the sub-dimensions of digital security, digital health, digital rights and responsibilities, digital law, digital etiquette, and digital commerce. The digital citizenship levels of the participants in these dimensions obtained from the scale were not consistent with their digital technology user behaviours and habits. Considering digital access, digital communication, and digital literacy sub-dimensions, it was concluded that pre-service teachers had sufficient knowledge. Another research finding shows that the responses of the participants to the scales should be questioned and emphasizes the importance of using different data collection methods.

Discussion: It was specified that the average digital citizenship score of 74 information and communication technology teacher candidates participated in the study was found to be 262 and it was described as

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“Very Good.” These results corroborate with the findings of a great deal of the previous works that show that digital citizenship levels of individuals have increased in recent years. However, data obtained from user habits and behaviours did not support this situation. This inconsistency may be due to the participants not acting objectively during scale scoring. The reason for this is not clear, but we thought possible causes maybe that teacher candidates may not express their real thoughts, may not want to get low scores on Digital Citizenship Scale (DCs) or they may see themselves as adequate despite their deficiencies. This situation is one of the biggest limitations of self-report measures and it is named “Social Desirability Bias” in the literature. There are, however, other possible explanations. In the study, participants have filled the DCs first and then used the e-Citizen application. Information and communication technology teacher candidates have taken lower scores from User Habits and Behaviours Surveys (UHBs) in each of the sub-dimensions compared to DCs. According to these data, we can infer that the participants may be able to increase their knowledge about digital citizenship and see their deficiencies thanks to the e-Citizen mobile application.

Limitations: It should not be forgotten that this study was limited by the validity and reliability of the digital citizenship scale, the efficiency of the mobile application, and the level of knowledge of the participant group and their objectivity in their answers.

Conclusion: Overall, this study strengthens the idea that there are problems in the concept of digital citizenship and its sub-dimension. As a result of the research, although the digital citizenship levels of the participants were measured to be very good, it was determined that there are inconsistencies with their behaviours and habits during the use of digital technologies in six of the nine sub-dimensions (security, health, rights and responsibilities, law, etiquette, and commerce). In three sub-dimensions: digital communication, access, and literacy, the data were relatively consistent. At the end of the study, the possible causes of the digital citizenship misconception experienced by teacher candidates were discussed separately and suggestions were made for future studies.

Key words: digital citizenship, e-Citizen, mobile application.

Employment Status and Educational Achievements in Universities: Evidence from Southeast Nigeria

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Abstract:

Introduction: Educational achievement has remained the common yardstick for assessing human capital development across the world. However, it has been observed that Nigeria is one of the developing countries facing the challenge of low level of academic achievement by employees in the university system, which in turn has grave implications for the overall performance of the Nigerian university system in terms of efficient work delivery.

Methods: This study adopts a robust and stratified sampling technique to select 4,122 employees in selected federal universities in the southeast of Nigeria and uses structural questionnaire and binary logistic regression to analyse the effect of employment status on academic achievement in South East Nigeria.

Results: The findings show that employment status negatively and significantly influences the academic achievement of employees in Nigerian universities.

Discussion: The major focus of this study is to examine the impact of employment status on educational achievement in the universities for southeast, Nigeria. To drive more effective and efficient service delivery in the universities, there is need for adequate salary enhancement for employees in order to motivate them to strive for higher educational attainments.

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Limitations: The study was carried out in federal universities in Nigeria. It is expected to expand the study to cut across both private, states in Nigeria for effective and efficient comparison among the universities found in southeast geopolitical zones.

Conclusion: The study concludes that government should continuously motivate these employees so that they can strive for higher educational attainments.

Key words: employment, academic achievement, human capital development, binary logit regression model, Nigeria.