

SPEAKING – WRITING MODE: STRATEGIES IN TRANSFORMING SPOKEN AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE

Siska Amelia Maldin

Staff UPT Language Center Andalas University
siskamaldin020890@gmail.com

Abstract

There is a tendency of cases in transforming spoken and written language. A current debate was proposed about the role. This debate derives from current phenomenon which shows evidence which is related with learner mastery in the particular skills. Some learners are able to produce spoken form of language fluently, however, when it comes to writing, it is seen that they find difficulties and get disturbance to put down ideas and elaborate the ideas into a good writing. Hence, two questions arise. First, to what extent is the nature of spoken and written language? Second, what are strategies to help learners in transforming their spoken language to the written production? Therefore, this article is proposed to explain the nature of spoken and written language and present any strategies to help learners in transforming their spoken language into the written forms.

Key words: *mode, nominalization, human actors, sequential, interactive, spoken language, written language*

A. INTRODUCTION

Learning language involves learning components and skills. Components consist of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, whereas, the skills include listening, speaking, writing and reading. These components and skills are compulsory to be learned by language learner because both of the elements synergize as the key of successful language user. Therefore, language learner should master these elements in order to reach high proficiency in using language.

As speaking and writing are two main courses which are crucial to examine the learners' production of language, a debate is proposed about the speaking and writing role. It seems that learners' competence in both of the skills is not equal because some errors are identified when learners transform their spoken ideas into its written form. In contrast, some also believe that it is similar in which learner's mastery of speaking may create a good writing production too.

Thus, two questions are proposed. First, to what extent is the nature of spoken and

written language? Second, as problem rises in errors in transforming spoken and written language, it is interestingly to know what strategies should be undertaken to help learners in transforming their spoken language to the written production. Therefore, this article is proposed to explain the nature of spoken and written language and present any strategies to help learners in transforming their spoken language into the written forms.

B. SPOKEN AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE

Generally, spoken and written language was differed based on the situation when the language is used. It is affirmed that spoken language contains everyday sort of words, including slang and others sentences which do not follow the standard grammatical structures. In the written language, it is seen that the language ideally has more distinguished vocabulary, and use standard grammatical structures. In addition, spoken language tends to focus on direct feedback in which when a first speaker speaks to the second speaker, a response will be conducted toward the

utterance and the feedback is possibly produced again by the first speaker. Written language, on the other hand, produce a one-way information sequence in which there is no direct feedback from other party. Then, it seems that spoken language is on the spontaneous situation. It can be seen from the involvement of interruptions, or incomplete utterances. In contrast, written language is drafted and mapped.

Moreover, there are several theories about the nature of spoken and written language. One of the theories is the concept

of systemic functional linguistic which is proposed by Halliday in 1978. In this linguistic framework, the notion of spoken and written language is included in the analysis of mode at register status. Eggin (2004: 92-93) states the “mode” analysis is the analysis about the role of language in particular interaction. Furthermore, mode divides two characteristics of spoken and written language; on which talks about situation and linguistic implications. The figures can be seen on the table 1.1 and 1.2 below

Table 1.1 Mode: Characteristics of spoken/written language situations

MODE: TYPICAL SITUATIONS OF LANGUAGE USE	
SPOKEN DISCOURSE	WRITTEN TEXT
+ interactive	Non-interactive
2 or more participants	One participant
+ face-face	Not face to face
In the same place at the same time	On her own
+language as action	Not language as action
Using language to accomplish some task	Using language to reflect
+spontaneous	Not spontaneous
without rehearsing what is going to be said	Planning, drafting and rewriting
+casual	Not casual
Informal and everyday	Formal and special occasions

Table 1.1 above implies that spoken language is used in the interactive situation in which the speakers may create direct connection with other respondents and feedback can be given from both sides. Next, spoken language generally involves two or more participants which creates a face to face interaction with the interactant(s) at the same place and the same time. As the interaction happens in same place and time, language is viewed as an action on the context of social interaction where some tasks are accomplished, for instance to do a favor, asking or giving an invitation and others. Hence, it can be identified that spoken language is clearly spontaneous and somehow undrafted. The reason is because spoken language doesn't need any rehearsal, and tend to be casual. Precisely, it is used in informal and everyday occasion.

Written language, on the other hand, provides a non interactive situation where interaction happens monotonous in one way communication transfer, means it happens without interactive feedback. In written language, there is only one participant involve (the writer). He or she doesn't need to face people as long as the work can be done alone by him or herself. Generally, visual contact is created on their own between their idea and the audience (the essay). In written situation, language is not viewed as an action because language is positioned to echo topics. Therefore, planning, drafting and rewriting are conducted before the writing process is started. In addition, written language is not casual and it is used in formal and special occasions.

From the linguistic implication, the differences of spoken and written language are summarized as follow

Table 1.2 Characteristics Features of Spoken and Written Language

SPOKEN AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE: the linguistic implication of MODE	
SPOKEN LANGUAGE	WRITTEN LANGUAGE
Turn-taking organization	Monologic organization
Context-dependent	Context-independent
Dynamic structure	Synoptic structure
-interactive staging	-rhetorical staging
-open-ended	-closed-finite
Spontaneity phenomena	'final draft' (polished)
Everyday lexis	'prestige lexis'
Non-standard grammar	Standard grammar
Grammatical complexity	Grammatical simplicity
Lexically sparse	Lexically dense

Similar with table 1.1, table 1.2 also distinguishes spoken and written language from the linguistic implication of mode. Briefly, it seems that some details in this table are carrying the same reflection as what it is figured in situational implication (see table 1.1). It can be seen here that spoken language is considered as turn-taking organization. It carries meaning when first speaker speaks, other will give a respond. After the respond is transferred, feedback can be given directly by the first speaker. In other word, turn-taking organization is a sequencing turn taking where "after I speak, you respond me, and then I speak again". The concept of turn taking in this table is a little bit similar with the idea of interaction in table 1.1. Hence, it can be assumed that both situational and linguistic implication derives from the same basic point.

Next, linguistic implication states that spoken language also strengthens its focus on the context where the language is used. As spoken language promotes context dependent, it means that different interaction creates different context. As a result, the structure of utterances which is produced in spoken language will be dynamic based on the arbitrariness of the speaker. In addition, interactive staging and open ended situation also becomes the point of creating a spoken language. In correlation with table 1.1, linguistic implication also points spoken language in a spontaneity phenomenon where everyday lexis, non-standard grammar specifies the precise

comparison between spoken and written language. Then, the level of grammatical complexity of spoken language is much higher than the written one because spoken language is generally functional and context dependent. As a result, spoken language is lexically sparse.

Written language, in contrast, stands more in monologic organization in which there is no discourse for having interactive language. It is also seen that written language is context-independent where the writer doesn't have to adjust the statement produced with the surround context. It is different with the theory of spoken language above that promotes the concept of context-dependent where the speaker's talk is highly determined by the context, for instance on the cooking practice, it seems appropriate to say "pour it" as people knows to what extent "it" refers to. However, when it comes to writing, it is not exact to say "pour it" because it seems difficult to interpret the term "it" without getting involve in the ongoing context where the situation happened.

Next, written language is viewed as synoptic structure (introduction, body, conclusion), with rhetorical stating, and closed-finite. It means written language promotes structure that encodes the writer interpretation of particular topic, therefore writing production should be arranged synoptically. Then, spontaneity is rarely seen in written language because producing written language needs drafting. The structure of the text or lexicogrammatical

features were drafted before the text is produced. Moreover, the use of lexis and grammar in written language is partly different with spoken language. From table 1.2, it can be identified that written language tends to use prestige lexis in which everyday lexis are not precise to be used. Written language, on the other hand, promotes the use of standard grammar, and the grammar is simplicity constructed and not lexically sparse.

In addition, Halliday in Eggins (2009: 94) also proposes feature of linguistic analysis about distinguishing spoken and written language. The feature is nominalization which defines as transforming any kinds of lexicon which are not commonly nouns to nouns which suitable to be used for other parts of sentences. She also adds that the major differences of spoken and written language is that spoken language concerns with the existence of human as an actor, concerning with ongoing action, having a dynamic structure of utterances. In contrast, written language links with abstract ideas/reasons, the appearance of compressed sentence (a dense sentence which is solid and not dynamic).

C. ANALYSIS AND STRATEGIES OF TRANSFORMING SPOKEN AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE

As in the previous heading, a theoretical review has been made toward the spoken and written language; this heading is going to explain about transforming spoken and written language. Further explanation will be the combination of analysis and strategies to prevent the errors, which is generally found in the transformation of spoken language into the written one. The examples are taken from “An Introduction of Systemic Functional Linguistic” by Eggins (2009: 94-99). First example is setting when someone speak to his or her tutor, boss or lecture about the postponed of sending a particular report. He or she may produce statement below

I handed my essay in late because my kids got sick

The previous statement contains two clauses. First clause is *I handed my essay* in late, while the second clause is *because my kids got sick*. Both of the clauses are connected by the conjunction *because*. Referring to the theory above (see table 1.1), this statement can be considered as spoken language. The reason is because this statement involves language as an action. In this case, the raising of the concrete action verb is identified, such as *hand in* and *get sick*. Then, it seems that this statement concerns with the involvement of human as an actor. This is similar with the theory of nominalization where different human actors are getting involves in a statement.

When the previous statement is changed into another form, semantically same, but the character of language that is used is different. (see example ii)

The reason for the late submission of my essay was the illness of my children.

Comparing the previous statement, this statement characteristically contains one clause that displays reasons which linked each other. The word's interaction is independent not depending on context. The action of “handing in” and “getting sick” were literally changed into another word which is more prestigious. The only verb which is found here is the non-action verb *is*. Moreover, human actors (I and kids) in example i have been changed into possessors of my and positioned as qualifiers of nouns (essay and children). It can be identified that example ii shows the relational process rather than action process because the idea is linked to one another in lexically dense. It can be identified that this statement is the form of written language.

Hence, two examples above have revealed the differences of spoken language and its written form. Concerning the differences, any strategies can be compiled derived from the theory which is proposed at the previous explanation. The strategies below are projected to be able to help language learners to get aware of differentiating spoken statements and the written one. As a result, better quality of writing can be produced.

Strategy 1: Transform the interactive language to its non-interactive form.

It is widely known from the theory that written language tends to focus on non-interactive form in which face to face organization or turn taking organization are not ideally used in constructing written production. Therefore, any kinds of interactive words which involve human actors (see example i) and real evidence, should be changed into a sentence that provides linking reasons. This is crucial to be done because it can minimize the level of context-dependent in the spoken language which is replaced with the independent setting of written language production. In written language, context doesn't highly contribute in making the written production because written language only focus on the topic that is going to write, not in the context or situation where it is happened.

Strategy 2: Change the everyday "lexis" with prestigious "lexis"

As written language or written production are generally in a form of text, it is suggested for any writers especially learners of English as Foreign Language (henceforth EFL) to enrich the intensity of prestigious lexis in their writing production. Commonly, particular amount of learners views that it is difficult to transform the lexis into its prestigious forms because they are not having enough mastery in memorizing lexis for written language. Therefore, it is suggested for learners to enrich their capability in comprehending prestigious lexis. For instance, learners may read some literary works and examining the semantic positioned of the lexis in the text. This is useful to help learners to know the variation of language prestigious forms.

Strategy 3: Compress the sentence into its dense

Generally, it is found that learners seem very often to construct complex and compound sentences which contains high level grammatical complexity. Theoretically, written language should be lexically dense, run on and promote the concept of grammatical simplicity. Therefore, learners should dense their sentences into a simple one with standard grammar which is more simple. In other words, a good writing production ideally consists of simple sentences, simple grammar that is explained in a sequence of ideas. The reason is because when a simple sentence is created; a better understanding will be gained by the readers and clearly, it may minimize the space for misunderstanding.

Strategy 4: Plan a draft before starting to write

As written language is sequential and not spontaneous, it is suggested for learners to do planning and drafting before writing process begins. There are so many ways to do drafting more effective. One of the ways is proposed by Williamson (2009:16). He calls the process of drafting as "brain purge" in which a writer can encourage themselves to do a prewriting activity that helps them to list any important examples before the writing was transformed into a text. The advantage of this drafting procedure is to help learners to think rapidly when they ask to create a particular writing production in advance. Otherwise, they won't assume anymore that they can't prepare what to write in a limit time. In other word, this brain purge drafting activity provides an opportunity for learners to gather their recent experiences related to the topic given which they can insert into the text. The sample of brain purge can be seen as follow (table 1.3 and 1.4)

Table 1.3 Sample Brain Purge (taken from On Demand Writing, Williamson (2009:12-13))

Sample Brain Purge

STEP 1: Purge your brain; list what's on your mind

Consider current events, recent films, books being studied in class, personal experiences and decisions. For example:	
lack of sleep the film 300 To Kill a Mockingbird the prom car payment/insurance lunch war in Iraq Interview With the Vampire school violence Chris Rock	Michael Jackson cell phone bill unfair curfew the Vietnam War entropy grades baseball play-offs mom's birthday The Simpsons
STEP 2: PROMPT (given by the teacher when the list is complete Citing examples from your reading, personal experiences and observations, agree or disagree with the premise that "Justice for all" applies to teenagers	
STEP 3: Comb your list for connections to the prompt	
Michael Jackson To Kill a Mockingbird Car payment/insurance	School violence Unfair curfew Grades
STEP 4: Formulate a controlling idea or thesis Teenagers are often denied justice on issues ranging from grades to violence	
STEP 5: Outline your potential essay or presentation	

From the five steps above, it can be identified that each of the step brings particular characteristics that provides a sequential idea and related linked ideas like what it is expected in written language. The five steps above is the first process before the outlining or drafting is designed. As it is

said at the beginning that, brain purge is designed to encourage learners to expand their ideas in a limit time but the idea is not bias. Therefore, when the brain purge is accomplished, learners may come to outlining process which is described in table 1.4 below

Table 1.4 Brain purge sample outline on justice for teenagers ((taken from On Demand Writing, Williamson (2009:12-13)

<p>Introduction: Personal example describing an argument with parents about Saturday's curfew.</p> <p>Controlling idea or thesis: Teenagers are often denied justice on issues ranging from grades to violence.</p> <p>Main points and supporting examples (taken from the purge!):</p> <p>I. High-school students are often unfairly graded</p> <p>A. grades in many subjects, such as English and art, are subjective</p> <p>B. teachers' grading policies are often unclear and inconsistent</p> <p>II. In To Kill a Mockingbird, Mayella has no recourse against her father's abuse</p> <p>A. she was too young to be taken seriously</p> <p>B. she was too poor to garner respect</p> <p>III. Many acts of school violence go unpunished</p> <p>A. hazing and harassment often go unreported</p> <p>B. punishment for reported incidents is often inconsistent</p>
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Conclusion (answers the questions, “Therefore what?” or “Now what?”):

Justice is not for all since teenagers often have no recourse when faced with unfair situations.

Table 1.4 above informs about how to draft the information gathered in the table 1.3. In every outline on the previous table, it can be identified that any information included on the outline were taken from what it is gathered in brain purge activity. This outline becomes fully sequential as there is no information which is bias or unrelated with the topic given. The drafting or outlining above is also clearly explained about how to relate ideas and make it in monologic organization and synoptic structure.

C. CONCLUSION

Transforming spoken and written language are viewed difficult by some learners of EFL. Therefore, it is important for them to know the basic understanding about what the spoken or written language is. As Halliday in his theory of systemic functional linguistic has presented the way to distinguish spoken and written language, it is clear now that the place of spoken and written are differed in situation and linguistic implication. Therefore, in expanding the theory, mode provides information about the role of language in particular interaction.

Instead of promoting the notion of situation and linguistic implication, mode also proposes the idea of nominalization. It is functioned as another consideration in distinguishing spoken and written language. In this concept, it is known that the major differences of spoken and written language is that spoken language concerns with the existence of human as an actor, concerning with ongoing action, having a dynamic structure of utterances. In contrast, written language links with abstract ideas/reasons, the appearance of compressed sentence (a dense sentence which is solid and not dynamic). Hence, it is clearly seen that the differences between spoken and written language is emerged.

Therefore, to solve problems about errors in transforming spoken and written language, four strategies are proposed to help learners to understand how to manipulate their spoken language into its written form. The strategies are transforming the interactive language to its non-interactive form, changing the everyday “lexis” with prestigious “lexis”, compressing the sentence into its dense, and planning a draft before starting to write. For the last step, drafting promotes the idea of brain purge in which designs to help learners to gather idea in the limit time. This concept of brain purge is expected may help learners to prevent any bias in generating their ideas before writing.

Ultimately, transforming spoken and written language is a great work to do. Thus, learners should perform more practice and comprehend more details about how to create a better writing production. Therefore, increasing awareness and motivation to write are highly required in this case. In conclusion, teachers and learners should have a better cooperation to give more attention in learning process. As a result, there will be no cases anymore related with errors in transforming spoken and written language.

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