

Chapter 2

Towards a Bilingual Writer: The Beliefs and the Process of L2 Writing

2.1 Introduction

In comparison with the writing process in the first language, creating compositions in the second/foreign language is a different experience. To be sure, the writer already possesses some expertise in writing texts in the first language; she will have received some instructions on how to create and receive written messages. She will have used strategies which help her plan work, organize ideas, revise and proofread texts. However, writing in L2 requires not only additional skills on the writer's part, such as mastering the second language, but it is also much more cognitively demanding, as it requires the writer to constantly switch between the two linguistic domains—the one in which their experience of creating texts is stored and the one in which they have to produce their compositions. The former is usually the domain of L1, in which the writing process has taken place so far, while the latter is the domain of L2, in which the writer is just beginning to gain experience.

Apart from the complex nature of writing in the second language, one has to consider the unquestionable role of beliefs which students and teachers hold about writing. Writing cannot only be viewed as a neutral activity performed for the purpose of language practice; there is a lot more to it: through writing we create ourselves, we present ourselves to the audience which our text is targeted at. That is why the present chapter will concentrate both on beliefs about writing which to a great extent influence the texts we produce, but also on the very process of creating texts in L2, “a bilingual event¹”, with the focus on the interplay of languages.

¹As it was called by Wang and Wen (2002, p. 239).

2.2 Beliefs About the Teaching and Learning Process

Perhaps the most important single cause of a person's success or failure educationally has to do with the question of what he believes about himself.

(Combs, 1962).

(...) beliefs are the best indicators of the decisions individuals make throughout their lives.

(Pajares, 1992, p. 307).

(...) might not Descartes have concluded that we are, not so much because we think, but because we believe (or perhaps reflect)?

(Pajares, 1992, p. 313).

Writers' active engagement in and reflection about writing will help them talk about problems and strategies, monitor their writing effectively, and develop a variety of adaptive writing strategies.

(Lonka, 2003; in Lonka et al., 2014, p. 263).

(...) the point is not to find "the truth" but students' subjective reality, "their truth," because it is their beliefs more than anybody else's that will influence their learning.

(Riley, 1997, p. 127; in Barcelos, 2003, p. 8).

Teachers' but also—or even primarily—students' beliefs constitute an important part of writing research. Whatever we do, either as student writers or as writing teachers, is influenced by our beliefs about what good writing is and what it is not. Undoubtedly, our choices are also influenced by our knowledge about the field as well as practical constraints, such as pressure of time, the need to adhere to formal requirements etc. It is believed that the process of teaching/learning, not only writing but also any other skill, is influenced by a mixture of these three factors—beliefs, knowledge and the limitations we face (Casanave, 2004).

Studies in beliefs about writing differ greatly. They adopt either wider or narrower scope, are more qualitative or quantitative in their nature, they investigate various types of writing, and they focus either on teachers' or students' perspective. The present section aims at reviewing the studies conducted in the area of writing beliefs to provide necessary background for the present study, which investigates the attitudes of university students towards writing in L1 (Polish) and L2 (English).

Before, however, this chapter sets out to delve into studies on beliefs about writing, it needs to be clarified what is understood by the term *belief*. The problem with the use of this term, together with others, such as *attitudes*, *orientations*, *perceptions*, and *personal theories*, has long been acknowledged. Borg (2001) observed that the concept of beliefs has "acquired a rather fuzzy usage" (2001, p. 186). Pajares (1992) rightly argued that

defining beliefs is at best a game of player's choice. They travel in disguise and often under alias—attitudes, values, judgments, axioms, opinions, ideology, perceptions, conceptions, conceptual systems, preconceptions, dispositions, implicit theories, explicit theories, personal theories, internal mental processes, action strategies, rules of practice, practical

principles, perspectives, repertoires of understanding, and social strategy, to name but a few that can be found in the literature. (Pajares, 1992, p. 309)

Pajares' article, in which he attempted to "clean up a messy construct", seems to be one of the most complete works on beliefs, which gives an account not only of the very concept of beliefs, but also of their nature, their relation with a larger system of beliefs within an individual, as well as of when and how they are formed. First, however, mention must be made of the three most frequently used interpretations of *belief*. Pajares makes a clear distinction between beliefs, attitudes and values:

When clusters of beliefs are organized around an object or situation and predisposed to action, this holistic organization becomes an attitude. Beliefs may also become values, which house the evaluative, comparative, and judgmental functions of beliefs and replace predisposition with an imperative to action. Beliefs, attitudes, and values form an individual's belief system. (Pajares, 1992, p. 314).

What one learns from Pajares' differentiation between beliefs, attitudes and values is that all three elements constitute a belief system of an individual. However, their nature as well as their influence over an individual to undertake an action differs. Beliefs are rather neutral and "only" beheld by an individual. Attitudes, which are based on beliefs one holds concerning a specific situation, may result in undertaking action by an individual. Values, with their evaluative nature, are even stronger—they may exert more power on an individual to act. However, for the purpose of the present study, following Salski and Szubko (2015), the term *belief* will be used "in reference to any views held by the participants about the nature of second language learning and teaching; and is applied interchangeably with *attitudes*."

Having clarified the difference between the often misused terms in the meaning of *belief*, it is worth mentioning Borg's definition of the concept of *belief*:

A *belief* is a proposition which may be consciously or unconsciously held, is evaluative in that it is accepted as true by the individual, and is therefore imbued with emotive commitment; further, it serves as a guide to thought and behaviour (Borg, 2001, p. 186).

Borg understands beliefs—be they conscious or unconscious, but undoubtedly evaluative and emotive in nature—as a driving force, which has a huge influence on all one's actions and decisions. With reference to Pajares' aforementioned distinction between beliefs, attitudes and values, it is clearly visible that Borg did not decide to differentiate between the three concepts: her definition of belief encompasses characteristics of all the elements constituting Pajares' system of beliefs. As an explanation, it can be said that Borg, who was familiar with Pajares' paper, probably made a conscious decision to simplify the "blurred" concept of beliefs. However, it is worth mentioning that in SLA literature there also exist more comprehensive definitions of beliefs. For instance, Kalaja and Barcelos proposed that beliefs about SLA "can broadly be defined as opinions and ideas that learners (and teachers) have about the task of learning a second/foreign language" (2003, p. 1). They see them as a domain of individual differences, which to some extent influence both the processes as well as the outcomes of learning a foreign language.

A thorough analysis of numerous attempts at defining the concept of belief by other scholars allowed Pajares to observe one feature that was common for all definitions, namely that “belief is based on evaluation and judgment” while “knowledge is based on objective fact” (Pajares, 1992, p. 313). He sees beliefs as a filter through which everything else, namely knowledge and thought, are perceived, and which guides behaviour. In other words, “beliefs influence perceptions that influence behaviours that are consistent with, and that reinforce, the original beliefs.” (Pajares, 1992, p. 317). As the author later observes, “learning and inquiry are dependent on prior beliefs that not only make current phenomena intelligible but also organize and define new information.” (Pajares, 1992, p. 320).

Beliefs are formed in the process of incorporating knowledge; early experiences have the greatest impact on our final judgments which are very unlikely to change; what is more, the earlier a given belief is incorporated into the belief system, the harder it is to change. Of course, beliefs differ in intensity and power: some may be stronger (as they were formed earlier) and are hence less likely to undergo changes than other beliefs. In the context of teaching, it is likely that a “crucial experience or some particularly influential teacher produces a richly-detailed episodic memory which later serves the student as an inspiration and a template for his or her own teaching practices” (Nespor, 1987, p. 320; in Pajares, 1992, p. 311). Pajares adds that “(s)uch memories can be from past teachers, literature, or even the media.” (1992, p. 311)

Beliefs have an enormous impact on the way in which our knowledge is later processed: even if the beliefs are based on incorrect knowledge, the holders of such beliefs will defend them even when faced with opposing (but logical) arguments. Pajares observed that “(p)eople grow comfortable with their beliefs, and these beliefs become their ‘self’, so that individuals come to be identified and understood by the very nature of the beliefs, the habits, they own” (p. 318). Also, when one comes across new information which stands in opposition to one’s beliefs and hence cannot be assimilated, one may either reject it or consider it irrelevant. One may even resort to assimilating it although it does not agree with their beliefs. However, the last thing that happens is the change of initial beliefs. This is because beliefs usually persist unchanged unless they are deliberately challenged (Lasley, 1980; in Pajares, 1992, p. 316). In order for the new information to be accommodated, one has to admit that it cannot be assimilated but has to be consciously opposed to the already existing beliefs, and the differences between them need to be minimized. For instance, in the case of teachers, no change in beliefs will take place when they are only presented with a given teaching technique; however, when they start teaching using this particular technique and it proves successful, usually a great change in the teachers’ attitudes will be observed. Hence, “change in beliefs follows, rather than precedes, change in behaviour” (Guskey, 1986; in Pajares, 1992, p. 321).

Other scholars have also contributed to the understanding of the nature of beliefs. Petric (2002) understands attitudes as grounded in the system of beliefs, but also as the ones that change with new experiences. A similar view of beliefs is proposed by Woods (2003). He is of the opinion that beliefs “are not stable entities

within the individual, but situated in social contexts and formed through specific instances of social interaction and, as a result, are constantly evolving” (p. 200; in Li, 2007, p. 58). This view of the changing nature of beliefs contrasts with Pajares’ suggestion that beliefs are very difficult to change. It is true that core beliefs may remain unchanged; however, in the context of education, with the development of knowledge, one gains new perspectives, which may lead to the change of attitudes, which exactly reflects what Petric claimed saying that attitudes are assumed not only to “determine behaviour in a complex way but also emerge as an outcome (non-linguistic) of language learning” (Petric, 2002, p. 11).

As was mentioned earlier, Woods (2003) considers that beliefs “influence decisions, actions, events and interpretations of events” (p. 206; in Li, 2007, p. 47). However, the relationship between one’s beliefs and behaviour is not as straightforward as it would appear. According to Ajzen’s theory of planned behaviour (see Dörnyei, 1998 for a summary), belief is not sufficient to influence an individual’s actions. The perception of control over one’s behaviour is a necessary aspect that needs to be taken into consideration while analyzing behaviour in relation to one’s intentions. In the context of the classroom, it means that the teacher’s decisions may not only be a direct consequence of their beliefs, but may also be influenced by factors such as time limitations, formal requirements,² or behavioural problems.

Researching beliefs and attitudes, both held by students and teachers, provides insight into the mechanisms which stand behind an individual’s actions. It has to be remembered that beliefs are not the only factor that influences behaviour. However, learning and understanding beliefs may prove useful in further learning and teaching practice. As Pajares noted, “teachers often teach the content of a course according to the values held of the content itself” (1992, p. 309).

Beliefs tend to have a priority over knowledge in understanding and predicting the mechanisms behind students’ and teachers’ decisions. From Ernest’s study (1989; in Pajares, 1992, p. 311), one learns that “two teachers may have similar knowledge but teach in different ways.” In other words, it can be said that beliefs lie at the very heart of teaching as they shape the knowledge one possesses.

However, investigating beliefs is a complex undertaking. It has to be remembered that beliefs are hidden and hence difficult to observe. Studying beliefs requires

making inferences about individuals’ underlying states, inferences fraught with difficulty because individuals are often unable or unwilling, for many reasons, to accurately represent their beliefs. For this reason, beliefs cannot be directly observed or measured but must be inferred from what people say, intend, and do—fundamental prerequisites that educational researchers have seldom followed. (Pajares, 1992, p. 314).

Furthermore, Borg (2001) highlights the problematic nature of beliefs when conducting or analyzing research in the field. A researcher needs to make a clear difference between one’s beliefs and knowledge, bearing in mind the evaluative

²e.g., teaching for tests.

nature of beliefs. The relationship between what one believes and what one actually does, needs to be investigated.³

Lately, there has been considerable interest among writing researchers concerning both students' and teachers' attitudes towards writing. Drawing on the definition of educational beliefs, Wan uses the term *writers' beliefs* to refer to "writers' conceptions and/or understanding as a set of mental constructions or representations, which guides, or creates and maintains, a disposition towards their specific learning and/or classroom practices." (2014, p. 53). It can be deduced that writers' beliefs adopt a much narrower scope than educational beliefs: they concern the very subject of writing. This limited perspective can be seen in the explanations of students' beliefs about writing provided by different researchers below:

beliefs about writing address what good writing is and what good writers do. As Graham, Schwartz, and MacArthur (1993) wrote, "The knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs that students hold about writing play an important part in determining how the composing process is carried out and what the eventual shape of the written product will be" (p. 246). Mateos et al. (2010) similarly described these beliefs as "filters leading students to represent the task of writing to themselves in a particular way," with the various models of writing created by these beliefs leading to "different engagement patterns" (p. 284).

(Sanders-Reio et al., 2014, p. 1).

In regards to the process of writing a composition, the degree of students' engagement can be predicted by studying students' beliefs about writing. Students' ability to develop ESL writing strategies and their probable success of completing a given writing task can also be predicted from their beliefs about writing. This may prove particularly useful for writing instructors in helping them better understand their students' actions, which are mainly (see section above) influenced by what the students believe will help them become successful writers.

There are many aspects that have been analyzed in the context of writers' beliefs. Researchers focus on teachers' beliefs concerning writing (Oi & Horne, 2014; McCarthey & Mkhize, 2013; Melketo, 2012), students' beliefs (Baaijen et al., 2014; Sanders-Reio et al., 2014; Lonka et al., 2014; Neely, 2014; Wan, 2014; Hawthorne, 2008; Li, 2007; Petric, 2002; Kear et al., 2000). Some of the studies focus on writing in general (e.g. Hawthorne, 2008), while some try to get an insight into beliefs within the field of academic writing (e.g. Wan, 2014; White & Bruning, 2005). Regardless of the style of writing, the studies tend to focus on different aspects within the skill of writing, e.g. the changing nature of writing (Neely, 2014; Kear et al., 2000), the relationship between writing beliefs and the quality of the final product (Baaijen et al., 2014; Neely, 2014; Sanders-Reio et al., 2014), the clash between the attitude and the actual behaviour (McCarthey & Mkhize, 2013; Melketo, 2012; Petric, 2002). The focus of the present book is on students' beliefs about writing, but a brief summary of the most important studies concerning teachers' beliefs about writing is provided below.

³Consideration should be given to the way in which beliefs were collected. Was the author interested in what is said or what is done? Or both?

2.3 Teachers' Beliefs About Writing

As has been already mentioned, in an ideal world teachers would teach in agreement with the beliefs they hold. Following Casanave, it is understood that

(...) examined or unexamined, with awareness or not, teacher choices and behaviours in the classroom reflect underlying beliefs and assumptions. (...) teachers benefit from bringing underlying beliefs into conscious awareness by articulating those beliefs, reflecting on them, and modifying them as needed (Casanave, 2004, p. 9).

The question that arises is: what exactly are the beliefs that teachers hold about writing? And are there any tensions between what they believe in and what they actually do when teaching writing? On the basis of a statement declared by the National Council of Teachers of English concerning teachers' beliefs about writing, it is understood that "writing can be taught, writing is a process, writing serves many purposes, writing is a tool for thinking, reading and writing are related, assessment involves complex human judgment, composing is embedded in social relationships, and conventions are important for readers and writers" (*NCTE Beliefs* 2004; in McCarthy & Mkhize, 2013, p. 5). These are the beliefs that probably most teachers hold about teaching writing. However, in terms of the relationship between teachers' instruction and their views of writing, mixed results have been reported so far. Some studies demonstrate that there is agreement between teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices, while others find inconsistencies between them due to the complexities of classroom life, including both individual differences between students as well as administrative requirements; these, in turn, affect teachers' actions in the classroom. Irrespective of the problems mentioned above,

(a)ttention to the beliefs of teachers and teacher candidates should be a focus of educational research and can inform educational practice in ways that prevailing research agendas have not and cannot (Pajares, 1992, p. 307).

Below is a summary of the most interesting studies within the field of teachers' beliefs about writing.

Oi and Horne (2014) conducted a questionnaire study on beliefs about writing among EFL junior high school and high school teachers in East Asia, precisely in Korea and Japan. The following areas were of importance to the researchers:

- frequency of teaching writing and possible reasons behind it,
- sources of knowledge about teaching writing and frequency of using this knowledge,
- aspects of writing that teachers focus on when teaching writing,
- when writing is done (during regular classes or only during extra classes),
- students' attitude towards writing, their writing skills, writing proficiency, and the most problematic aspect of writing in English for students,
- opinion about textbooks they work with and possible improvements that should be made to these textbooks, and

- changes that should be introduced concerning writing instruction, including how the teachers themselves should improve their teaching practice.

It transpired that writing skills were not given priority in the EFL classroom either in Korea or in Japan. The teachers pointed to the inadequacy of textbooks as well as not enough materials included in them. Teachers admitted that their teaching of writing is usually limited to grammar and vocabulary learning and it usually involves sentence-level writing. It is, however, positive that teachers feel that writing should be reinforced in the EFL context. College entrance exams, which usually include open and closed format questions, teachers' insufficient knowledge of how to teach writing, combined with oversized classes, hinder the implementation of necessary changes. Better communication between teachers and course book writers was recommended in order to improve future textbooks in regards to the skill of writing.

McCarthy and Mkhize (2013) conducted a study in which they investigated high and low income schools' teachers' orientations towards writing as well as factors influencing their beliefs. The researchers observed significant differences between the two groups of teachers concerning what they valued in writing. Teachers from high income schools focused on rhetorical style and helped their students develop voice in their papers. They indicated links between reading and writing, which are considered crucial elements of writing practice. In contrast, teachers from low income schools paid attention to grammar, mechanics and sentence structure, which does not encourage students to approach writing holistically. Teachers made students focus on micro level issues. Teachers' orientations towards writing were influenced by the school context, syllabuses and materials,⁴ as well as assessment procedures. On this basis, it can be concluded that freedom in organizing course curriculum, the opportunity for teachers to supplement the classes with their own materials and—most importantly—not having to succumb to the washback effect significantly improve the quality of teaching.

In a study on teachers' beliefs about writing and the tensions with actual teaching practices, Melketo discovered that writing beliefs were not always in line with what the subjects of the study teach (the writing strategies they apply). This was mostly due to “contextual factors such as class time, students' expectations, teaching the test rather than teaching the subject, and focusing on classroom management concerns” (2012, p. 98). The teachers themselves observed that “I believe in A but my students expect me to do B”; “I believe in A but my students seem to learn better via B”; “I believe in A but the curriculum requires me to do B”; and “I believe in A but my learners are motivated by B.” (Melketo, 2012, pp. 108–109). These comments clearly show that teachers' practices were not directly influenced by their beliefs about language learning. The study showed that “learning is enhanced when learners are engaged cognitively, when their

⁴Teachers from high income schools tended to use extra-curricular materials as opposed to teachers from low income schools, who needed to adhere to the curriculum recommended by the district in which they taught.

expectations are met, when they are well motivated, and when order, control, and flow of the lessons were maintained" (Melketo, 2012, p. 109), more than when more autonomy (in which the teachers believed) was given to the learners. It was observed that talking about their beliefs helps teachers understand their behaviour better, reflect on their attitudes, and improve their teaching practice.

The only Polish study conducted in the field of beliefs about writing, in particular pre-service teachers' beliefs, was conducted by Salski and Szubko-Sitarek (2015). The aim of the project was to describe the students' attitudes towards writing (concerning their previous school experiences) as well as towards teaching writing in a foreign language (after their pre-service teaching practice), and their own experiences as writers gained in the process of writing their B.A. theses. The study confirmed the attitude that prevails among Polish students. Salski & Szubko-Sitarek explained Polish students' lack of fondness for writing as being the result of "the poor school experience and the lack of knowledge about writing techniques" (Salski & Szubko-Sitarek, 2015); they also regard it as "difficult and time-consuming" (*ibid.*). This attitude was also present when they started their teaching practice. Moreover, it was observed that although in the course of teaching practice theoretical knowledge about writing evolved, practical knowledge (including effective writing techniques) did not develop much. However, in the process of writing B.A. theses students' image of themselves as writers changed from "poor" and "I don't see myself as a writer" to "developing" and "I never thought there is so much about writing to be learnt" (Salski & Szubko-Sitarek, 2015). It follows that both pre-service teaching experience as well as writing a B.A. thesis positively contributed to the change of the students' beliefs about writing.

In this section it was shown that writing is often a neglected skill, which is liked neither by students nor teachers. Past experiences with writing tend to influence teachers' beliefs about the skill, which in turn have a great impact on prospective teachers' future teaching practices. These can be positively modified by their own writing practice. Sometimes, however, these beliefs may differ from their actual teaching practices due to many reasons such as the need to adhere to formal requirements for example. Also, writing instructors may differ in their beliefs about writing depending on the school context (high vs. low income schools). Still, "(s) ince the beliefs about the self as a writer and the knowledge about the process of writing seem to have an important influence on teacher students' attitudes towards writing instruction" (Salski & Szubko-Sitarek, 2015), it is important to investigate students' beliefs about writing. Hence, the following section will look at different studies on students' beliefs about writing.

2.4 Students' Beliefs About Writing

The importance of researching students' beliefs about writing seems undisputed: students act—in an ideal world again—according to what they believe in. For instance, a student may favour teacher correction over peer correction not because

the latter proved unsuccessful but because they believe the former is more effective. For this reason, if teachers familiarize themselves with their students' beliefs, they will be able to better tailor their writing classes to the needs of their students. The present subchapter will both show how students' writing beliefs develop in the process of learning and discuss whether (and how) students' attitudes towards writing affect their writing behaviours, their final products, as well as their well-being. However, first two important studies in the field will be reviewed: the first will help better understand students' conceptions about writing thanks to the use of metaphor while the other will look at a very popular belief, namely that writing is an innate ability.

Wan's study (2014) perfectly shows how (academic) writing is perceived by students. Thanks to the use of metaphors, which "are useful in investigating students' beliefs since they represent conceptual tools for interpreting and perceiving experience," as stated by Riley (1994; in Barcelos, 2003, p. 24), the readers get a very telling image of the students' perceptions of writing, which help better understand the difficulties they encounter in the process of composing but most importantly how complex this process is for them. Wan asked her study participants (for whom Chinese was L1) to come up with metaphors concerning academic writing while they were performing a writing task, so that the metaphor would closely resemble their true attitude towards composing an academic piece in ESL. Then, they were supposed to share and discuss the metaphors with other study participants in order to: identify and better understand their own problems, increase self-confidence in writing, enhance critical thinking about writing, and make changes to beliefs about writing, including formulating plans of action to implement their new views of writing and writing practices (Wan, 2014, pp. 56–57), which were later reported by the study participants. The respondents' metaphors "related closely to personal approaches to, emotions towards, and difficulties in writing" (Wan, 2014, p. 65). "Writing as a tour", "writing as making a sandwich", "writing as robot", and "writing as making a documentary film" transpired to be the most influential metaphors and had the highest degree of acceptance among all the metaphors given by the respondents. The results have practical implications not only for the students in helping them become successful writers as the conceptions about writing become better understood and clarified thanks to the use of metaphors (Wan, 2014, p. 66), but also for teachers as it helps them "understand what makes writing difficult for students and suggest what kinds of writing support should be given" (Wan, 2014, p. 56).

At this point, it is worth mentioning one of the first studies in the domain of writing beliefs, which was conducted by Palmquist and Young (1992). They investigated the concept of writing seen as an innate gift that some have and others lack. It was discovered that the belief that writing ability is innate results in writers being more apprehensive about their writing, having lower estimates of their writing skills and abilities as well as being less confident that they will become good writers. The researchers acknowledged that the belief in innateness "appears to make an important, though largely unacknowledged, contribution to a constellation of expectations, attitudes, and beliefs that influence the ways in which

students approach writing” (Palmquist & Young, 1992, p. 159; in Sanders-Reio et al., 2014, p. 2). It was especially evident in the case of those students whose assessment of their own paper was low and who were apprehensive of their writing: the belief in writing being innate may prove to be an excuse for their poor writing performance.

It has thus far been shown that beliefs about writing have far reaching consequences for writing behaviours, and in a broader perspective, on the quality of their papers. For this reason, it should be of vital importance, not only to researchers but also to writing instructors, to investigate the writing beliefs of their students. To help better understand what writing beliefs entail, the following sections will discuss selected studies conducted in the field of students' beliefs about writing (including the concept of transmission and transaction), changing nature of students' beliefs, the relationship between beliefs about writing and the quality of products, the relationship between beliefs and one's well-being, as well as clash between beliefs and actual behaviour. The suggestion that understanding students' beliefs helps us to better understand students and their complex identities, closes the section.

2.4.1 Transmission and Transaction: Their Effect on Writing

A seminal study which gave rise to later works in the field of writing beliefs was conducted by White and Bruning (2005). They explored the role of two widespread beliefs about reading in the context of writing, namely transmission and transaction. This classification can be compared to the one proposed by Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987), who viewed writing as either knowledge-telling (transmission) or knowledge-transforming (transaction). White and Bruning found that writers with mostly transactional beliefs “view the purpose of writing as a way to personally and critically construct the text by actively engaging their own thinking into the process” (2005, p. 168). However, writers with mostly transmissional beliefs “envision writing as a way to transfer information from authoritative sources to the reader in a manner that limits how the writer's ideas are reflected in the text” (White & Bruning, 2005, p. 168). Later studies used the classification proposed by White and Bruning (2005) in order to verify what consequence writing beliefs have on different aspects of writing.

The aforementioned study on writing beliefs together with the one by Palmquist and Young (1992) were an important step in acknowledging the complex nature of beliefs about the process of learning to write, as well as later laying the foundations for designing further studies within the field (cf. Sanders-Reio et al., 2014 with White & Bruning, 2005). One of the studies that relied on the two reviewed in the preceding paragraph was conducted by Sanders-Reio et al. (2014). It focused on the relation between students' beliefs about writing (transaction vs. transmission) and

their impact on writing self-efficacy, apprehension and performance. It was found that beliefs about writing did relate to the students' writing self-efficacy, apprehension, and performance; they also predict unique variance in the students' grades for their written work (Sanders-Reio et al., 2014, p. 9). The researchers considered four aspects of students' beliefs about writing—audience, writing as a recursive process, transmission, and transaction. Concerning the first two aspects, that is audience and writing as a recursive process, it was found that they belong to those aspects that are adaptive to the writer's skills and experience in writing. The more experienced the writer is, the more attention they pay to potential readers and the more recursive their writing process is. In the case of transaction and transmission, it turned out that those students who tend to pay more attention to understanding the source materials they refer to in their papers (transaction), tend to enjoy writing more than those who tend to "transmit" (transmission) the knowledge they read about via their paper. It was discovered that when the idea of incorporating references to one's written work is misunderstood, "a mechanical and/or safe, self-protective, and detached approach to writing that entails stringing other writers' quotes together, plugging new text into established formats, or simply using new words to convey established lines of argument laid out by authorities in encyclopedias and textbooks" (Sanders-Reio et al., 2014, p. 9) may be fostered among the students, making them "less self-efficacious and more apprehensive about writing, particularly with respect to grammar and writing mechanics" (Sanders-Reio et al., 2014, p. 9). It transpired that participants who had high writing self-efficacy did not have high writing apprehension and enjoyed writing more, while those who had low writing self-efficacy did not enjoy writing so much and were comparatively more apprehensive about writing. Those who were more apprehensive about writing received lower grades on their papers, while those participants who had high writing self-efficacy received higher grades (Sanders-Reio et al., 2014, p. 9).

Another study which investigated the influence of transactional and transmissional beliefs on writing was conducted by Baaijen et al. (2014). The researchers aimed to verify whether writers with different writing beliefs differ in the type and intensity of engagement. They queried whether writing beliefs and type of planning had an effect on text quality, on change in subjective understanding, and on the amount of text modification. The following aspects were analyzed in their study: text quality, the development of understanding, and text modification. Relationships between the amount of text modification and text quality and change in understanding were investigated. The most important conclusion concerns revision. In the case of transactional writers, revisions are undertaken as a natural consequence of discovering meaning during the process of writing. However, when low transactional writers revise their papers they do it in order to conform to the initial ideas, which is detrimental to the final product as "it involves modifying the text to satisfy a preconceived plan rather than changing the plan to better capture the writer's understanding" (Baaijen et al., 2014, p. 90). This finding shows that low and high transactional writers produce similar amounts of text modification but that this has different relationships with the development of understanding and text quality for the two groups. It is visible that there is a difference in the nature of the two beliefs.

Transactional beliefs are about the processes that are involved in the process of writing while transmissional beliefs are about the type of content that should be written about.

2.4.2 The Changing Nature of Beliefs About Writing

It is already known that beliefs are not stable: they develop with experience in writing, which encompasses not only accumulated knowledge but also all the other factors accompanying the process of composing, such as teacher feedback. A study which focused on the changing nature of writing beliefs was carried out by Kear et al. (2000). They investigated the writing attitudes of primary school students with the use of a survey. It transpired that younger students tend to have a more positive attitude towards writing than older students. This may be a consequence of the realisation that good writing requires considerable effort. Students' experiences connected with their writing practice are rather negative and include tedium, being given limited or almost no choice in their writing practice and negative feedback from their teachers.

Another study on the changing nature of beliefs was conducted by Neely (2014) and focused on first-year students (most of them were English native speakers) and their epistemological and writing beliefs both in the context of shifts (from the beginning to the end of semester) as well as in relation to their final papers. She found that first year students in their first semester at university who "view writing as a product were more likely to think that learning happens fast, authority is omniscient, knowledge is certain, and have impatience with ambiguous knowledge" (Neely, 2014, p. 148). Later in the semester the students' beliefs changed especially in the area of the product-based nature of writing. They started to see writing as a way of communicating with an audience and were more likely to accept revision which they saw as "an integral part of the process" (Neely, 2014, p. 149).

It is evident then that students' beliefs about writing change in the process of gaining knowledge. These changes may be either positive in their nature, as was demonstrated on the example of the study by Neely (2014) and her analysis of the development of students' understanding of writing, or may have a negative tendency due to the students' negative experiences connected with writing, as was seen in the study by Kear et al. (2000).

2.4.3 The Relationship Between Writing Beliefs and Quality of Papers

As has been already shown, planning may have a considerable effect on text quality. In the study by Baaijen et al. (2014) it was observed that there is a significant difference between low and high transactional writers concerning planning. Outlining increases text quality in the case of low transactional writers but not high

transactional writers. Planning plays an important role in text quality—in the case of transactional writers it does not help them constitute knowledge, but it helps organize ideas better in the case of low transactional writers. High transactional writers prioritize a bottom-up, knowledge-constituting process, while low transactional writers prefer a top-down, knowledge-telling process.

The study by Sanders-Reio et al. (2014) confirmed the relationship between students' beliefs about writing and the quality of their final papers. Those students who are more apprehensive about their writing receive lower grades; however, students with high writing self-efficacy receive better grades (Sanders-Reio et al., 2014, p. 9). Neely (2014) came to a similar conclusion. Her study revealed that “students whose beliefs reflected writing as a product, the purpose of writing as to report authority, and the notion that good writing should avoid disagreement wrote papers that were rated lower on the Contingency factor of their course paper” (p. 153). Likewise, those students who believed that the “purpose of writing is to report authorities' ideas tended to have papers that were less clear and organized” (Neely, 2014, p. 154).

Summing up, it is visible that beliefs about writing have considerable influence on students' papers. Writers who are more apprehensive are rated lower on their papers. In the case of low transactional students planning helps them organize their ideas better and—as a result—produce a paper of a better quality.

2.4.4 Beliefs and Personal Traits

Students' beliefs about writing may affect not only their compositions: they may well be related to their well-being or how involved the students are in writing. The impact of beliefs about writing was investigated in a study by Lonka et al. (2014) which focused on Ph.D. students and their views on academic writing and their well-being during writing. The study was based on four constructs: adaptive ideas about writing (which included: knowledge transforming, self-efficacy and productivity), beliefs in writing as an innate ability, problems in writing (such as writer's block, procrastination, perfectionism), and general dysfunctional emotions related to writing. Eventually, the questionnaire study included the following theoretical constructs: blocks, procrastination, perfectionism, innate ability, knowledge transforming, and productivity. It transpired that exhaustion, stress, anxiety and lack of interest contribute to a greater level of blocks, procrastination, and perfectionism, and the students being less productive. However, seeing writing as a process of transforming knowledge resulted in greater productivity on the students' part. Also, students who viewed writing as knowledge transforming believed that writing can be taught and learned (and not only as an innate gift). What seems to be even more important is the fact that students' ideas about writing are connected with their well-being.

A notion of engagement in writing and its effect on one's writing was investigated by Hawthorne (2008). In his study, he interviewed secondary school students

about what engages them in writing. It was discovered that interest and perceived relevance of the task are of primary concern as far as one's engagement in writing is concerned. Hawthorne divided his respondents into two groups, the engaged and the reluctant. He discovered that reluctant writers are more likely to be influenced by the teacher, belief in themselves as writers as well as knowledge and skills factors. Engaged writers, on the other hand, prefer to have more choice and control over their writing. In this way it is visible that students' attitude towards writing can effectively influence the writing process, by either enhancing or impeding it.

2.4.5 A Clash Between Attitude and Behaviour

So far it has been demonstrated that studying beliefs about writing proves helpful in understanding students' behaviours and the outcomes of their actions. However, students' beliefs do not always influence the way in which a student acts in the classroom. Petric (2002) investigated the issue of students' attitudes towards writing in relation to their classroom practices. Adopting new writing strategies and adapting to new writing strategies were the two issues which were of primary interest to her. It was observed that the process of adopting new writing strategies is a conscious one; in other words, students who come to a writing classroom with some already existing strategies, learned either explicitly or implicitly, have to negotiate them with the new ones presented to them. It does not necessarily mean that these new practices will be adopted as students may resort to familiar strategies (although the change of behaviour has taken place) if they do not feel in control (Petric, 2002, p. 21). Generally, change in belief follows rather than precedes a change in behaviour (Guskey, 1986; in Pajares, 1992) and "positive writing experiences are essential for positive attitude formation or change" (Petric, 2002, p. 21). However, there is a clash between students' attitudes and their behaviour. What the students believe to be good for them in the writing process, may not necessarily be utilized by them, for instance due to lack of time. Petric also observed that there are individual differences in the attitudes of the students. These may be a consequence of their personality, cultural and educational background. The level of proficiency may have an impact on the attitudes held by the students (2002, p. 19). Petric concludes that by acknowledging the importance of writing attitudes and the experiences that students bring with them may help teachers understand the causes of students' discomfort and the reasons for some students to resist writing. Incorporating practices which concentrate on students' beliefs, attitudes towards writing as well as their experiences may help students to become better writers.

2.4.6 The Relationship Between Culture, Writer Identity and Learner Beliefs

Barcelos stated that “(...) understanding students’ beliefs means understanding their world and their identity” (2003, p. 8). Li (2007) focused on this relationship in the product, micro-process and macro-process of writing in English as a foreign language. Her respondents were all Chinese, for whom English was a foreign language. The gap between the two cultures, namely the Eastern and Western one, as well as different expectations concerning academic education connected with it were of interest to the author. On the basis of the observations and interviews with the students and their teacher, Li came to very interesting conclusions. First, she noticed that the writer’s culture greatly influences the construction of writer identity and the formation of learner beliefs in an EFL situation. It was initially difficult for the respondents to find themselves in a new culture, in which they were asked to think critically and focus on originality of ideas, while in China they were encouraged to transmit the knowledge delivered by authorities. Second, the roles of teacher and student in the macro-process were different; in other words, students’ expectations were different from the teacher’s. The students were initially teacher dependent, they respected the authority of the teacher and did not trust the opinions of their peers. They awaited linguistic correctness in their papers. In sum, the Chinese students focused on micro-processes more than on macro-processes (just as reported in the study by Oi & Horne discussed earlier in this chapter). Lastly, a different approach towards micro-process activities was observed. The teacher assigned all the micro-process activities “so as to improve students’ competence in writing through these specific practices” (Li, 2007, p. 57). However, the students did not see any connection or greater goal between the assigned micro-process activities, such as free-writing or peer correction. Li points out that

When students and teachers first meet in an ESL class, their perceptions and beliefs may not overlap significantly. It is through negotiation and effort to understand each other that students start to change their ideas and move closer to their teachers’ beliefs. It may take students varying lengths of time to understand the teacher’s philosophy of teaching (Li, 2007, p. 59).

Li considers whether it should always be the students who should attempt to fit to the teachers’ beliefs. Li wonders if teachers’ beliefs may change as well as a consequence of students’ views on writing.

2.5 Behind the Skill of Writing in L2

First, L2 writers must be conscious of their own cognitive processes (metacognitive knowledge) to manipulate and build on existing writing competences. Second, they must be able to exercise deliberate control over these cognitive processes (strategic knowledge) in

ways that allow them to achieve the pragmatic and textual goals defined by a given task. Last, they must sustain a reasonably high level of lexicomorphosyntactic knowledge of the L2 to translate ideas into a linguistically acceptable form (Whalen & Menard, 1995, p. 382).

Since 1966, when Kaplan published his seminal article claiming that when we write in the second language we unconsciously transfer patterns known to us from our L1. Contrastive Rhetoric, more frequently referred today as Intercultural Rhetoric, has been used to show the mutual influence of the two languages, namely L1 and L2, in the process of writing. Together with the change of its name, beliefs concerning the actual role of the acquired languages on written texts have developed. Kaplan suggested that there exist certain “cultural thought patterns” characteristic of representatives of different languages. On the basis of this assumption, every writer is believed to have their own thought pattern which becomes visible in the texts they produce. Kaplan claimed that those culture-dependent ways of organizing texts will manifest themselves not only when composing in the native but also in the foreign language.

The differences in structuring texts written both by representatives of different cultures as well as learners of foreign languages have been of interest to researchers investigating writing. With respect to formal correspondence, including genres such as letters of complaints and business letters, the focus is very often on investigating the influence of languages on the rhetorical as well as the pragmatic sphere. Directness and politeness strategies have been analyzed by Maier (1992) and Connor, Davis, and De Rycker (1995). James, Scholfield, and Ypsiladis (1994) concentrated on the persuasive character of the motivational letter. Jenkins & Hinds (1987), and Wolfe (2008), who analyzed business correspondence, focused on rhetorical aspects such as the orientation of the letter, avoiding uncertainty and power distance between the writer and the reader, resulting from a position held. Upton and Connor (2001) paid attention to characteristic expressions and to certain freedom in structuring the letters. Precht (1998) concentrated on the way of organizing information and supporting a candidate’s figure in letters of recommendation. In the aforementioned studies it has been observed that the existing differences in the letters are most frequently the consequence of cultural differences, different genre expectations or the transfer of linguistic solutions known from L1. However, they may also be the consequence of different aspects writers concentrate on when composing in the mother tongue and in the foreign language. According to Costino and Hyon (2011), L2 writing focuses on different aspects than L1 writing, just to mention the focus on genre and its characteristic expressions.

The view, however, that an L2 text will reflect the characteristics of L1 culture was very one-sided as it assumed that “students from a certain culture belong to a homogeneous group and are passive recipients of cultural norms” (Kubota, 1998, p. 74). Such aspects as EFL learners’ abilities, experience and intentions were ignored. It has been observed that the way in which the text in L2 is structured may not only be due to interference of L1 cultural rhetoric. There exists a large body of research which investigated the cognitive aspect of writing, which confirmed the positive transfer of cognitive abilities in the process of writing. The present section

will discuss many studies investigating the role of language proficiency (Uzawa & Cumming, 1989; Wang, 2003; Wang & Wen, 2002) and writing expertise (Cumming, 1989; Whalen & Menard, 1995; van Weijen et al., 2009) in the process of foreign language writing. Cumming (1989) claimed that writing expertise, which is developmental in its nature, should be seen “as a central cognitive ability—with second language proficiency adding to it, facilitating it in a new domain, and possibly enhancing it” (p. 121). Skibniewski (1988) and Skibniewski and Skibniewska (1986) observed that more interesting differences may be seen when the writing processes of novice writers are compared with those of expert writers. Matsumoto (1995) contributed to the discussion and reported that “certain indispensable nonlinguistic strategies (...) are needed to produce cohesive writing” (p. 23), which may mean that one needs to be a good L1 writer in order to be a good L2 writer. However, for the transfer of writing skills to take place, as Berman (1994) adds, one needs to attain a certain level of L2 proficiency.

Many studies which focused on examining the writing processes of L2 writers have shown that the processes of writing in the first and second language may be similar or different according to different factors. The following sections will focus on both the similarities as well as differences in the same process but taking place in two languages.

2.6 Similarities and Differences Between the Processes of L1 and L2 Writing

There have been many studies conducted so far which aimed at discovering whether the processes of composing in the target language and in the second/foreign language are similar or different. Different stages of the writing process, such as planning strategies, text generation, or revision strategies, to name a few, have been investigated. The results have been contradictory due to the perspective adopted by a researcher. Quantitative and qualitative differences can be noted in the results. The first are connected with, for instance, students spending more time pausing while writing in L2 (Hall, 1990; Pennington & So, 1993), writing shorter texts in L2 than in their L1 (Berman, 1994; Friedlander, 1990; Hall, 1990), and with students spending more time rereading their texts (Pennington & So, 1993) in L2 than in their L1. Quality, however, is related to the use of a given strategy both in L1 and L2. It should be mentioned here, after Jones & Tetroe (1987), that those studies which focus on quantity when measuring cross-language performance find differences, and those that concentrate on patterns, or quality, find similarities between the L1 and L2 writing processes. In other words, it could be said that whenever the very L1 strategy and its hypothetical transfer into L2 is in focus, the results suggest similarity between the application of this strategy in the two languages. However, when the extent to which the strategy has been utilized in the first and in the second

language is measured, usually a difference between the two languages is suggested. A thorough interpretation of the results is needed.

Matsumoto in his study (1995) interviewed a few experienced Japanese academic writers about their writing practices in English, their second language. The subjects admitted that “they transfer strategies they acquired in Japanese research paper writing to English research paper writing” (p. 23); one of the professors said that

it seems that I have learned certain indispensable nonlinguistic strategies that are needed to produce cohesive writing. (...) I feel that there is something essential or fundamental about writing whether you write in Japanese or in English, or probably in Chinese or in Spanish, which is independent of specific languages (...) if you want to be a good second language writer, you have to be a good native language writer in the first place (Matsumoto, 1995, p. 23).

It has been visible from this study that the ability to write in the second language is not viewed as distinct from writing in L1; it is even suggested that there might exist one system which governs writing in any language. Matsumoto, though, did not wish to ignore Kaplan’s (1966) proposition that differences in writing depend on one’s cultural and linguistic background. He, however, stated that such claims may not be true in the case of highly-advanced sophisticated EFL writers, who might have already conquered cultural barriers that would otherwise have produced L1–L2 stylistic and perceptual variations.

Below is a summary of studies which focus on the comparison of the writing processes in L1 and L2, concerning the stages of the composition process—planning, revision, transcription and translation.

2.6.1 *Planning*

One of the studies which focused on planning strategies in the two languages was conducted by Jones and Tetroe (1987). In their study, Spanish-speaking ESL writers produced texts both in L1 (Spanish) and their L2 (English). It transpired that the planning strategies were common for both languages; however, in L2 they were not as well-developed as in their first language. It was assumed that “the quality, not the quantity, of planning transfers from L1 to L2” (Jones & Tetroe, 1987, p. 56). The actual realization of the planning strategies is believed to depend on L2 proficiency, which may constrain the planning process in the case of low L2 proficiency. The results were explained in terms of working-memory capacity when working in the second language—when writing in the first language, the mind is not overburdened with switching between the two languages and more attention can be paid to such aspects as monitoring or revising. What influences the planning strategies in L2 is the ability to plan in one’s L1. Jones & Tetroe summarized it in such a way: “the reason their planning remained at a concrete level is not because they could go no higher in English, but because they did not know how to go higher

in any language” (p. 55). A more detailed analysis of the factors contributing to the transfer of writing skills will be discussed in the following sections.

Whalen and Menard (1995) came to a similar conclusion in their study, in which they investigated planning strategies of their L2 writers both in L1 and in L2. It transpired that planning strategies are different in the two languages. Participants planned mostly on pragmatic and textual level in their L1. Linguistic planning was, however, carried out more frequently in L2. The researchers verified not only the occurrences of each planning strategy but also their quality. Similarly to Jones & Tetroe’s findings, they observed that although the type of planning may vary across languages, the quality remains similar. They concluded saying that “although more abstract planning sequences were noticeably fewer in L2 protocols, the pragmatic and textual planning that did occur was very similar to that in L1 protocols” (p. 395).

2.6.2 Revision

There have been many studies conducted investigating revision strategies both in L1 and L2 writing, among them studies by Chelala (1981), Zamel (1983), and Gaskill (1986). The differences in revision strategies between the expert and novice writers when composing in their L1 were summarized by Whalen and Menard (1995):

The “expert” writer reviser will undertake changes at all levels of discourse, often revising at these levels simultaneously. Proficient writers will manage this kind of parallel processing on the basis of an explicit and flexible mental representation of the emerging text, which guides successive revisions. When making changes at the local level of phrase structure, the expert writer will test them against their semantic value at both pragmatic and textual levels. (p. 397)

In contrast, “adult novice writers generally lack control of cognitive processing because they have underdeveloped strategic skills due to a simple lack of writing expertise” (Whalen & Menard, 1995, p. 398). They also checked the differences between the revision strategies in L1 and L2. It transpired that the strategies used on pragmatic, textual and linguistic level were very similar in the two languages. Their writers revised mostly on the local level. They revised very infrequently on the pragmatic level and textual revision took place more often in L1 but linguistic revisions in L2. This type of revision was the most frequent in both languages. However, the researchers went further and examined whether there were any differences in the depth of those linguistic revisions performed by their participants. It transpired that writers “revised more frequently at deep levels of linguistic processing (phrase, punctuation, and sentence levels) in L1 writing, but revised more frequently at surface levels of linguistic processing in L2 writing (morpheme and orthography)” (Whalen & Menard, 1995, p. 402). Bearing in mind that the participants were advanced students of French, the results could be attributed to

complex French morphosyntax when compared to the English one. There is also the probability that the respondents did not voice other types of revisions during their think-aloud sessions although they might have taken place, and managed to report only the surface revisions.

Also Hall (1990) focused on revision strategies in her study. In this case advanced ESL learners with different L1 backgrounds were asked to compose a text in their L1 and L2. Hall observed that the revision strategies were very similar across languages. It was concluded that the writers must have used a single system during the revision process in L1 and L2. This, in turn, suggests that there might exist something like a system (nonlinguistic but rather cognitive-strategic) which helps writers to meet the goals of producing effective and cohesive writing (Matsumoto, 1995, p. 25).

2.6.3 *Transcription*

According to Whalen and Menard (1995), transcription could be described as “the linguistic formulation of generated ideas in writing” (p. 406). In their study, they observed that transcription is much more complex in the case of writing in L2 than in L1. They explain it in the following way:

If translation of the mental representation into linguistic structures is slower and more laborious in L2, the writer risks losing the clarity and explicitness of this representation due to concentration on searching, accessing, and retrieving linguistic forms. In terms of simple memory constraints, L2 writers momentarily “forget” what they intended to say. (Whalen & Menard, 1995, p. 406)

Creating texts in L2 very often results in linguistic errors, reductions in content and undeveloped ideas, in other words problems which can be compared to those of a basic writer producing compositions in L1. It should be remembered that the following problems will mostly appear in the case of those writers who still tend to think in their native language when producing a text in the foreign language and who may find it problematic to transcribe their thoughts into another language from the one in which they were generated. The situation will be different in the case of proficient L2 writers, who (when given a topic to write about) will automatically start thinking in the target language and will not have the problems of less proficient L2 writers.

2.6.4 *Translation*

Translation is understood, after Whalen and Menard (1995), as word-for-word rendition of ideas expressed first in L1 and then translated into L2. The researchers observed that this strategy was used by all their participants; however, the

participants made use of translation in different ways, depending on whether they were more or less strategically proficient writers. In the case of the former, it transpired that translation is used mainly for formulating clear lexical and syntagmatic choices, which in turn improved the readability and coherence of their L2 texts. However, translation strategy had a negative influence on the L2 writing process in the case of less strategically proficient writers, in which case the transcription process and the process of generating ideas was frequently interrupted. The findings were summarized in the following way:

The more strategically proficient writer translates in order to more effectively achieve pragmatic and textual goals while continuing to process information at all three levels of discourse. The less strategically proficient writer translates in order to generate acceptable linguistic structures, while being unable to attend to higher-level processing when employing this writing strategy. (Whalen & Menard, 1995, p. 410).

The aforementioned studies show that the writing processes in L1 and L2 are similar; however, they may vary to some extent depending on the proficiency in L2 and the expertise in writing in L1. L2 writers will make use of the experience they have gained when learning to write in the first language, which was shown in Jones & Tetroe's study; the only difference may be how well developed their ideas become in the L2, which seems to be tightly connected with their fluency in the L2. This was confirmed by other studies investigating writing strategies in L1 and L2. For example, Arndt's (1987) study showed that in the case of Chinese-speaking graduate-level L2 writers the processes and strategies of every writer were the same for composing in both languages. Krapels (1990) observed that the process of writing in one's L1 is almost the same as in the case of L2 writing. The same was confirmed by van Weijen et al. (2009), whose study proved that those learners whose writing skills in L1 were assessed as good, transpired to be also relatively good writers in L2 (p. 245).

2.7 The Use of L1 in the L2 Writing Process

As has been already mentioned, the processes of writing in L1 and L2 are similar, with this difference that when composing in L2 the L2 writer has two languages at her disposal. Although the actual text is produced in the target language, the process of composing may entail both languages known to the writer. However, the way in which the first language is used in the process of writing compositions in L2 may have a positive or negative nature, and it may concern both more global as well as more local aspects of the writing process. The use L1 depends not only on the writer's L2 proficiency, but also on her general writing proficiency, topic knowledge or task type. This subchapter will first discuss the factors affecting the use of L1 in the L2 writing process. It will analyze the domains in which L1 is mostly used during the process of L2 writing, and finally it will take a look at the effect L1 has on the final L2 text quality.

2.7.1 Factors Affecting L1 Use in L2 Writing

Although it is claimed that good L1 writers are usually good L2 writers too, some conditions need to be met in order for the transfer of writing skills to occur. The two most important conditions are proficiency in the target language and general writing proficiency. Topic knowledge and the type of task are also relevant. The following subsection will focus on summarizing the most important studies which have shown that these four aspects are crucial in the process of L2 writing.

2.7.1.1 L2 Proficiency

The influence of L2 language proficiency (and the language of instruction) on transferring writing skills between languages was the focus of Berman's study (1994). He draws on the findings by Yau (1987), who indicated that in order for the transfer of skills to take place, there has to exist a certain level of grammatical competence in L2 (Yau, 1987; cited in Berman, 1994, p. 29). Berman went even further claiming that

Whatever thoughts a writer generates before writing can be expressed in variety of ways not tied to a particular language. It would follow that, to the extent that thoughts are transferable across languages, people should be able to apply the skills and knowledge that they have acquired in first language writing to their L2 writing (Berman, 1994, p. 30).

In other words, the author assumed that the transfer of writing skills should take place between languages irrespective of the language of instruction, provided, however, that the grammatical proficiency in L2 is sufficient. In his experiment he included three groups of students: those who were instructed in their mother tongue (Icelandic) (Group L1), those who were instructed in English (Group L2) and those who obtained no instruction (the comparison group). The results showed that as far as the students taught in English were concerned, grammatical proficiency was not an important factor in transferring writing skills between languages. However, in the case of instruction delivered in the students' L1, grammatical proficiency might have had an impact on their ability to transfer writing skills from L1 to L2. Berman attributed the results to the fact that less able L2 writers with poorer grammatical proficiency are more engaged in looking for the right words and constructions, and have less time to deal with organization of the essay. Nevertheless, the study clearly shows that the transfer of writing skills does take place between languages no matter what the language of instruction is.

The study carried out by Wolfersberger (2003) seems to confirm the belief that there needs to exist a certain level of L2 proficiency in order for transfer of writing strategies to be executed from L1 to L2. In the case of low proficiency L2 writers, who were Wolfersberger's subjects, L1 was often used during prewriting and when translating from their L1 to their L2 in order to compensate for their limited ability to write in their L2. However, what was especially interesting was the finding that the students differed in the strategies they applied when composing in their L1

(Japanese) and L2 (English). In contrast, in a study by Beare & Bourdages (2007) it was observed that in the case of full bilinguals (and skilled writers in the two languages) the strategies used when composing in L1 and L2 are similar irrespective of the language in which the composing process takes place. It can be said that the transfer of L1 writing strategies to L2 writing is inhibited when L2 learners lack the necessary proficiency level to cope with the writing task.

Kecskes and Papp (2000, p. 16) confirm that L2 competence needs to reach a certain level in order to influence the way in which L1 is used. The authors predict that this influence will result in better text developing skills, more complex and better constructed sentences and more selective use of vocabulary. The results of their study allowed them to assume that learning a foreign language helps a learner to cope creatively with the task they are faced with. This, in turn, suggests that the knowledge gained through any language will have its impact on other learned languages.

Centeno-Cortés and Jiménez Jiménez (2004; cited in van Weijen et al., 2009, p. 236) also differentiate between the extent to which L1 is used in the case of less and more advanced L2 learners. Although they confirm that intermediate L2 learners use their mother tongue more often than advanced L2 learners, the latter group use their L1 as well, especially when problem solving becomes too difficult. Wang and Wen (2002) conceive the development of L2 writing as a continuum which begins with less proficient L2 student writers producing their texts via L1-to-L2 translation, and develops when proficient L2 writers generate their entire texts directly in L2. However, in the case of higher-order mental processes, such as planning or text organization, advanced L2 student writers still tend to refer to their L1. The two various purposes of language switching during the process of writing in the second language were found by Wang (2003). He observed that while less proficient L2 writers refer to their L1 mostly when generating their texts, proficient L2 writers used their mother tongue to clarify text concepts, enrich contextual information and shape their discourse; in other words, they used it to attend to higher-order problems, which may have an impact on better coherence, organization and topical appropriateness of their papers (Wang, 2003, p. 367). In this way, it is evident that becoming a proficient user of the second language allows for much more freedom in the complex process of L2 writing. Mastering the foreign language offers an opportunity to focus on other aspects of writing more consciously, which often results in producing a better text.

2.7.1.2 General Writing Proficiency

It is, however, not only language proficiency but also writing expertise that significantly influences the process of creating compositions in the foreign language. Furthermore, Schoonen et al. (2003) observe that “general writing proficiency overshadows the influence of L2 proficiency on L2 writing” (cited in van Weijen, 2009, p. 245). Writing expertise is understood, following Gardner (1983, cited in Cumming 1989: 124), as “specially developed intelligence with unique cognitive

characteristics that can be applied across languages.” It was shown that both writing expertise and language proficiency contribute differently to the processes of composing in the second language (Cumming, 1989). Concerning the role of one’s general writing proficiency, in comparison with novice writers, expert writers (p. 119):

- use particular strategies actively to solve problems while they write,
- transform their knowledge as they write,
- use complex mental representations to guide their decision making,
- produce more effective content and discourse organization in their compositions,
- interrelate planning and production processes in sophisticated ways, and
- attend frequently to word choices.

Novice writers, on the other hand, though able to perform the task, lack relevant procedures, strategies and knowledge.

In terms of second language proficiency, Cumming found that “as people gain proficiency in their second language, they become better able to perform in writing in their second language, producing more effective texts, attending more fully to aspects of their writing” (p. 121). However, high proficiency in the foreign language does not equal changes in the thinking processes and decision-making behaviours during the processes of composing in the foreign language. Cumming claimed that writing expertise should be seen “as a central cognitive ability—with second language proficiency adding to it, facilitating it in a new domain, and possibly enhancing it” (p. 121).

Uzawa and Cumming (1989) hold that it is cognitive strategy use that leads to the difficulties when composing in a foreign language. They even hypothesize that “other aspects of writing expertise would seem to have a developmental basis, which may more closely relate to higher order literacy skills, quite independently of language proficiency or anything like contrastive rhetoric” (p. 186). They go on to account for mistakes such as linguistic errors, reductions in content, and undeveloped ideas in terms of a chosen writing strategy—either *lowering the standard* or *keeping up the standard* strategy. In the case of the first one, learners resort to reducing the quantity of information, simplifying the syntax, borrowing specific lexical items verbatim from source materials, avoiding semantic elaborations and neglecting concerns for the audience who may read their texts. The use of this strategy does not have to be the effect of the lack of language; mostly it is a systematic strategy used by language learners.

The second strategy, to maintain the standard, concerns another approach to L2 writing. As it is difficult to put forward all the information one would want due to limited language skills in the foreign language, one resorts to “compensatory strategies such as rehearsing and organizing information in the mother tongue, taking extra time to compose, seeking assistance on word choices and grammar and revising texts extensively” (Uzawa & Cumming, 1989, p. 185). However, by using this strategy the students may “get stuck in their thinking, and consequently lose control over their writing, producing less than coherent text” (Uzawa & Cumming,

1989, p. 186). Writing in the second language can be understood in terms of cross-linguistic transfer of cognitive skills.

Raimes (1985) and Zamel (1983) found that there exists a difference between skilled and unskilled writers in their approach to pre-writing activities, revision activities and their views on the writing process. Starting from pre-writing activities, it turned out that unskilled writers do not spend much time on planning. They stick to the initial plan of their paper and do not change it much during the writing process. Skilled writers spend more time on planning and they also change and revise the original plan flexibly whenever a new idea appears. Concerning revision strategies, the researchers found that unskilled writers focus on mechanics (surface-level mistakes) and do not make any changes to the meaning of their texts. However, skilled writers focus on developing and formulating their ideas and concentrate on editing (grammar, punctuation and spelling errors) only towards the end of the writing process. The views of the writing process appeared to differ between skilled and unskilled writers. Unskilled writers view writing as a linear process, which simply expands the original plan of the composition; skilled writers, however, view writing as a nonlinear and creative process, in which they discover new ideas, explore and formulate them. The same view was presented in Matsumoto's study (1995), in which the writing process was viewed by his subjects as "a process of thinking and creating ideas and making our own thoughts more accurate and precise" (p. 23). His study, which investigated writing behaviours of Japanese university professors, advanced speakers of English as L2, showed that when writing compositions in English they do not incorporate L1-to-L2 translation in the writing process. However, they may refer to their L1 when brainstorming and generating ideas in the prewriting stage. The same results were indicated earlier in the study by Lay (1982, cited in Wang & Wen, 2002), who observed that the L1 (Chinese) was used by L2 writers to "get a strong impression and association of ideas" (Lay, 1982, p. 406; cited in Wang & Wen, 2002, p. 226) when writing a text in L2.

In the study by Whalen and Menard, less proficient L2 writers "sought to translate, word by word, the first idea that came to mind in their L1" (1995, p. 409; cited in Wang and Wen, 2002, p. 241). On the other hand, proficient L2 writers produced their texts directly in L2, referring to L1 when looking for better words, or as Whalen & Menard put it: "used translation to formulate more precise lexical and syntagmatic choices that contributed to the readability and coherence of the written product" (1995, p. 407). Woodall (2002) observed that less proficient writers switch more often from their L1 to their L2 than high proficiency writers. This was influenced by whether they were writing in noncognate (Japanese-English) or cognate languages (Spanish-English) (cited in van Weijen et al., 2009, p. 236). In Whalen's and Menard's study, in the process of writing compositions in L2, more strategically proficient writers translated in order to "more effectively achieve pragmatic and textual goals while continuing to process information at all three levels of discourse" (p. 410). Less strategically proficient writers translated in order to "generate acceptable linguistic structures, while being unable to attend to

higher-level processing when employing this writing strategy” (Whalen and Menard, 1995, p. 410).

A study by van Weijen et al. (2009), in which Dutch learners of English were asked to produce four short argumentative essays in their L1 and four in their L2, showed that “writers with lower general writing proficiency are likely to carry out cognitive activities in their L1 while writing in their L2, while writers with higher general writing proficiency are likely to use their L2 while writing in L2” (p. 244). The authors explain this phenomenon in terms of cognitive overload. Learners who obtained advanced writing proficiency are less likely to experience cognitive overload in the process of constructing an L2 text will consequently turn to L1 less often than less proficient writers (p. 245). Their study confirmed the results of the aforementioned studies that it is the general writing proficiency which influences the use of L1 in the writing process, not the general L2 proficiency, which influences only the L2 text quality.

2.7.1.3 Type of Task

Jones and Tetroe (1987) in their study investigated writing behaviours of second language writers focusing on how they plan their compositions and whether, and if yes to what extent, they make use of their first language when planning in L2. It was found that the use of L1 depended on the type of task assigned. When students were faced with a conventional writing task, understood as “the kind of writing task usually set for ESL students in their writing courses or on English-proficiency tests” (Jones & Tetroe, 1987, p. 44), L1 was present in their think-aloud protocols more frequently than when they were given a final sentence of the paper they were supposed to write. It was observed that providing the subjects with some vocabulary (as was the case in ending-sentence intervention) resulted in the reduction of the first language when composing in the second language. Also, it turned out that the genre of the paper influenced the amount of L1 use as well. Students resorted to their mother tongue less frequently when they were performing narrative tasks; in comparison, L1 was used more often when they created an argumentative piece, which required a greater deal of abstract goal setting on their part.

Similarly, Manchón, Roca de Larios, and Murphy (2000) included two writing tasks, argumentative and narrative writing, in their study. It transpired that the use of L1 differed according to the task performed. Due to a very limited number of participants it is impossible to draw conclusions concerning the type of task and the amount of L1 used. In order to find an answer to the query which the aforementioned study was not capable of addressing, a similar study was conducted by Wang and Wen (2002). They also provided their respondents, intermediate and advanced students of English, with two writing assignments, that is a narrative and a argumentative essay. It was observed that although narration is believed to be the least cognitively demanding writing task and argumentation the most demanding (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996; cited in Wang & Wen, 2002, p. 229), the quantitative analysis of think aloud data showed that in the case of the narrative essay the L2 writers

resorted to L1 more frequently than when structuring the argumentation essay. This result, however, might be attributed to the differences in the prompts: the narrative essay was introduced with a set of pictures, while there was a task in the English language for the argumentative essay. As Wang & Wen put it, “the more the cognitive processing is related to the textual output, the less L1 is used in it” (2002, p. 240). In other words, irrespective of the genre, it is the prompt the students get that will influence the amount of L1 which will be used in the process of writing in L2.

2.7.1.4 Other Aspects

Apart from the already discussed factors which influence the use of L1 in the L2 writing process, namely L2 proficiency, general writing proficiency and type of task, there are other aspects which contribute to the L2 writer’s use of L1. One of them is topic knowledge. Krapels (1990) points out that “certain writing tasks, apparently those related to culture-bound topics, elicit more first language use when writing in a second language than other tasks do” (p. 50). However, there is more to topic knowledge than culture-related issues. The construct in question may also encompass other domains of knowledge, depending on the language in which that knowledge was acquired and/or processed. If a writer learned about a given topic via L1, then it would probably be easier, provided that either the topic was complex or L2 proficiency is not yet developed, to write compositions on this topic in the language in which it was acquired. Conversely, if something was learned in L2, probably both lexical resources and transcribing the text would be easier to manage in the target language.

There are also other factors that influence the way in which L1 is used. Those might be individual differences between L2 writers, but also educational practices. For example, some teachers may encourage their students to employ L2 as much as possible when writing in the foreign language, even at the expense of more limited ideas. Other teachers may allow students to rely on L1 throughout the writing process, which may result in L1 being used not only when generating ideas or looking for lexical items, but also when planning the paper or creating the actual text. The most important factors that influence L1 use in L2 writing remain to be general writing proficiency and L2 proficiency.

2.7.2 *The Domains and Extent of the Use of L1 in L2 Writing*

In the writing process, students may use their L1 for different purposes; some do it for extensive planning, while others may need it for lexical searches mainly. The extent to which they control their L1 use varies. Woodall (2002) observed that

“some students appeared to control their language switching, using their L1 as a tool. For others, language switching seemed out of control, and the L1 seemed more like a crutch to obtain cognitive stability” (Woodall, 2002, p. 20). The reasons behind these linguistic switches were discussed in the previous sections. What is of importance now is in which stages of the L2 writing process switching between the two languages is most often evident.

The use of L1 in the process of generating ideas, searching for topics, developing concepts and organizing information was observed by Uzawa and Cumming (1989). As their Anglo-Canadian subjects represented only an intermediate level of L2 (which was Japanese), some of the students actually wrote drafts or notes in English before transposing them into Japanese text. One of the subjects admitted that usually when she writes a composition in Japanese,

I first think of a topic that I feel I can write an essay on, then I write it all down in English to get the structure I want. Next I look up vocabulary words and sentence structure, and finally I write in Japanese (Uzawa & Cumming, 1989, p. 183).

The same tendency was observed in the case of intermediate Spanish EFL writers in Roca de Larios, Murphy, and Manchón's (1999) study. The results from think-aloud data clearly show that L2 writers used L1 not only during the pre-writing phase, when generating, developing and revising their ideas, but also produced pretexts in their L1.

The study by Wang and Wen (2002) indicated that L1 is used mainly when controlling the writing process in L2, but also when generating and organizing ideas. The use of L1 in these processes was higher in the case of intermediate students but it was still visibly present in the case of advanced learners. The decrease in the use of L1 in the whole writing process was continuous from intermediate to advanced level, but it stayed almost constant within the advanced level of L2 proficiency. The drop in L1 use was especially apparent in the case of process controlling; nevertheless, its level was still the highest from all the analyzed writing processes. The domain in which advanced L2 writers tended to use almost no L1 was text generating while less proficient learners constructed sentences with the use of L1-to-L2 translation. On the basis of their findings, Wang and Wen (2002) conclude that world knowledge and rhetorical knowledge is L1-dominant (due to the increased use of this language when generating and organizing ideas), but linguistic knowledge is L2-dependent, which is the result of using the foreign language when structuring the text.

Jones and Tetroe (1987, p. 54), who conducted a study on the processes of planning in L1 and L2 writing, observed that the subjects' L1, i.e. Spanish, was used mainly for metacomments and abstract, rhetorical goal setting. Similarly, in the case of Knutson's study it was observed that the subjects, mainly intermediate students of French as L2, mostly reported “rarely thinking in French, always translating mentally from English” (2006, p. 92). In other words, the writers declared that when creating texts they almost always think about what they want to write in their first language and only then try to transcribe their thoughts into their second language. However, the actual use of L1 depended on the level of L2

proficiency. While students with lower L2 proficiency often used L1 to generate their texts, more proficient L2 writers produced texts directly in the L2.

There are also studies which made an attempt to answer the question concerning the amount of thinking in one's L1 when writing compositions in L2. In the study by Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992) Japanese university-level students were asked to indicate how much L1 (Japanese) they use in their minds when creating texts in L2 (English). The results show that almost half of the group used 50–75% of Japanese; a slightly smaller proportion, namely 27% of the respondents, admitted to using 25–50% of their L1 when composing in L2. Cohen and Brooks-Carson (2001) reported that the majority of their respondents, who were intermediate learners of French, declared that they thought in English (L1) often or always when writing compositions in French. The outcomes of both studies are very telling, as they show that L1 functions not only as a device to fall back on when problems in L2 occur but it can be perceived as a “springboard” or as a way for L2 writers to perform the writing task in L2.

Although the aforementioned studies contributed to the understanding of the functioning of the L2 writing process, mainly on the use of L1, the findings were based mostly on the subjective views of the respondents. For this reason, there arose a need for a more quantitative approach which could augment and shed additional light on existing studies. Guo and Liu (1997) conducted a study in which they asked Chinese EFL learners to write aloud in their L2. The results showed that 55% of the mental operations were carried out in the students' L1, from decoding the pictures to constructing the L2 text. Another study, conducted by Manchón, Roca de Larios, and Murphy (2000), showed that the use of L1 while writing in L2 in the case of intermediate Spanish learners of English varied from 78 to 16%. In turn, the study by van Weijen et al. (2009) revealed that during the process of creating texts in L2, metacomments and self-instructions are the most likely to occur in L1, especially in the instances when the writing process falters (pp. 241–242). In contrast, the use of L1 during goal setting, generating ideas and structuring was considerably lower.

2.7.3 L1 Use and Its Impact on L2 Text Quality

The fact that L1 is used while a composition is being written in L2 cannot be disputed. However, the role the L1 plays in the writing process may be twofold. Knutson (2006), Cohen and Brooks-Carson (2001), Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992), Uzawa (1996), Uzawa and Cumming (1989) claim that the use of L1 may have a beneficial effect on the L2 written product. Whereas Woodall (2002) chooses to narrow down the scope of the effect of L1 saying that “L1 use appeared to be positive for high proficiency writers of cognate languages” (cited in van Weijen, 2006, p. 237). Studies by Lay (1982, 1983) confirm that using L1 during the L2 writing process is facilitative. It was observed that the quality of the compositions

was better in the case of those students who moved more frequently between their two languages, as transpired from the data gathered thanks to think-aloud protocols.

However, L1 use during L2 writing may have a negative effect on the L2 text quality, as follows from the study by van Weijen et al. (2009). Those students who make frequent metacomments in L1 when writing in L2 produce texts of relatively poorer quality (p. 244). Nevertheless, the same is true when metacomments are formulated in L2 suggesting that metacomments signal moments when writers experience cognitive overload, which is then manifested in the quality of their texts.

For these reasons, the impact of L1 use in the L2 writing process can be beneficial, but it needs to be remembered that this is not the case for all writers. As has been mentioned above, it is L2 proficiency, general writing proficiency, type of task, topic knowledge as well whether the L1 and the L2 are cognate or noncognate languages, that influence the extent to which L1 is used in the process of L2 writing.

2.8 Towards a Multicompetent Bilingual Writer

In order to present the full picture, where it is not only the L1 which influences L2 writing, the issue of second language and its impact on one's writing in L1 has to be mentioned. There are easily discernible differences between, for example, L1 academic texts written by people of the same L1 background but professionally specializing in different languages, such as English, French or Polish. If that is the case, then it cannot be said that it is only L1 that influences the way in which the writer expresses himself in L2; the influence in the opposite direction seems also to be possible. However, special care must be taken, as there is a need for a thorough scrutiny here, taking into consideration linguistic knowledge, writing expertise, and instruction obtained when learning to write in a given language. Kubota (1998) called for a change in looking at EFL texts, from treating representatives of a given language background as having the same writing behaviours to taking a more individualized approach, as to how writers "are diverse in their ability, experience and intention" (p. 74). Thus, there might be writers whose expertise is such that they are able to choose between different modes of writing.

Nowadays we do not talk about writing only in terms of the writing product being influenced by other languages treated as separate systems. Today a more complex approach is postulated, which encompasses all the languages known by an individual and their role in producing a text. Hence, it is not only the influence of L1 on L2 writing, nor L2 on L1 writing in the case of more advanced students; neither is it simple bidirectional transfer. The language systems of bilinguals tend to overlap, which changes the perspective bilingual from which writing was perceived until recently. As Kobayashi and Rinnert (2012, p. 125) put it,

the repertoire of knowledge expands and evolves, the relations between L1 and L2 writing knowledge change from almost separate systems to greater degrees of overlap, until some parts of the repertoire can be said to merge into one core repertoire of writing knowledge

having no association with a particular language, which corresponds with one of the basic conceptions of multicompetence (Cook, 2008; Hall et al., 2006).

According to De Angelis and Jessner (2012), “a holistic or multilingual approach to multilingualism is needed in order to understand the complexity of multilingual written performance” (p. 47). In their study of native speakers of Italian, with German as L2 and English as L3, they aimed to examine how language systems interact with each other in the writing development process and how these interactions shape students’ performance over time. In order to investigate these issues, De Angelis & Jessner relied on Dynamic Systems Theory (DST), as they believe that “(i)n a multilingual system no language system should be looked at in isolation” (2012, p. 49). Concerning writing development, it is understood that every language subsystem influences the development not only of another language subsystem but also of the overall multilingual system (De Angelis & Jessner, 2012). In their study, it was found that the written products were influenced by the knowledge of other languages, both in terms of transfer of academic writing skills, management of multilingual writing, as well as crosslinguistic interaction, which in their study was evident, among others, on the level of lexis.⁵ The researchers call for a “multicompetence lens” in second language writing research, which would underline that L2 writing encompasses more dynamism and complexity than a mere influence of the native language on the foreign language written product.

Cenoz and Gorter (2011) believe that with the increase of the number of languages acquired, metalinguistic awareness develops and the languages used by multilingual speakers interact strongly (p. 358). They propose that

When a multilingual learner is acquiring languages, a holistic approach such as “Focus on Multilingualism” can show how the different subsystems are connected across the languages in their development and the way they support each other. (...) For example, we can observe the effect that learning a specific strategy in writing through instruction in one of the languages has on the other languages. (p. 360)

The dynamism and interconnectedness of the language systems were visible in their study, in which individual students used the same general strategy to approach the task in the three languages. They either decided on a storytelling or description mode. Multilingual learners chose similar strategies and themes and decided to focus on colours, celebrations, locations, etc. when producing compositions in the three languages. These findings are accounted for in terms of “soft boundaries” between the languages, where a given element is taken when needed (p. 366). In other words, Cenoz and Gorter observed that in a multilingual mind all the languages are in constant interplay; they also observed that a writer may use similar strategies in the three languages owing to experiencing similar problems when writing texts in the three languages. However, it has to be admitted that this study

⁵The lack of more advanced instances of interaction between the language systems was due to the low level of proficiency of the study participants.

included L3 intermediate speakers, which did not allow for frequent transfer of knowledge obtained through this language in the students' L1 and L2 writing. In addition, L1 and L2 in this case are spoken in the Basque country on a daily basis, which makes it difficult to differentiate which of them is the mother tongue and which is the second language.

Another study on L2 writing development conducted by Kobayashi & Rinnert (2012) proved that "as the repertoire of writing knowledge expands and evolves, the relations between L1 and L2 knowledge change from almost separate systems to greater degrees of overlap" (p. 101). In their study, they investigated the differences in the written products by novice and more experienced writers. They found that in the case of novice writers substantial L1 influence on the L2 writing was evident, while strong L2 influence on the L1 writing was perceived in the case of more experienced writers. Persistent L1 influence on the L2 writing was observed in the latter group as well. The aforementioned findings support the notion that "the influence of writing training/experience is bidirectional across L1 and L2 writing" (Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2012, p. 113). The same finding was true concerning the perceived influence of writing instruction/experience across the two languages; namely, as for the amount of L1 writing knowledge surpassed that of L2 in the case of novice writers, they mostly relied on their L1 writing knowledge when creating texts in any language. In comparison, more experienced writers relied more heavily on their L2 writing knowledge. The change in the language systems is best described below:

if declarative knowledge about a particular text feature, such as counterargument, is learned from an L1 context, it is associated with L1 writing, whereas if it is acquired from L2 instruction, the opposite appears to be true. Next, as writers are exposed to varied L1 and L2 writing experiences, particularly when similar patterns recur in both languages, knowledge about writing features begins to overlap; that is, language-specific knowledge becomes available for both L1 and L2 text construction (Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2012, p. 126).

Earlier, transfer of writing features was perceived as "a progression of stages that reflected the development of the L1/L2 writer: beginning with L1 to L2 transfer, moving to L2 to L1 transfer, and finally culminating in bidirectional transfer of features, i.e., in both directions" (Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2012, p. 128). However, now transfer of writing features across languages tends to depend on the changes to the repertoire of L1/L2 writing knowledge. It entails the concept of "transfer of learning" in which what has been acquired through the medium of L1 or L2 is applied in a new context, which may entail using another language. However,

When writers acquire more experience, some L1/L2 writing knowledge is combined into a single, merged component of their repertoire, available regardless of the language being used, while some knowledge appears to remain associated with one specific language. (...) Therefore, we can say that more experienced multicompetent writers generally do not transfer writing features across languages (Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2012, p. 129).

An advanced writer in three languages, namely Japanese (L1), English (L2) and Chinese (L3), was the subject of another study by Kobayashi and Rinnert (2013), where the authors positioned the subject of their longitudinal study “as a human agent in socially situated context” (p. 5). This view is based on the assumption that learning is “not just the acquisition of linguistic forms but (...) growing participation in a community of practice” (Norton & McKinney, 2011, p. 87). In such a way, a multiple writer is seen as a person who makes decisions concerning their writing consciously, having at least two languages at their disposal.

Natsu, the subject in Kobayashi & Rinnert’s study, used the patterns known from L1 writing in L2 writing, such as no use of paragraph discourse markers, deliberately. Her decision was influenced by the imagined audience, which suggests that the choice she made was influenced by the social context, namely the expectations of imagined readers. Another interesting finding concerned the role of instruction. It was found that Natsu’s writing in the L1 (Japanese) changed due to explicit instruction received in L2 (English). What is more, she reported that she consciously applied the knowledge obtained in L2 to construct texts in the same genre in L1. This statement suggests that Natsu was capable of making conscious choices concerning her writing in any language. She was able to use the knowledge she obtained in a different language, which in turn proves that writing knowledge is not bound to a certain language and can be transferred in multiple directions “as the repertoire of writing knowledge expands and evolves, the relations between L1 and L2 knowledge change from almost separate systems to greater degrees of overlap” (Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2012, p. 101). In the case of Natsu, “at that moment, a large portion of her L1 and L2 knowledge, which was previously distinctly separated, merged in her mind” (2012, p. 122).

The influence of L2 writing knowledge and practices on L1 written products were also observed in the study by Majchrzak (2012). Formal letters of complaint written in Polish by advanced EFL students showed instances of transfer from L2 (English), especially in the area of letter closing: both the place (left-hand side) and the use of punctuation (a comma after the closing expression) showed the signs of transferring patterns typical of English formal correspondence. However, it has to be added that many writing guides⁶ show samples of Polish correspondence, in which a traditional pattern characteristic of English writing is shown as the one recommended for Polish texts. This is undoubtedly connected with globalization, but also with online practices, where it is simply more convenient to put the closing expressions together with the signature on the left-hand side, especially in the case of emails.

The transfer of writing skills between three languages was also observed in the study by Sagasta Errasti. In her work (2003), carried out in the Basque country, she aimed to verify whether there is a positive relationship between writing scores in Basque, Spanish and English. Sagasta compared two groups of students: those who

⁶Among others “Sztuka pisania. Przewodnik po testach użytkowych” by Zaśko-Zielińska, Majewska-Tworek, and Piekot (2008).

had Basque as their L1 and used it at home, school and in social contexts (model D-maintenance); and those who had Spanish as their L1 or tended to use Spanish more than Basque (model D-immersion). Both groups participated in schooling where Basque was the main language of communication, except for the subjects of English and Spanish. She observed that in the case of written production in English the students of D-maintenance model significantly outperformed students of D-immersion model in such aspects as overall production and fluency. It also transpired that the measurements (overall production, fluency, syntactic complexity, lexical complexity and accuracy) are highly correlated in the writing production in three languages in the case of students who had Basque as their L1. The study confirms that writing competence is transferred across languages and that bilingualism has a positive effect on acquiring additional languages and performance in them.

2.9 Recapitulation

L2 writing process encompasses many aspects, among them the ability to transfer knowledge concerning the composition of text, to use linguistic repertoire, to skillfully make use of rhetorical and pragmatic strategies, and to express knowledge concerning a given issue. It is not only linguistic knowledge —though when limited, it can successfully inhibit the writing process—but the writing skills and experience in writing that shape a good L2 writer. The more skillful and experienced a person is in L1 writing, the better L2 writer he becomes (and vice versa). At the same time, it is interesting that being an advanced L2 writer still means making use of the resources obtained through the channel of L1, which is manifested at all stages of the writing process, that is planning, revising, transcribing, and translating. However, it is not only these factors that contribute to the creation of an L2 writer. Also one's beliefs about writing play an important role in this process. What is held as good writing practices and as a good text, influences the writer's behaviour to a great extent. And although all the aforementioned factors have a considerable impact on what kind of L2 writer the learner becomes, in order to be a complete writer, she also needs to develop her identity in L2 writing, because it is identity that makes texts truly one's own. The construct of L2 student writer's identity will be considered in the next chapter.

Learner Identity and Learner Beliefs in EFL Writing

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