

ABSTRACT

THE USE OF TASK COMPLEXITY IN WRITTEN LANGUAGE PRODUCTION BY INDONESIAN EFL LEARNERS AND THE RELATIONSHIP WITH TASK DIFFICULTY

By

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Numerous studies have explored the use of tasks sequenced on the basis of task complexity (cognitive factors). Task complexity involves the resource-directing and the resource-depleting dimensions each of which has three aspects. With reference to the Cognition Hypothesis, tasks facilitate learners to improve better language performance when they are made complex (cognitively more demanding) and simple (less cognitive engagement) along with the resource-directing and the resource-depleting dimensions, respectively. However, very few studies have been conducted to particularly investigate different tasks for which every single aspect of the resource-directing was made complex and the resource-depleting dimensions were designed to be simple. The current study investigated the effect of three different levels of tasks on learners' written language performance in terms of complexity, accuracy, and fluency (CAF). The subjects of the study were 30 Indonesian EFL learners. The data were collected through recording while learners were performing the tasks. They were transcribed and were analyzed using ANOVA one way repeated measure. The results showed that the three types of tasks generated a statistically significant effect on accuracy and fluency, but syntactic complexity. This indicates that the findings partly confirm the Robinson's Cognition Hypothesis.

Furthermore, there was also an undeniable relationship between the students' written language production and their perceptions of the three tasks with respect to task difficulty within the affective factor, revolving around the aspects of the difficulty of the task, the degree of stress, confidence, interest, and motivation. The result of this investigation revealed a unique revelation. EFL students regarded a task manipulated with past tense as the most interesting and the most relaxing task. Moreover, it also positively affected their motivation in which it influenced their accuracy and fluency's mean scores which were the highest ones among the two other tasks.

Keywords: CAF measures, cognition hypothesis, students' perception, written language performance