Vygotsky’s socio-cultural theory of literacy
Scaffolding children to read and write at an early age

MAHZAN ARSHAD AND WU HSUEH CHEN

Abstract
In the article the concept of semiotic mediation, appropriation, internalization, Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and scaffolding in particular were reviewed to provide understanding of the process. Under the concept of semiotic mediation, the issue of how children learn through imitating adults was examined with inputs from second language acquisition theories. Vygotsky’s concept of appropriation provides the springboard for a discussion on how children may appropriate the psychological tool of language through modeling and text meditation in the context of second language learning. It is hoped that the understanding of these concepts could lead to more insights in order to understand the various changes observable in children at early age as they nudge to achieve their potential in their literacy development. The information gathered in the paper may be used by parents or teachers in preschool as the foundation to help children acquire literacy skills at early age.

Keywords
Socio-cultural theory, scaffolding, early literacy, literacy acquisition

This paper examines the contributions of Vygotsky’s theories and concepts towards the multi-faceted opportunities for literacy acquisition of children at an early age. For this purpose Vygotsky’s (1978, 1981) Socio-cultural theory and his concepts of semiotic mediation, appropriation, internalization, Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and scaffolding in particular are reviewed to provide an understanding of the process of literacy learning in a second

MAHZAN ARSHAD is a lecturer at the Department of Language and Literacy, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; his research interest is in language and literature education, early childhood education, and multicultural education. E-mail: mahzanars@um.edu.my.

WU HSUEH CHEN is a teacher in a public school in Kuala Selangor, Malaysia; a specialist in the teaching of English as a second language; her research interest is in early childhood second language acquisition.

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