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Dept of English
Branch of Linguistics

Exploring Metacognitive Awareness in ESL Writing

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Submitted by:

Mahmoud Shaaban Abdel-Salaam Azaz
Demonstrator,
To
Ain Shams University, Faculty of Arts,
Dept of English, Linguistics Branch
Under the supervision
of

Dr. Amal Ibrahim Kary
Professor of Linguistics
Ex- head of
Department of English
Faculty of Arts,
Ain Shams University

Dr. Nevine Hassan
Lecturer of Linguistics
Department of English
Faculty of Arts,
Ain Shams University

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Abstract

This study investigates the effect of activating awareness of metacognitive processes on developing writing quality, grammatical accuracy, grammaticality judgment in terms of cohesion features as outlined by the model of Halliday and Hasan (1976).

Following the mixed design and the collective case study approach, the study explores the impact of activating eight freshmen case studies' (four low achievers and four high achievers) metacognitive awareness of self-evaluation, self-monitoring and centering attention as main metacognitive processes; the independent variable, on improving the quality of ESL writing in terms of cohesion features in expository written texts as a dependent variable.

It tests one main null hypothesis that has predicted that that there would be no statistically significant differences between the subjects' pretest mean scores and the posttest mean scores within groups on the features of cohesion in the error correction test, the gap-filling test and the expository essays.

To know the effect of the proficiency level on the development of metacognitive awareness, the study compares between the posttest mean scores difference across the two groups of low and high achievers.

The major finding of the study refutes the main assumption as there are statistically significant differences between the pretest mean scores and the posttest mean scores group within the two groups of low achievers and high achievers on the seven features of cohesion in the error correction test, the gap filling test and the expository essay. The study also finds no statistically significant differences between the posttest mean scores difference across groups. This might refer to the slight effect of the proficiency level once metacognitive awareness is activated.

Starting from the SLA domain, the study concludes with many pedagogical implications in the field of TEFL/TESL. For the college composition courses and curricula to be effective, inclusion of metacognitive processes is an instrumental part. More significantly, the analytical rubric that the researcher develops can be used as a tool for assessing cohesion features in the expository texts.

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Dedication

To my father

who

shared with me love of hard work ,

and to

my mother

whose

true sense of sacrifice, love and support

have made this endeavor possible,

with heartfelt gratitude

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