STRATEGIES USED BY ESL LEARNERS IN PROCESSING RATIONAL CLOZE WITH AND WITHOUT OPTIONS

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER IN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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ABSTRAK

The main aim of the study is to investigate the strategies utilised by four ESL polytechnic students in completing two rational cloze designs. These are open-ended cloze (that is, without options) and multiple-choice cloze (that is, with options) which focus on content word and function word deletions. The analysis of data revealed that the subjects had utilised thirty-four strategies in order to complete the two cloze tasks. Secondly, the research seeks to identify and compare these strategies through think-aloud protocols and stimulated recall. The outcome of the comparisons between the two cloze designs and two deletion types proved that cloze design was the more influential factor in determining the strategies employed by the subjects. The insights gleaned from the study were also an indirect indication of what the cloze technique tests. This in turn is predetermined by the cloze design. Thirdly, it examines the mental processes involved in cloze completion. The data from the think-aloud protocols provided evidence and support for the auto-strategic language processing model proposed in the study. Fourthly, another related aspect of the study is to explore the possibilities of teaching cloze completion strategies to ESL learners by interviewing English language instructors of the same polytechnic. The similarities and differences between the data obtained from the interviews with the instructors and the strategies employed by the subjects disclosed that ESL learners could benefit from overt teaching of language processing strategies.
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