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THE EFFECTS OF TEXT STRUCTURE INSTRUCTION ON THE COMPOSITION OF EXPOSITORY PROSE BY ESL LEARNERS

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Abstract

This study examines the effects of text structure instruction on the composition of expository prose of both good and poor ability writers. More specifically, the study sought to examine the effects of teaching text structure on the writing ability of sixty-three upper secondary students from a school in Malaysia. Another important aspect of the study was to examine whether both groups profited differently over a different time frame, i. e., post-test or delayed post-test.

The experimental study was designed to teach good and poor ability writers about text structure instruction, focusing only on the comparison or contrast structure, the transitional expressions which signal the specified structure and how to use a graphic organizer to visualize the said structure in composing expository prose. Both different ability groups received instruction on text structure as part of the treatment for the experimental group. Text structure instruction was not mentioned in the pre-test, the post-test and the delayed post-test. Results showed that instruction in text structure enhanced the ability of poor ability writers to organize their compositions. It was found that the poor ability writers performed better in organization in the delayed post-test than in the post-test. For the purpose of this study, the compositions were graded analytically according to the five elements in the ESL Composition Profile. It was found that as far as the overall writing performance is concerned, the poor ability writers performed better in the delayed post-test than in the post-test. It was also found that the use of transitional expressions affected the organization in the composition of both

subjects in both groups during the post-test. From the findings, it can be concluded that the writing of expository prose by ESL learners of poor ability writers can be improved by instruction in text structure. Limitations of the study, however, point to the need for additional evidence and support from further studies.

Abstrak

Kajian ini meneliti tentang kesan struktur teks terhadap karangan ekspositori pelajar-pelajar yang baik dan lemah di dalam penulis karangan. Secara khusus, ia mengkaji tentang kesan struktur teks ke atas penulisan karangan pelajar seramai enam puluh tiga orang daripada sebuah sekolah di Malaysia. Satu lagi aspek penting yang dikaji ialah untuk mengetahui samada kedua-dua kumpulan tersebut mendapat manfaat secara berbeza dalam masa yang ditetapkan iaitu seminggu selepas rawatan atau tiga minggu selepas rawatan.

Kajian eksperimental ini bertujuan mengajar pelajar-pelajar yang baik dan lemah hanya dalam penulisan tentang struktur teks bagi karangan perbandingan, kata penghubung yang digunakan untuk karangan perbandingan dan penggunaan struktur grafik untuk menghubungkaitkan idea dalam penulisan karangan. Kedua-dua kumpulan eksperimental telah mendapat bimbingan tentang pengguanaan struktur teks dalam karangan mereka. Penggunaan struktur teks tidak disebut sebelum rawatan dan selepas rawatan. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan stuktur teks dapat menbantu pelajar yang lemah di dalam organisasi sesebuah karangan. Dapatan ini juga menunjukkan kumpulan pelajar yang lemah mencapai keputusan yang lebih baik di dalam organisasi tiga minggu selepas rawatan daripada seminggu selepas rawatan.

Untuk kajian ini, karangan pelajar juga dinilai dengan menggunakan Skor Analitik mengikut pembahagian lima unsur di dalam "ESL Composition Profile" (skor menyeluruh). Apabila karangan dinilai dengan cara ini, pelajar-pelajar yang lemah mencapai keputusan yang lebih baik di dalam organisasi tiga minggu selepas rawatan daripada seminggu selepas rawatan. Kajian ini juga mendapati penggunaan kata penghubung telah memberi kesan ke atas organisasi dalam karangan. Secara kesimpulan, struktur teks dapat memperbaiki karangan perbandingan pelajar-pelajar yang lemah yang mempelajari Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua. Kekangan-kekangan kajian ini menunjukkan betapa perlunya bukti daripada kajian-kajian lain.

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