

Metacognitive strategies used by secondary school children in the writing process

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This research focuses on the 'knowledge and awareness and the monitoring, controlling, and regulating of such knowledge and awareness in the three stages of writing process. Objectives were to identify metacognitive strategies used by secondary school children in the three stages of writing process (Planning, Writing, Revising), to identify distribution patterns of metacognitive strategies within metacognitive strands (Awareness and Regulation) and metacognitive fields (Generating ideas, Goal setting, Organization, Self monitoring and Self evaluation), and to identify whether metacognitive strategies differ according to rural / urban schools, secondary school grades and sex of the child. 725 children (Male 363; Female 362) of Grade 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 from purposively selected four schools (Urban = 2; Rural = 2) were included in the sample. A sub sample of 120 children were used to collect 408 observation notes and written exercises from 278 Mother Tongue lessons. 289 interviews were also conducted. Based on these data and literature, 3 questionnaires were developed to collect data from 725 students. Qualitative data from 120 students were coded and frequencies were calculated, according to the steps of writing, Metacognitive strategy fields, Metacognitive strands and 72 Metacognitive strategies. Z test was used to decide on significant differences between proportions of frequencies. The quantitative data from questionnaires were analyzed by using cluster analysis, Chi square test and Factor analysis.

Writing stage is dominant in the writing process of Grades 6 -10 students of both sexes and urban rural schools. Planning and Revising stages were mixed with the writing stage because children tend to do planning and revising in the writing stage while writing. The planning stage of children is dominated by explaining of lesson made by the teacher, which gives ideas to children to write in the writing stage. Students do not show an awareness or regulation of metacognitive strategies on planning. Knowledge telling process, rather than Knowledge transformation process can be found in the writing stage. Revising style is dominated by mechanical and surface level changes. The Sculpture Style of Grade 6 students changed to an Engineering style in Grade 10. There is a tendency towards a boy - girl dichotomy ie: Girls emphasize planning stage and boys writing stage. To enhance the quality of writing there is a need for training on metacognitive strategies for both students and teachers.

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