ESL Learners’ Metacognitive and Cognitive Reading Strategies in Comprehending Online Reading Materials

Neny Isharyanti
Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, USA

Purpose:
To find out the cognitive and metacognitive strategies employed by ESL students when they encounter online reading materials.

Method:
- The participants consisted of 4 freshman students from Indonesia (2 males, 2 females) who were taking English 104 course (First Year Composition)
- They were asked to select an Internet article about gamelan (Indonesian musical instruments) and to summarize the article as a material for writing a paper about cultural artifacts.
- The data collected are the screen capture, video and audio recording, post-interview transcript and notes that they made during the activity

Analysis:
Qualitative analysis of the screen capture, video and audio recording (identification of the strategies employed and application of certain strategy due to the nature of online reading materials)

Results:

Table 1. O’Malley et al (1985) --- 70 high school ESL students, 22 teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metacognitive</th>
<th>Percentage of Strategies used</th>
<th>Cognitive</th>
<th>Percentage of Strategies used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advance preparation</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-management</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>Note-taking</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selective attention</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>Imagery</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directed attention</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-monitoring</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>Transfer</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Instances: 192

Table 2. This study --- 4 students, Indonesian freshman in ISU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metacognitive</th>
<th>Percentage of Strategies used</th>
<th>Cognitive</th>
<th>Percentage of Strategies used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-management</td>
<td>56.8%</td>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>79.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-monitoring</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
<td>Resourcing</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selective attention</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>Transfer</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directed attention</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance Preparation</td>
<td>56.8%</td>
<td>Imagery</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Instances: 44

- Students seemed to employ similar strategies, mostly because the strategies can be done in both modes of text presentation.
- There are certain behaviors in certain strategies which are unique to computer-based materials such as: managing the screen environment to be conducive to do the task, copying texts from the links rather than taking notes, using features of certain software as resources.

Conclusions:
- Different tasks may require different strategy use
- Every student has unique reading strategies
- Computer-based materials may become an alternative to provide more opportunities to students to read and work on their reading strategies.
• The potentials of certain features of the software as an alternatives for certain pedagogical purposes

**Some issues on this kind of study**
• More participants, more tasks
• Time consuming data analysis

**References**


**Bio**

Neny Isharyanti is 2003-2005 Fulbright grantee from Indonesia and a second year student of Master’s Program in TESL/Applied Linguistics of Iowa State University, with specialization in Computer-Assisted Language Learning and English for Specific Purposes. Her research interest includes second language acquisition in Internet interpersonal communication.

Contact Info: Neny Isharyanti, English Department, Iowa State University, 203 Ross Hall, Ames, IA 50011, USA. Email: neny@iastate.edu or neny_priyanto@yahoo.com. Website: http://www.public.iastate.edu/~neny