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ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3537-9175>*e-mail: kheiriya.delovarova@sdu.edu.kz**TEACHING WRITING THROUGH META-COGNITIVE STRATEGY INSTRUCTION**

In the context of secondary school language classes, the development of writing in a foreign language is a particular challenge for many students at all levels. Taking into account the fact that writing skills require study and conscious development, it was assumed to offer cognitive approach to teaching writing as a solution to the mentioned problem. The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of meta-cognitive writing strategy instruction on senior school students' writing performance. To achieve this goal, researchers conducted a 4-month intervention, which was aimed at teaching four main types of meta-cognitive writing strategies (planning, organizing, editing, evaluation). Moreover, the author described a 4-stage strategy instruction model, which was applied in the intervention process. Possible techniques and activities were suggested to develop each of the model stages. A stimulated interview was used as a tool for data collection, which was then thematically analyzed. An essay written by participants after intervention process were used as stimuli for students to report on the employed writing strategies. The results of the qualitative data analysis revealed the impact of the strategy use on all aspects of writing as well as on students' satisfaction and confidence. The conclusions made on the current study, which demonstrated that strategy instruction works for improving two main learning domains (academical, reflected in writing performance and psychological contributing to students' satisfaction and confidence) may have practical value in developing secondary school students' writing skills.

Keywords: meta-cognitive writing strategies, writing performance, strategy instruction, planning strategies, organizing strategies, editing strategies, evaluating strategies.

Introduction

In the context of secondary school language classes, the development of writing in a foreign language is a particular challenge for many students at all levels. Unlike speaking, which is given more emphasis in the classroom and can be acquired naturally with sufficient input and exposure, writing is usually underestimated due to the complexity of organizing the learning process and providing much useful feedback. Moreover, writing skills require study and conscious development. Thus, the need for a cognitive approach to solving this problem allows us to confirm the feasibility and effectiveness of using the meta-cognitive strategy instruction in developing writing skills.

The relevance of this study is expressed in the attempt to solve the above mentioned problem by implementing the meta-cognitive strategy based instruction. It is expected to get results which might have a practical significance for writing pedagogy.

The aim of this study was to investigate the impact of meta-cognitive writing strategy instruction on senior school students' writing performance.

Before figuring out the essence of meta-cognitive writing strategies, we suggest understanding the "learning strategies" term. Cohen (1998) argued that second language learners' strategies can be applied by learners at different levels of language proficiency to solve a variety of problems [1]. In addition, the effectiveness of learning strategies in improving academic performance and in the accomplishment of language tasks in a foreign language was confirmed by Macaro (2001); Oxford & Schramm, (2007) [2, 3]. Strategies are also individual to each student and can change and develop over time [4]. The language learning strategies in the context of which this study was conducted "are generally considered as a means of ensuring that language is stored, retained and able to be produced when necessary; that is, they affect learning directly" [5, p.11].

One of the most well-known taxonomies of language learning strategies was developed by O'Malley and Chamot (1990), who distinguished three types of strategies according to their function: cognitive, metacognitive, and social-affective. Metacognitive strategies, which have become the focus of our study because of their greater measurability, are defined as strategies that "involve thinking about the learning process, planning for learning, monitoring of comprehension or production while it is taking place, and self-evaluation after the learning activity has been completed" [6, p.158].

With regard specifically to writing strategies, the most used classification developed by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) distinguishes between such metacognitive writing strategies as planning, monitoring, and evaluating strategies [6]. Later, Devine, J. (1993b) defined meta-cognitive writing strategies as "a complex

cognitive process involving the writer's long term memory where knowledge of the topic, audience and writing plans are stored; the task environment, including the rhetorical problem and the text produced so far; and writing sub-processes such as idea generation, goal-setting, organizing, reviewing, evaluating, and revising" [7].

Materials and methods

Strategy instruction intervention

Strategy instruction (SI) was defined by Hassan et al (2005) as "any intervention which focuses on the strategies to be regularly adopted and used by language learners to develop their proficiency, to improve particular task performance, or both" [8, p.76]. Our 4-month implementation process proceeded according to the system described by Ardasheva et al. (2017) and included 4 stages: consciousness rising, modeling, guided practice and evaluation/goal setting [9].

Consciousness rising stage was aimed at increasing students' awareness of the strategies they already used to complete writing assignments, and to clarify the goals and effectiveness of those strategies. To reach the goal such techniques were applied: Brainstorming, Open-class discussions of strategy use, Strategy Search Game, Case-study discussions.

Modeling stage represents introduction of new strategies by the teacher and aims at mastering them in solving particular writing problems. During the intervention period participants were modeled 4 types of writing strategies that might be applied to complete writing assignment from the planning stage to the editing stage: Planning, Organising, Editing, Evaluating. The full list of the strategies is presented in the following scheme (Figure 1):

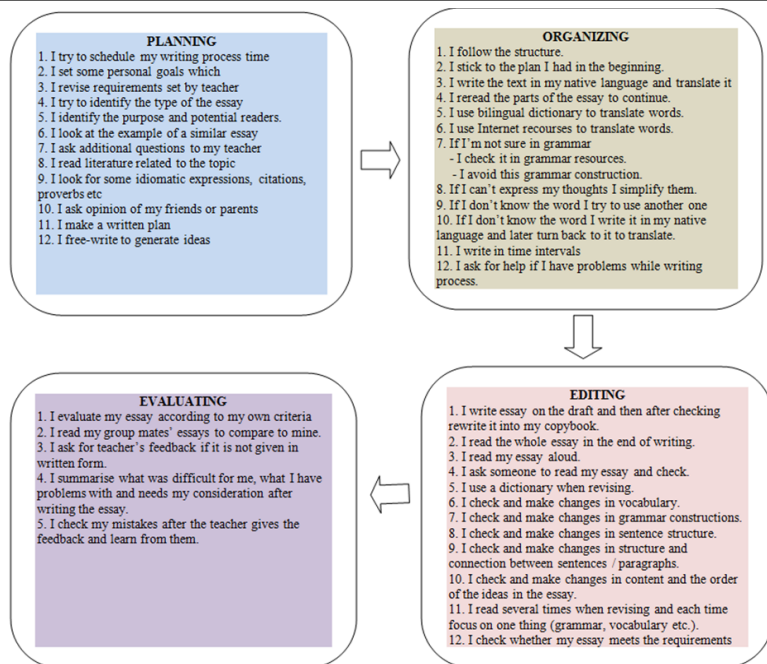


Figure 1 – Strategies focused on during the intervention period

In the process of strategy presentation, the teacher modeled them by thinking aloud during an activity "in order to reveal to students their thought processes and strategies used" [5, p.70]. In addition, Interactive lectures and Gradual presentations of new strategies by stages of writing were successfully used.

Guided practice stage is aimed at putting into practice acquired strategies under the teacher's guidance and assistance. At this stage, students were offered such activities as: Mind mapping, Box plan, Pass it out (different activities to teach essay planning, idea generation, essay structuring).

Evaluation/goal setting stage helped students to individually analyze, choose and apply already acquired strategies to new, not familiar writing situations and problems. Participants were involved in self/peer evaluation activities, for which clear and detailed rubrics were prepared. Moreover, there were discussions on students' progress, where they shared aspects of writing they had progressed in as a result of strategy application.

After 4 month of regular intervention students were assigned to write a final essay after which they were asked to answer some questions related to editing

and evaluation strategies they applied and to identify their level of satisfaction on an offered scale (Figure 2).

Let's check ✓

Yes No

Did you check your writing? ☐ ☐

If your answer is yes ☐, answer these questions.

Did you check your work while writing? ☐ ☐

Did you check your work when you finished it? ☐ ☐

What particularly did you check?

Did you make any changes after you checked your work?

How long (approximately) did you spend checking your work? _____ minutes.

Give your opinion about this writing task

What did you find easy about the writing task?

What did you find difficult about the writing task?

How well have you done?

1

2

3

4

5

Explain why you think so?

Figure 2 – Writing strategy task sheet (adopted from Forbes, 2016)

Sample

The study involved 32 secondary school students aged 13 to 14 years (9th grade). Despite the fact that students studied a foreign language from the first grade, most of them had a level no higher than pre-intermediate. The reason for choosing this particular age and level for the study was the theory of Chamot and Keatley (2003), who argue that the use of a strategy instruction in a foreign language is ineffective for students with a beginner level of language competence [10]. Moreover, Grenfell and Harris (2015) and Oxford (2011) have identified difficulties in applying this approach to teaching at the initial level of learning a foreign language [11, 12]. Forbes (2016) explained the reasons for these difficulties by the fact that "meta-cognitive understanding is a developmental process and younger children are not as fully aware of their own thinking and learning processes as are adolescents and adults" [5, p.47].

To select participants, a non-probability convenience sampling method was used, that is, a widely used method in which data is collected from all available participants. Conclusions about their level of foreign language proficiency and academic performance were made on the basis of the comments of the school teachers, as well as their students' grades (Table 1).

Table 1 – Research sampling

Gender		Level of foreign language		Performance at school		
Male	Female	Pre-Intermediate	Intermediate	Low	Middle	High
14	18	26	6	3	19	10

Data collection tool

The use of strategies by students is a difficult process to measure, so it was decided that the most effective way to find out what strategies students are already using is to ask them [13]. Moreover, given the fact that our goal was to explore students' perceptions, it was clearly the right decision to use interviews as a data collection tool.

The interviews were stimulated (based on the completed writing assignments on the specially designed writing strategy task sheets to comment on the elements of writing and decisions made in the process of writing the essay) and semi-structured, which allowed, in addition to the main points of the focus of the study, the possibility to "the interviewee develop ideas and speak more widely on the issues raised" [14, p.176]. Students' essays written after the completion of the intervention period were used as stimuli and could give an overall picture of the results of intervention effectiveness. As the interview language the participants' first language was selected with the aim for them not to hesitate in reporting any details or important thoughts about the discussed issue. To comply with ethical standards, the written consents for the interview were received from the participant' parents, students gave their consents orally. All the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. A thematic analysis was used to analyze interview data.

Results and Discussions

Braun V. & Clarke V. (2006) identify 6 main phases in the qualitative data thematic analysis process that the interview results went through: Familiarization with the data, Assigning source codes to the data to describe the content, Finding topics for codes with similar functions, Identifying and naming topics, Identification of thematic networks, Interpretation of results [15]. As a result of the phased processing of interview data, 4 main categories were identified that combine strategies related to key aspects of writing, such as "Planning",

"Organization", "Editing", "Evaluation". The topics grouped under the mentioned categories and the students' perception of the results of the implementation of the Strategic instruction model are set out in Table 2.

Table 2 – Thematic analysis of interview data

Category	Theme	Description
Planning	Importance of planning	Re-evaluation of the importance of planning, conclusions about the effectiveness of the use of the plan, as well as the ability of planning to simplify and shorten the writing process.
	The impact of planning on the performance	As a result of using the plan, students solved such problems as the wrong structure of the essay, deviation from the main topic, illogicality and inconsistency in the presentation of thoughts, loss of interesting ideas.
	Application of the plan while writing	A more conscious approach to writing a plan, following the plan when writing an essay
Organizing	Essay structure	Students' awareness of the purpose of each part of the essay, as well as such basic elements as the thesis statement and topic sentence.
	Problem solving	Effective use of strategies to solve problems such as lack of ideas, lack of knowledge of vocabulary, and grammatical structures.
Editing	Approaches to editing	The use of proofreading not only after writing an essay, but also intermediate after writing a sentence or a paragraph.
	Aspects of editing	Not only spelling and accuracy control, but also consideration of the logical sequence of thoughts, compliance with requirements, and topic coverage.
	Task requirements and outcomes	Taking into account the type of the essay and the requirements for its writing by students.
Evaluation	Confidence	Students attribute their higher level of confidence to the fact that it became much clearer how to plan, organize and solve problems after the intervention and mastery of writing strategies.
	Satisfaction	The majority (73.6 %) of students noted a high level of satisfaction with their written works.

The results of the qualitative data analysis revealed the impact of the strategy use on all aspects of writing on its 4 main stages: Planning, Organizing, Editing, and Evaluating.

So, in the aspect of planning, the important influence of the introduction of the strategic instruction led to a reassessment of the significance of the planning stage and the realization of its importance in improving the final result. Undoubtedly, a cognitive approach to the initial step of completing a writing task will contribute to the effectiveness of each subsequent stage of writing.

Thus, at the stages of organizing and editing essays, students returned to the previously drawn up plan when generating ideas and controlling the logical presentation of thoughts (coherence and cohesion), which, in our understanding, can be reflected when performing written tasks in other languages (Kazakh and Russian), as well as when expressing thoughts in another productive skill (speaking).

Moreover, the results of this study may contribute to the solution of the psychological problems of students caused by fear and insecurity in their writing skills. Often, deliberately low self-esteem leads to a low level of aspiration and achievement, which in turn becomes the cause of poor-quality essays. The findings of this study showed that students' possession of planning, organizing, editing and evaluation strategies, often increase their self-esteem and confidence in their achievements, which leads to greater effort and higher satisfaction.

Based on the results of the current study, which demonstrated that strategic learning works to improve two main areas of learning (academic, reflected in writing, and psychological, promoting student satisfaction and confidence), we conclude that correctly implemented into the writing process and taught by the proposed stages (consciousness rising, modeling, guided practice and evaluation/ goal setting) writing strategy instruction may be of practical importance for the development of writing skills of secondary school students.

Conclusion

Adding to the increased interest in learning strategies among teachers and researchers, "examining the extent to which SI may affect learners L2/FL learning and self-regulated learning is essential" [16; 9, p. 573]. Current study, the aim of which was to investigate the affect of meta-cognitive strategy instruction on 9-th grade students writing performance, demonstrated that SI works for improving both domains: academical (writing performance) and psychological (satisfaction and confidence).

Thus, the findings of the study are compliant with the theories of several significant researchers in this field (Sarkulova et.al, (2021); Oxford, (1990); Macaro, (2001); O'Malley & Chamot (1990); Grenfell & Harris (2015); Alolaywi,

(2025)), in whose works there is an evidence that the effective use of writing strategies can be of great benefit to language learners [17; 18; 2; 6; 11].

Moreover, this study revealed the improvement of writing performance in all aspects of writing which was manifested by students in facilitation of the task fulfillment process, as well as increase the level of confidence and satisfaction on the basis of the meta-cognitive strategy instruction use.

As a further study, it can be offered to investigate the perception of transfer of writing strategies acquired in English lessons to the process of performing writing assignments in the students' first language.

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МЕТАТАНЫМДЫҚ СТРАТЕГИЯЛАРДЫ АРҚЫЛЫ ЖАЗУДЫ ОҚЫТУ

Орта мектепте тілді оқыту жағдайында шет тілінде жазуды дамыту барлық деңгейдегі көптеген оқушылар үшін ерекше міндет болып табылады. Жазу дағдысы оқуды және саналы дамытуды қажет ететінін ескере отырып, бұл мәселенің шешімі ретінде жазуға үйретудің когнитивтік тәсілін ұсыну көзделді. Бұл зерттеудің мақсаты метакогнитивтік жазу стратегияларының жоғары сынып оқушыларының үлгеріміне әсерін зерттеу болды. Осы мақсатқа жету үшін зерттеушілер метакогнитивтік жазу стратегияларының төрт негізгі түрін (жоспарлау, ұйымдастыру, өңдеу, бағалау) үйретуге бағытталған 4 айлық интервенция жүргізді. Сонымен қатар, автор араласу кезінде қолданылған 4 қадамдық стратегиялық оқыту моделін сипаттады. Модельдің әрбір кезеңін әзірлеу үшін мүмкін болатын әдістер мен жаттығулар ұсынылды. Ынталандырылған сұхбат деректер жинау құралы ретінде пайдаланылды, содан кейін тақырыптық талдау жасалды. Қатысушылар араласу процесінен кейін жазған эссе студенттерге қолданылған жазу стратегиялары туралы есеп беру үшін ынталандыру ретінде пайдаланылды. Саналы деректерді талдау нәтижелері стратегияларды қолданудың жазудың барлық аспектілеріне, сонымен қатар студенттердің қанағаттануы мен сенімділігіне әсерін көрсетті. Бұл зерттеудің нәтижелері оқыту стратегиялары оқытудың екі негізгі бағытын жақсартуға көмектесетінін көрсетті: оқу, жазу сапасында көрініс табатын және психологиялық, студенттің қанағаттануы мен сенімділігін арттырады. Олардың жоғары сынып оқушыларының жазу дағдыларын дамытуда практикалық маңызы болуы мүмкін.

Кілтті сөздер: метакогнитивтік жазу стратегиялары, жазу дағдылары, стратегиялық оқыту, жоспарлау стратегиялары, ұйымдастыру стратегиялары, өңдеу стратегиялары, бағалау стратегиялары.

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ОБУЧЕНИЕ ПИСЬМЕННОЙ РЕЧИ НА ОСНОВЕ МЕТАКОГНИТИВНЫХ СТРАТЕГИЙ

В контексте языкового обучения в средней школе развитие письменной речи на иностранном языке является особой проблемой для многих учащихся всех уровней. Принимая во внимание тот факт, что навыки письма требуют изучения и осознанного развития, предполагалось предложить когнитивный подход к обучению письму как решение указанной проблемы. Цель этого исследования состояла в том, чтобы изучить влияние метакогнитивных стратегий письма на успеваемость старшеклассников. Для достижения этой цели исследователи провели 4-месячное вмешательство, которое было направлено на обучение четырем основным типам мета-когнитивных стратегий письма (планирование, организация, редактирование, оценка). Кроме того, автор описал 4-ступенчатую модель обучения стратегиям, которая применялась в процессе вмешательства. Были предложены возможные приемы и упражнения для разработки каждого из этапов модели. В качестве инструмента для сбора данных использовалось стимулированное интервью, которое затем тематически анализировалось. Эссе, написанное участниками после процесса вмешательства, использовалось в качестве стимула для студентов, чтобы сообщить об используемых стратегиях письма. Результаты качественного анализа данных показали влияние использования стратегий на все аспекты письма, а также на удовлетворенность и уверенность студентов. Выводы, сделанные в текущем исследовании, которое продемонстрировало, что обучение стратегиям работает для улучшения двух основных областей обучения (академической, отражаемой в качестве письма, и психологической, способствующей удовлетворенности и уверенности учащихся), могут иметь практическое значение для развития навыков письма учащихся средней школы.

Ключевые слова: метакогнитивные стратегии письма, навыки письма, обучение стратегиям, стратегии планирования, стратегии организации, стратегии редактирования, стратегии оценки.

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