

Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English



Symposium

“Cognition and Language Learning”

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Faculty of Letters and Languages,
Mouloud Mammeri University, Tizi-Ouzou

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Synthesis of the Symposium

For almost two decades, the behaviourist paradigm had dominated American psychology focusing mainly on observable behaviour, rejecting the contribution of mental processes to learning. Afterwards, the cognitive revolution redirected attention to human thought processes, thinking abilities and reasoning. It has now become impossible to deny the central role of cognition in language learning.

The symposium on cognition and language learning has mainly focused on research into the mechanisms of human cognition leading to a deeper understanding of how the processes of thinking, problem solving, attention, perception, and memory affect learning and lead to effective strategies that enhance learning in educational settings. The symposium has featured contributions on theory and empirical research concerned with all aspects of the interplay between cognition and language learning. Case studies, experimental studies, corpus-based studies, quantitative and qualitative analyses.

The symposium has gathered scholars and researchers interested in these research areas who have discussed recent contributions to the field, and have opened debates about the part played by cognition in language learning with special emphasis put on the following axes:

- Axis 1: Cognition and Learner Motivation
- Axis 2: Cognition and Language Processing
- Axis 3: Cognition and Language Skills Development
- Axis 4: Cognition and Learners' Use of Strategies
- Axis 5: Cognition and Second/foreign Language Learning

Abstracts list (Arranged by author's name in alphabetical order)

Achili Nora (MAA. Univ. Boumerdes)

Understanding Students' Learning Success and Failure Perceptions through Attribution Theory

The case of Master 1 EFL Students at the University of Boumerdes

The concept of causal attributions was firstly introduced in the field of Social psychology, and afterwards in ELT field, to explain the substantial impact of learners' past success and failure experience in language learning on their future successful and unsuccessful language learning behaviours. Most studies carried out on this line strived to understand the specific reasons underlying both, with the ultimate goal of changing the cognitive processes involved when dealing, more specifically, with failure. However and in spite of the noted importance of the topic, exceptionally little is known about Algerian EFL students' success and failure reasons, namely students belonging to the English Department of Boumerdes University. Accordingly, the conducted study aimed at filling this gap by exploring the English Department students' perceived reasons of success or failure in language learning and exams alike. A case study was conducted with sixty-two (62) Master 1 students who participated in the completion of a causal attribution questionnaire including eight items based on the reviewed literature to elicit relevant data. The results indicated that most of these students attributed their success to both external factors such as supportive parents and friends, but giving more priority to internal reasons such as effort and motivation. In parallel, students attributed their failure to both internal reasons such as poor ability and lack of appropriate learning strategies but highlighting more external reasons such as luck, task difficulty, teachers and inadequate learning environment. In the light of these findings, language teaching and learning in the Algerian academic context is considered and implications are drawn correspondingly.

Ait Hamouda Hanane (Doc. Univ. Blida).

The Influence of Code Switching on the Cognitive Process of Foreign Language Production

The issue examined in this contribution is about code switching in foreign language classes which is at the core of a great deal of interest. Code switching is the alternation between two or more languages in the same discourse and it is a common phenomenon in the bilingual and multilingual communities. The current study intends to report the influence of code switching in EFL classes on learners' language production process. It mainly seeks to find out primarily whether the non or near exclusive use of the target language alters the effective production of English language or not. In fact, language production is a cognitive process that converts thoughts into verbal actions. This process goes through four stages, namely; conceptualization, formulation, articulation, and self-regulation (self-

monitoring). To achieve this objective, two distinct analytical frameworks are employed: Lightbown (2001) and Macaro (2003). The former emphasizes the importance of creating an exclusive foreign language environment. The latter advocates the usefulness of code switching for learners. In order to collect the relevant data, an online questionnaire with open and close ended questions will be emailed to Master 2 students of the department of English, Language and Communication option, in TiziOuzou University. The collected data will be examined employing relational content analysis, also called semantic analysis. The outcomes will possibly reveal that the learners have difficulties in producing language effectively which may be due to the impact that code switching has on the different stages of language production, such as formulating a sentence by conceptualizing its components with reference to the mother tongue or another foreign language they master. They may also indicate that code switching does not influence the effectiveness of learners' written or spoken discourse. The findings will be reported quantitatively and qualitatively, interpreted and some suggestions for future research in this field will be provided.

Ammour Kamila (MAA. Univ. Tizi-Ouzou).

EFL Learners' Metacognitive Awareness when Reading Narrative Texts at Mouloud Mammeri University

The main objective of the presentation is to shed light on Algerian EFL students' metacognitive awareness when reading narrative texts. More to the point, it aims at measuring the students' awareness of reading strategies as well as examining the types of strategies which are more frequently used or less frequently used by the participants. Metacognitive awareness refers to the learners' control of their cognitive resources to meet the aims of the learning situation. Generally acknowledged as a higher-order cognitive activity, metacognition involves learners' capacity to evaluate and regulate their learning process. As regards the narrative text, it encompasses a variety of genres that EFL students are required to read in different courses. It includes both fiction such as novels, short stories, or poems, and nonfiction like biographies. Fifty-six third-year students enrolled at the department of English have been randomly selected to participate in the study. A quantitative research design was used to collect and analyse data. As a basic data collection instrument, a metacognitive reading strategies questionnaire was designed and used. It is composed of fifteen closed-ended items. The collected data were analysed by means of descriptive statistical procedures. The findings showed that the respondents are not conscious enough of their process of constructing meaning from narrative texts. They make use of an array of reading strategies to interpret texts. However, their strategies are limited to the word level and confined to the literal meaning of texts. Their lack of metacognitive awareness and inefficient use of appropriate reading strategies are likely to hinder their achievement of critical reading comprehension. The findings of the present study alert both students and teachers on the appropriate and judicious use of reading strategies when reading narrative texts. It has some pedagogical implications including the role and challenge of teachers which is raising the students' metacognitive awareness.

Arab Ouided (MAA. Univ. Constantine).

Can We Make Information Processing Optimal?

Reading is the language skill most widely used in the EFL academic context; thus, success with reading comprehension is of paramount importance for learners. Nevertheless, students, in general, endure serious reading difficulties which are mainly caused by the lack of reading fluency. If readers do not recognize the words rapidly enough, this will place heavy demands on short-term memory whose capacity is very limited and minimizes the cognitive energy available for comprehension. Admitting the fact that, skilled reading involves both speed and comprehension (Perfitti, 1985), and that slow and effortful reading is a major hindrance for EFL students to achieve an effective comprehension of what they read (Fraser, 2004), improving reading speed is a major factor for EFL educators. Starting from this point, the present study is intended to enhance first year students' reading speed through paced reading without losing reading comprehension. To check this speculation, an experiment is conducted under the pretest-posttest design to determine to what extent the treatment has helped in improving students' performance in reading speed and reading comprehension. In addition, the student t-test is computed for statistical analysis of the data. The findings indicate that the participants' reading speed has been improved without a concomitant decrease in reading comprehension. This demonstrates the pedagogical usefulness of paced reading activity and points out the need for its implementation in reading classrooms.

Bacher Ahmed (MCA. Univ. Biskra).

Contribution of Phonics and Phonemic Awareness to the Development of EFL learners' Literacy

It is a research-based fact that Algerian tertiary EFL students are unable to read and write properly. To be fair, it might not be their fault, because they have been taught English as if it is a logical *continuum* of French. This injustice is coupled with the inherent discrepancy between spoken and written English. EFL teachers' task is, therefore, complex: They need to make it their primary concern to teach their students not only to listen to words, but also to read and write them to meet the expected standards. This is by definition teaching literacy. According to Grabe (2009: 5), "citizens of modern societies must be good readers to be successful". Likewise, citizens of modern societies must be good writers to be successful. The current paper, which attempts to report this researcher's experiment with the sophomore oral expression students at M. K. University of Biskra, targets the contribution of phonics and phonemic

awareness activities to help overcome reading and writing challenges. Phonics refers to “[...] associating of letters to their sound value” (Elabsy 2013: 46) whereas phonemic awareness is generally understood to be the “[i]ndividual’s awareness of the sound structure, or phonological structure, of a spoken word” (Gillon 2018: 2). The paper will also attempt to address these questions : Why do tertiary students of English fail to attain a proficient level in reading and writing? What can phonics and phonemic awareness activities bring to the students’ meaningful learning experience? Primary results seem to support the hypothesis that stipulates that if judiciously implemented, phonics and phonemic awareness activities may lead to a promising contribution to the development of literacy skills. They also disclose that EFL tertiary students of English seem to spell better, read better, and write better, which is a strong indication that phonics and phonemic awareness need be an integral part of the national curriculum.

Bachir Tiziri (Doc. Univ. Alger).

L’ergonomie cognitive dans l’enseignement / apprentissage de l’anglais comme langue étrangère : applications et apports

L’approche cognitive est l’une des méthodes d’apprentissage ayant reçu le plus d’intérêt de nos jours. Elle est sous l’égide de l’approche communicative, axée sur les processus mentaux produits par l’apprenant lors de son interaction avec une langue qui lui est complètement ou partiellement étrangère. C’est en raison de son importance avérée par des études récentes, que l’ergonomie consacre un volet à part entière à la cognition, afin de développer dans le cadre de l’ergonomie cognitive, les meilleures conditions possibles, susceptibles de stimuler les différents aspects cognitifs de l’apprenant, en vue d’un processus d’apprentissage/ acquisition efficaces et efficaces, de la langue étrangère. L’anglais comme *lingua franca* constitue sans doute l’une des langues les mieux servies à ce niveau ; ainsi son enseignement connaît un essor remarquable en Algérie aux côtés du français intégré comme langue seconde plutôt comme langue étrangère. C’est pourquoi, afin de mettre à l’épreuve l’approche cognitive dans l’apprentissage de cette langue, nous essayerons d’analyser dans la présente communication, une formation dispensée par le « British Council » établi en Algérie, comme école de formation référentielle dans le domaine et, ce à travers un de ses manuels d’enseignements. Ainsi, nous tenterons d’apporter quelques éléments de réponses aux premiers questionnements qui s’imposent, à savoir : En quoi consiste l’approche cognitive de l’enseignement/ apprentissage d’une langue étrangère ? En quoi consiste l’ergonomie cognitive et, quelles applications sur l’enseignement/ apprentissage de la langue étrangère ? Quels apports de l’ergonomie cognitive à l’enseignement/ apprentissage de l’anglais comme langue étrangère ? Les résultats de l’étude vont à première vue, dans le sens de l’affirmation d’une hypothèse par laquelle, la formation dispensée par le « British Council » au profit de l’apprenant algérien, constitue dans son ensemble une approche ergonomiquement adaptée aux besoins d’apprentissage, puisque nombreux aspects mentaux sont pris en considération à savoir : la motivation et l’usage des nouvelles technologies d’interaction de l’apprenant vis-à-vis de la langue.

Belkhir Sadia (MCA. Univ. Tizi-Ouzou).

Does MIP Promote EFL Learners' Cognitive Ability to Identify Metaphors in Written Discourse?

In cognitive linguistics, metaphors are primarily conceptual not linguistic. They are tools that facilitate communication through the understanding of abstract concepts in terms of concrete ones (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Academic discourse has been claimed to feature the highest amount of metaphorically used words (Steen et al. 2010). This is mainly instantiated in language through a type of metaphor referred to as *personification* wherein abstract concepts are attributed human attributes (Lakoff & Johnson 1980). Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) is a method that is intended to facilitate the identification of metaphorically used words in discourse. Metaphor identification is not a trouble-free task because of inconsistency in researchers’ intuitions associated with a lack of accuracy in determining what counts as a metaphoric expression (Pragglejaz Group 2007). The present paper offers a modest report of experimental studies conducted with four advanced EFL learners, two Master’s graduates, and one doctoral student. Its main objective is to investigate the potential effect of MIP upon their cognitive ability to identify metaphors within written text. Some text passages are extracted from a master’s dissertation. These extracts make up the experiments administered to the participants. The subjects are requested to identify metaphors within the passages. This yields data about the degrees of their cognitive aptitude to identify metaphors before and after they are introduced to MIP. This small-scale investigation is conducted in a higher education context (the Department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University). The results of the study indicate that MIP is a tool that partially helps the subjects in the process of metaphor identification. It is, therefore, suggested that it be complemented with additional data about conceptual metaphor and its linguistic manifestation in academic discourse in order to increase learners’ proficiency in metaphor identification within written discourse. These findings can make a humble contribution to the field of education, as it might offer useful data to educational practitioners and researchers.

Benaissa Amel (MAA. Univ. Tizi-Ouzou).

The Use of Online Quizlets and Digital Flashcards to Enhance Students' Retention and Memorization of Vocabulary

Research in psychology, and more precisely in cognitive science, has had significant implications for both second language acquisition and language teaching. Recently, many researchers have suggested that the cognitive approach to language learning can be useful in developing and evaluating effective computer assisted language learning (CALL) resources and tasks that can help create successful and long-lasting learning opportunities (Chapelle, 2009; Garrett, 1991; Sanosi, 2018). The present work starts first by bridging the gap between the theoretical and empirical principles of cognitive language learning and the design and implementation of technology-based materials to enhance second language acquisition. More precisely, it aims at confirming the positive role that online Quizlets and digital flashcards, as two useful technological resources, can have on maximizing the information-processing stages needed to acquire and retain English vocabulary. Particular emphasis will be put on first year university students' effective retention and retrieval of a wider range of vocabulary in the speaking course. Last but not least, the paper comprises some concrete and practical guidance for teachers and students to use both the mobile and computer version of the Quizlet application.

Berbar Katia (Doc. Univ. Tizi-Ouzou)

Anxiety and Cognitive Processing in English Learning: The Case of First Year Students at the University of Tizi Ouzou

Learning a foreign language can be a demanding task for many students owing to the variety of cognitive and affective factors that adversely affects language learning performance and achievement. Among the psychological variables, anxiety is the most influential and an inhibitor of students' performance in English (Liu & Huang, 2011). Tobias (1986) submitted that anxiety is a prevalent phenomenon that interferes with the three language learning phases: input, processing, and output. By studying the influence of language anxiety on cognitive processing, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) found that anxiety is negatively correlated with students' performance at any stage. They described the impact of anxiety as pervasive and subtle. Thereby, the aim of the present study was to measure the degree of anxiety at each stage and elicit clearer understanding regarding its impact on cognitive processing. To this end, a five-point Likert questionnaire was developed and administered to sixty-five first year students of English enrolled at the University of Tizi Ouzou during the academic year 2016-2017. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 24.0 was used to compute the gathered data. Descriptive analysis was used to calculate the means and the percentages of each item. The results revealed that the participants experienced high levels of input anxiety, processing anxiety, and output anxiety. Anxiety arousal at the input stage prevented learners from understanding vocabulary items in the target language. Highly anxious students have high affective filters, which prevent them from obtaining comprehensible input. At the processing stage, anxiety affected memory processes through impairing students' cognitive ability to encode, organize, and store language input. Anxiety at the output stage obstructed the retrieval of the previously studied material and precluded learners from communicating and expressing themselves in English. The study conclusions indicated that anxiety is a hindrance since it negatively affected learners' ability to process information at each stage.

Berdjane Ouiza (MAA. Univ. Tizi-Ouzou).

Correlation between peer assessment and students' cognitive, affective, and behavioral engagement in problem-based learning EFL classroom.

According to constructivists' assumptions, problem-based learning is a student-centered learning approach that establishes an inviting learning environment, supports peer collaboration, and enhances students' engagement in the learning process by involving them in particular activities and interactions. One aspect that reflects peer collaboration and has been given importance in problem-based learning activities and instructions is peer assessment, and one factor that impacts on academic success, according to Newman (1992), is students' engagement. The purpose of this study was to investigate the correlation between peer assessment and students' cognitive, affective, and behavioral engagement in problem-based learning EFL classroom. The study draws on Fredricks, Blumenfeld and Paris' description of engagement as a "multifaceted" or "multidimensional" construct and the constructivists' perspectives on peer assessment in problem-based learning. The study was conducted on 60 secondary school students selected randomly and grouped into two groups: the control and treatment groups. The learners involved in this study were assigned problem-based learning activities selected by the English teachers of the two groups in relation to the expected outcome. The treatment group is informed about the criteria of peer assessment by their teacher who identified the criteria in accordance to the objectives of the activities. Gallagher's classroom engagement rubric is used to identify and compare the learners' level of engagement in both groups. The teachers involved in the study identified the learners who showed cognitive, affective, and behavioral engagement in the group that used peer assessment and the control group. Data were analyzed using a statistics program. The results obtained from the analysis showed that the correlation between peer assessment and the students' cognitive, affective, and behavioral engagement is

significant. The findings suggest that peer assessment in problem-based learning can create a learning context that increases the learners' level of cognitive, affective and behavioral engagement in EFL classroom.

Chalal Fatima Zohra (Doc. Univ. Alger) & Bouzidi Louiza (Doc. Univ. Alger).

Foreign Language Attrition: A Case Study of Algerian Multilinguals Having English as their L4

This contribution discusses the issue of language attrition in relation to instructed foreign languages. Language attrition refers to the decay in language skills. It is classified into L1, L2 and foreign language attrition. The latter refers to the language knowledge that is forgotten later in life due to a wide range of factors. As the majority of the body of research related to foreign language attrition was conducted three decades ago, there is a need for new/recent studies investigating such a topic. The significance of this kind of research lies in the fact that the modern language learners' profile is no longer the same as that of the learners thirty years ago. This new and complex profile (i.e. multilingual) is considered as an opportunity as well as a challenge; that is, how can individuals stay multilingual and at the same time save all the languages they have learned throughout their life. Put differently, foreign language learning and mastering requires time, effort and money; so once acquired, these languages should be saved and prevented from loss. For this sake, scholars started working on language retention and relearning theories. Hence, they suggested the '*saving paradigm*' (Nelson, 1978) as a method which assumes that once a word is learned there are residues of knowledge that can be used to reactivate it; thus, preventing it from loss. The second part of this contribution presents a case study which intends to examine a population of ten Algerian multilinguals having English as their L4, and who are no longer using the language. The experiment works under the hypothesis claiming that the relearning process is faster and easier than the acquisition process because of the memory savings. The findings of the experiment revealed that the participants recalled English vocabulary, which they once learned at school, easier and faster than learning and retaining new English vocabulary. Therefore, it appears that the *saving method* explains and justifies the retention of the forgotten English vocabulary and prevents it from attrition. The paper concludes with suggestions for future research in the field.

Hadj Mohand Amel (MA. Univ. Tizi-Ouzou).

Implementing Vygotsky's theory of social learning in the classroom to enhance students' cognitive abilities. The case of KrimBelkacem's Secondary School teachers.

The brain is a seat of cognition. It is where knowledge is stored according to Cognitivists. This paper discusses ways in which teachers manage to use Vygotsky's social principles to develop students' cognitive abilities. It aims also at identifying to what extent teachers apply these principles. A cognitive social approach as well as evidence will be adopted to support this research. In fact, Vygotsky's theory of social learning forms the core of this work. Indeed, adults convey to children the way they perceive the world through interaction; then several mental processes; which begin as social activities, are put into action as children internalize the knowledge obtained to make it their own. Vygotsky (1978) asserts that attention, sensation, perception, and memory are mental functions that can be adopted into more sophisticated mental processes through interaction. As stated in Woolfolk (2010) as well as in Brooks and Brooks (1993) several classroom activities and strategies can be involved in order to promote these processes such as role plays, modeling behaviours, assessing learner's understanding through application and performance of open structures in addition to challenging tasks to promote maximum cognitive growth. This study examines KrimBelkacem students and teachers of English who are randomly selected. In order to achieve the overall aim of the research, classroom observation was adopted in addition to interviews submitted to eight teachers to find out to what extent they use the principles of Vygotsky when teaching and what are their importance in enhancing student's cognitive abilities. The expected results of this research are that teachers of KrimBelkacem, to a higher extent, apply Vygotsky's principles in the classroom which have a great impact on student's memory and understanding. The conclusion can also be drawn that Vygotskian social principles deem very effective to allow students build their knowledge based on interaction with the more knowledgeable others in society. Therefore scaffolders make use of different activities based on interaction to boost student's remembering as well as understanding.

Idri Nadia. (MCA. Univ. Béjaia).

Using the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) to Develop Algerian Doctoral Students' Academic Achievement

While learners struggle to learn how to write their assignments at graduation, doctoral students need to develop this skill further to save time and effort while conducting research. In the Algerian LMD (Licence/Master/Doctorat) context, learners are required to develop their academic literacy; be it in the different seminars or to participate in conferences or simply to successfully and efficiently write their dissertations. This paper suggests the use of the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) (Chamot & O'Malley, 1986, 1987, 1994, 1999) to monitor doctoral Algerian students of English for them to develop their academic writing through applying its five-step instructional model (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994). The study's main aim is to put the focus on the cognitive

strategies students need to use on the one hand and suggest the application of the model's modules namely the appropriate learning strategies, development of academic language and a related curriculum to their specialty and research field on the other. The work is in progress and uses a quantitative method based on a scale whose items were developed according to Cummins' (1984) classification of language and content activities and CALLA model (Chamot, 2005). Preliminary results showed that the CALLA model's phases (preparation, presentation, practice, self-evaluation, expansion, and assessment) are partly used by a wide range of students but not all of them. In addition, content-based instruction related to research can be adjusted using this model to develop their academic and scientific writing. In addition, the difficulties Ph.D. students encounter are found in the academic and cognitively demanding activities like concept formation, academic productions (written and spoken), understanding written texts related to a technical field, making models, maps, charts and graphs and discussing them. This paper adds value to cognitive strategies in the research field since many difficulties were revealed and the CALLA model can be applied and can be added to doctoral curricula to structure the students' academic productions.

Isselnane Karima (MAA. Univ. Tizi-Ouzou).

From Learners' Errors to their Cognitive Strategies

This paper seeks to explore different cognitive strategies middle school learners use when learning English as a foreign language by means of analysing and explaining their errors in their written productions. It is assumed that when writing in English, learners use cognitive strategies such as Language transfer, strategies of L2 learning, L2 communication strategies and overgeneralisation, to learn the foreign language (Selinker, 1992). This study has been conducted in order to understand these strategies and techniques used by middle school learners of Tizi-Ouzou in the process of foreign language learning using Selinker's (1992) interlanguage theory and Ellis's (1995) Error Analysis. Error analysis, which is a very important area of applied linguistics as well as of second and foreign language learning, is a systematic method to analyze learners' errors. These errors are not always viewed negatively, rather they are seen as important parts and aspects in the process of language learning. They can provide interesting insights into the language development process as well as a methodical way to identify, describe and explain learners' errors. In other words, errors help to better understand the processes that are involved in the very complex phenomenon of second and foreign language learning (Ellis, 1995). This work investigates two types of errors in writing namely « the use of the English prepositions » and « the use of the English verbs and tenses ». The corpus consists of 200 exam papers in English taken randomly from the first Brevet Exam held, in Tizi-Ouzou, in 2007. The data have been analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The findings of this study reveal that the cognitive strategies used by these learners range from interference of the mother tongue, to strategies of L2 learning and overgeneralization.

Metrouh Farid (Doc. Univ. Tizi-Ouzou)

Brainstorming and EFL Learners' Motivation in Speaking at Mouloud Mammeri University

Motivating students especially the ones who are reluctant to participate, speak or engage in classroom learning activities is one of the principles for attaining an effective teaching learning process. However, learners may sometimes lose their willingness and interest to speak voluntarily in the ESL/EFL classroom. There is a great deal of background behind why students need to get motivated in order to participate, speak, and engage in classroom learning activities. Brainstorming can be a useful tool to help learners generate ideas (Roestiyah, 2001: 73). Through this research, we attempt to explore the use of brainstorming activities to promote motivation in speaking and engagement in the ESL/EFL classroom. One hundred twenty four (124) first year English BMD students at MMUTO have participated in the study. The purpose was to explore the types of brainstorming activities used and how this technique was employed to enhance students' motivation and engagement to speak freely in the classroom. Finally, it gathers the students and teachers attitudes and perceptions on the use of brainstorming activities to promote speaking skills. The data were obtained through questionnaire completed by the students, an interview with six 06 teachers of oral expression, as well as through classroom observations during the brainstorming sessions. The results reached in this research reveal that students and teachers attitudes and perceptions on the use of brainstorming activities to promote speaking skills are positive. Further, it was shown that the majority of teachers use brainstorming in small groups and by following Osborn's main guidelines. Furthermore, it was demonstrated that brainstorming activities using word lists, word mapping and also pictures are commonly utilized in the speaking tasks. Besides, it was observed that brainstorming contributes to the increase in students' motivation, confidence, and participation as reflected by the positive students' behavior during classroom observations. The findings are consistent with the studies by Slavin (1995) and Hamzah and Lu (2010), who found that students were more confident and motivated to express their ideas when brainstorming in small groups. Accordingly, the findings support Cullen's (1998) belief that brainstorming activities encourage students to become better learners, especially when low proficiency students can learn from the better ones. To conclude, this study has not only shed light on the use of brainstorming to address students' reluctance to speak English more voluntarily, but also provides useful insights for teachers to deal with the reluctance to speak in the ESL/EFL classroom.

Moussaoui Samira (MCB. Univ. Bordj Bouarerdj) & Akhrib Mohamed (Doc. Univ. Alger).

A Think-aloud Protocol Analysis of the Cognitive Processes and Strategies Used by Skilled and Less-skilled EFL Learners in Essay Writing

This paper attempts to analyse the results of a case study conducted through a think-aloud procedure, an introspective research technique that has been proven effective in uncovering learners' cognitive processes, mainly in writing (Abdellatif, 2009). The aim of this study was twofold: (1) to explore the cognitive processes of two EFL university students, categorized as skilled and less-skilled writers, as they plan, compose and revise their academic essays, and (2) to compare the strategies they used during each stage of the writing process. This study contributes to the body of research investigating the learners' cognitive processes, mainly those comparing skilled and less-skilled writers (e.g., Leki, Cumming, and Silva, 2008; Sasaki, 2000) in terms of the way (s) in which they process (plan and organize, compose, and revise) their writing and the strategies they use to juggle the cognitive multi-tasks required in each stage of the writing process (e.g., Alhaissoni, 2012; Graham, MacArthur, and Fitzgerald, 2013). The data for this study were collected from the participants' think-aloud protocols, the analysis of which has yielded important findings. Thus, a comparison between the two participants' protocols demonstrated that although both of them followed the fundamental stages of the writing process (planning, composing, and revising), the skilled-student used the writing strategies more effectively and purposefully than did his less skilled peer. In other words, the former had a good manipulation of the topic (ideas) and planned more strategically, at the local as well as the global levels, than did the latter. In addition, he composed and revised more recursively and devoted more effort and time to the deep level processes, compared to his less-skilled peer, who focused more on the surface level processes and showed a limited awareness about the use of strategies and analytical skills. These findings imply that skilled and less-skilled students demonstrate various differences pertaining to the way (s) in which they process cognitive tasks, mainly the way (s) they employ the writing strategies. It is, therefore, important for writing instructors to consider learner differences as an integral part of the teaching program and pay special attention to the less-skilled learners.

Segueni Lamri (MCB. Univ. Biskra)

Matching teaching styles to learning styles: A comparison of university students.

The concept of learning style has been introduced by educationalists to describe students' attitudes and behaviours that determine their preferred way of learning. Therefore, syllabi designers and teachers need to take into account the learning requirements of students to ensure their integration and maximize their motivation. We all know that students intake and process information in various ways using different sensory channels. And since we cannot adapt to every single student, we can still find differences among students who join the university. The teacher's choice of response styles makes difference to the students' subsequent actions and learning. The goal is to find how we can unify their needs of studying with the guidelines of the institutions in today's Higher Education. To achieve this goal, teachers should understand which learning styles prevail in their students. The present research was undertaken via a questionnaire about students prevailing learning styles. Our research makes use of Honey and Munford's learning style questionnaire (LSQ) in order to measure the different learning styles (reflectors, theorists, activists, and pragmaticists) throughout three successive levels namely, first, second and third year at the department of English, Biskra University. We searched for the prevailing learning styles and propose to teachers to plan their teaching approach on our findings.

Yassine Souryana (MCA. Univ. Tizi-Ouzou).

Dissertation supervision: Reflexions about Students' Cognitive Strategies

Writing a dissertation is an academic requirement for getting university degrees such as Masters and PhDs. It is a summative exercise whose function is not only to confer a degree but also to serve as recognition of a certain expertise in a given field of speciality. In English as a Foreign Language studies the challenge is double. The candidates must show appropriate critical thinking skills and a strong mastery of the linguistic system to be able to write their research. Fortunately, this complex academic writing performance is conducted under the guidance of a supervisor. It requires the involvement of many cognitive strategies by students. Therefore, dissertation supervision is a process that unveils the different cognitive strategies students may have or lack and the ways they make use of them to complete their research writing. This paper is a reflexion about some cognitive and metacognitive strategies such as setting goals, planning, prioritising and self-management (Rubin;1987, O'Malley; 1985 and Oxford;1990) Masters and PhD students make use of while writing their academic research. The study is based on a corpus of narratives collected from ten PhD Candidates and forty-three masters 'students about the supervision process and the respective roles of supervisors and students. It qualitatively analyses the expressed expectations of students involved in writing their dissertations at the Department of English at MouloudMammeri University. It aims at highlighting the cognitive and

metacognitive strategies used by the participants and those they ought to use but do not. It subsequently discusses the impact of the lack of certain cognitive strategies on the overall performance of the participants.

Zebbouchi Hadjer (Doc. Univ. Biskra).

Investigating Close Reading Contribution to Enhancing Students' Reading Comprehension and Critical Thinking

Reading is a fundamental skill for students' overall success; it is the ability to respond effectively to text and extract meaning from it to apply it in real situations; it involves complex cognitive processes in terms of comprehension, critical reasoning, and inference making. This paper aimed at investigating the extent to which *close reading* (i.e., a purposeful and substantive reading that entails active engagement of the mind, intellectual skills to analyze and assess the author's work, and the ability to raise higher-order questions that delve into the text to obtain evidence while reading) is practiced by EFL students and its contribution to enhancing their reading comprehension and critical thinking. This study was motivated by a widely observable problem at Constantine-1 University: even after years of receiving English instruction in middle and secondary schools, a large proportion of EFL tertiary students showed limited intellectual skills to dig deeper in the text and critically analyze its content and structure to determine the type and value of its information, in addition to struggling with comprehending plethora of complex literary and informational texts. They tended to read passively and lack the attentiveness that unfolds layers of meaning. This study was undertaken to answer two questions: (1) Do EFL tertiary students at Constantine-1 University fully engage their minds when reading texts assigned to them? (2) Do they implement *close reading* cognitive strategies properly (i.e., purposeful rereading; annotations; text-dependent questions; and text discussion) to overcome comprehension difficulties and develop critical thinking? To conduct this small-scale qualitative study, we administered and distributed a questionnaire to a random sample of twenty EFL freshmen at Constantine-1 University to answer questions related to *close reading method*. Findings revealed the absence of a well-established *close reading* practice and unawareness of the cognitive strategies that critical reading comprehension incorporates; besides the impressionist reading students tend to perform. We conclude by stressing the importance of integrating *close reading* in both classroom instructions and individual reading habits to build a strong foundation for students' critical reading comprehension. We also call for further research in this area.

Zidane Abdelhak (Doc. Univ. Biskra) & Mehiri Ramdane (MCA. Univ. Biskra).

Cognition and language learning: Towards a better understanding of the cognitive processes involved in language learning.

Throughout history, language learning has been the concern of a myriad number of researchers (Selinker 1972; Ellis 1994; Gass, 2000; Crystal 2003). Nevertheless, do we really make use of such a giant background of knowledge appropriately in the present time? This research investigated some studies and theories of cognitive processes in language learning, firstly, and a study after that was conducted to look at the usefulness of such a theoretical background. Hypothetically, this study came out of a belief that teachers' feedback in the classroom is crucial, and that it is based on the extent to which the teacher is sufficiently knowledgeable of the theories and processes of language learning (language transfer, transfer of training, strategies of L2 language learning, L2 communication strategies, and overgeneralisation of rules and principles). A questionnaire was distributed to 23 students and teachers; six of them are PhD students from Biskra University, and the rest are Master degree holders from Boumerdes University. The questions were mainly about their attitudes towards the learning process and their teachers' level. The results showed that 40% of them had positive training influence, while, 10% witnessed a negative one, and the rest fluctuated between positivity and negativity, depending on their teachers' methods of teaching. As far as the communication strategies are concerned, the results revealed that the participants' strategies encompassed; asking for clarification, paraphrasing, the use of their body language, and speaking slowly using simple language. Concerning their "overgeneralization of rules" process, the data swung between high and low degrees of occurring. Lastly, and most importantly, the participants' opinions of their teachers' competency in the mastery of the linguistic knowledge exhibited that 48% of the students see that their teachers master enough linguistic knowledge, and that 39% of them believe that some teachers were sufficiently knowledgeable and some were not that competent. The last percentage (13%) stated that all their teachers lacked adequate linguistic knowledge.