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Using computer analysis of student writing to improve lesson planning (Article)

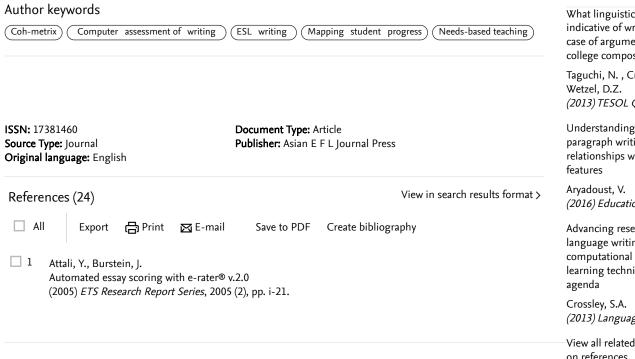
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Abstract

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This paper describes the results of a study that aimed to investigate the effectiveness of using Coh- Metrix to perform a computer analysis of student writing , and the extent to which this analysis could be used by the classroom teacher to improve lesson planning and thereby create opportunity for better learning outcomes. A quasiexperimental design was employed to gather data from undergraduate students taking a pre-requisite academic English writing course at a Malaysian public university. The students took part in four weekly lessons, during which the researchers assigned writing tasks that were analysed using Coh-Metrix to determine student performance in selected aspects of writing . Student essays were also independently assessed using the ESL Composition Profile. The results from the analyses of each assignment were then used to plan the following lesson . Following teaching that targeted identified areas of weakness, the majority of the selected writing measures analysed using Coh-Metrix showed an improvement from essay 1 to essay 3, as did the four categories assessed through the ESL Composition Profile. The results indicate that a Coh-Metrix analysis, used in conjunction with a teacher analysis of student writing, is useful in the identification of student needs and for the planning of appropriate classroom lessons. © 2018 Asian E F L Journal Press. All Rights Reserved.



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