

Branka L. Milenković¹
University of Kragujevac
Faculty of Philology, English Department

STUDENT METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS IN L2 WRITING: COMPETENCE VS. PERFORMANCE

Writing in a second language certainly embodies constraints that are not met in L1 writing due to numerous decisions L2 learners make while producing a text. Many researches have shown that L2 writing is largely based on decision-making with relation to form and search for appropriate words which make the writing process even more complex and time-consuming. Therefore, communicating with the readers through the use of metadiscourse poses an additional obstacle in L2 writing. This paper is concerned with the use of metadiscourse markers in L2 student writing at the Department of English language, at the University of Kragujevac in Serbia. In essay writing research we frequently observe quantitative analysis of specific language items, however, in this research, we attempt to juxtapose the quantifiable metadiscourse items in student writing with their thinking processes and decision-making while composing. Thus, the research correlates three insights, one being the students' liability to *deep writing*, which relies on their metacognitive awareness in writing, established through the modified questionnaire of *the Inventory of Processes in College Composition* (Lavelle and Zuercher 2001) and based on previous research (Milenkovic & Lojanica 2015). Students' responses are then correlated with the analysis of 33 student essays on behalf of the use of metadiscourse markers based on *A model of metadiscourse in academic texts* established by Hyland and Tse (2004). Finally, the students' metacognitive awareness in writing is analyzed through an introspective questionnaire with the aim to yield qualitative responses in relation to their cognitive ability to reflect upon their writing. The results of the study confirm the common belief that using metadiscourse features is a constraint in L2 writing. Evidently there is a disproportion between the metadiscourse items students use in writing with relation to what they believe that they use and students have displayed more metacognitive awareness in relation to *interactive resources* as opposing to the *interactional resources* in academic writing. Implications of the results may establish a basis for a modified teaching practice in second language writing instruction with the aim to enhance students' communicative competence in writing.

Key words: *L2 writing, reflective writing, interactive resources, interactional resources, metadiscourse*

1. INTRODUCTION

Establishing communication with the readership is regarded as discourse reflexivity accomplished through the use of metadiscourse markers in writing. In scientific research, especially interesting is the study of the use of metadiscourse markers in student essays because it relates to the ability of students to communicate with their readers through their writing.

1 branka.milenkovic@filum.kg.ac.rs

Cognitive complexity of the writing skill is relevant for writing at the undergraduate level, because, as Harris and Graham (1995: 195) indicate, "... as the cognitive processes required by the writing task become more numerous and complex, task difficulty increases and greater cognitive capacity is needed." Requirements for student writing range from the mastery of rhetorical forms in essays to writing critiques, comparative summaries and different research papers and reports that all demand highly engaged cognitive processes for summarizing, analyzing and synthesizing. Even more nowadays, writing is seen as a tool for learning and so we witness this skill as complex, versatile and multifaceted.

During my doctoral thesis research I came across an interesting experimental task that was conducted to illuminate and compare cognitive effort used for writing as opposing to other cognitive operations (Kellog 1994) and it was this insight that provided me with additional purpose and acknowledgement that we as professors need to devote much time and effort to alleviate the writing process for our students.

In Figure 1 I present the results of the abovementioned experiment alongside with the obtained results:

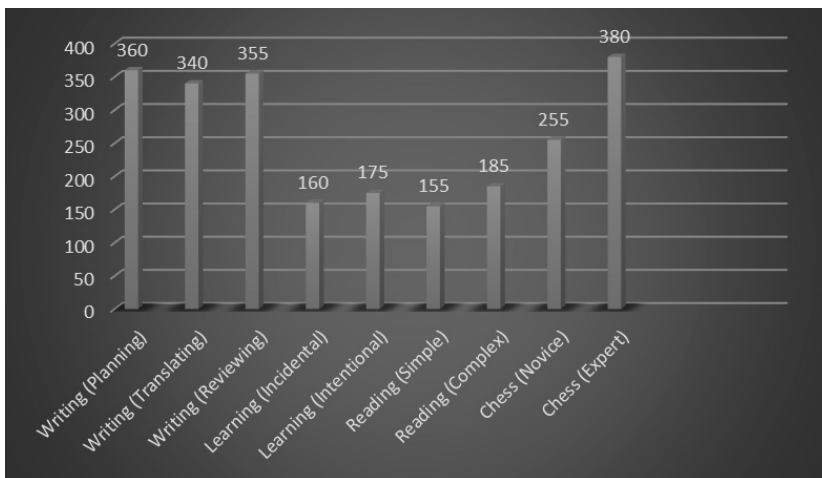


Figure 1. Cognitive effort for writing and other cognitive operations as indexed by interference with secondary-task reaction time in milliseconds. (Kellog 1994: 17)²

As can be seen in Figure 1, the writing process (in stages of planning, translating and reviewing) requires more than twice as much of cognitive effort as opposing to the learning or reading processes. The writing process can be seen as approximately equally demanding as the cognitive effort in expert chess playing. Thus, we may conclude that the writing skill is among the most demanding language skills in ELT and a fruitful research ground for those who teach Academic writing and other writing courses.

2 Based on a comparative study of different scientist (Britton, Glynn, Meyer, and Penland, 1982; Britton & Tessor, 1982) and Kellog's researches (Kellog, 1986. Copyright © 1986 by the Psychonomic Society, Inc. Reprinted by permission).

Another incentive in doing my research on the writing instruction in English as a Second/Foreign Language is the fact that this type of research in contexts other than the USA, Australia, Canada and the UK is minimal (Grabe & Kaplan 1996: 29) so the research results may contribute to L2 writing in EFL in the Serbian education system at the tertiary level.

The teaching implications may be observed in the purpose of this study which are to establish a comparative distinction between the student competence in L2 writing and their performance in L2 writing relating the use of metadiscourse markers. In this study I attempt to juxtapose the quantifiable measures of metadiscourse markers in student essay writing to the qualitative measures of the student thinking processes and decision-making during the writing process. The study correlates three insights: students' liability to *deep writing* based on the previous research (Milenkovic & Lojanica 2015) conducted using the modified questionnaire of the *Inventory of Processes in College Composition* (Lavelle and Zuercher 2001); the analysis of 33 student essays following a modified syllabus design on behalf of the use of metadiscourse markers based on *A model of metadiscourse in academic texts* (Hyland and Tse 2004); and students' metacognitive awareness in writing through an introspective questionnaire with the aim to yield qualitative responses in relation to their cognitive ability to reflect upon their writing.

The research questions that governed the analysis reflect upon students' approach to deep (reflective) writing³, a modified teaching syllabus that stimulates metacognitive development in writing and an introspective approach aimed at raising student awareness about the use of metadiscourse markers in writing.

Having considered the cognitive effort present in the process of writing in general, it is significant to establish a distinction between the cognitive effort students make in L1, as opposing to L2 writing. Only by fully understanding the requirements set before students writing in a L2 will we be able to comprehend their competence and performance of the deep (reflective) writing.

1.1. COGNITIVE COMPLEXITY IN L2 WRITING VS. L1 WRITING

Cognitive complexity of the writing process increases even more when we consider the distinction between L1 and L2 writing. It is well-known that the students who are learning writing in L1 already possess the linguistic knowledge which they are only enhancing through writing and

3 This research was presented in a published paper *Deep and Surface approach to writing at the threshold of C2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)* Milenkovic B. & Lojanica M. 2015: Temeljni i proceduralni pristup pisanju na pragu C2 nivoa prema Zajedničkom evropskom referentnom okviru za žive jezike (CEFR) [*Deep and Surface Approach to writing at the C2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)*], *Lipar* XVI/58, Faculty of Philology and Arts: Kragujevac, 27-44.

that way acquiring a special form of the language they already know (Weigle 2002:4). However, those students who are learning to write in a second language are expected to simultaneously possess the linguistic competence of the target language and to master the skill of analyzing, interpreting, criticizing, generating ideas, synthesizing, arguing and researching in the target language (Grabe & Kaplan 1996:341). In this sense we are talking about the higher-order elements of writing. Therefore, we may note that writing involves engagement at many levels simultaneously which indeed is that additional cognitive effort present in writing in a second/foreign language. It places a greater emphasis on the communicative elements of language that emphasize the issue of purpose and audience in writing. And, according to Hyland, the purpose for writing in this new paradigm is communication rather than accuracy (Shaw & Weir, 2007:9).

Alongside, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, aimed at teaching and testing language skills in Second/Foreign Language Acquisition (SLA/FLA), has proposed descriptors in mastering each level of learning a language. Therefore, due to the fact that the study program of the English Department at the Faculty of Philology aims at preparing the students for the C2 (proficiency) level, the following descriptors have been assigned for the ultimate goal of teaching the writing skill:

Overall Written Production	Overall Written Interaction
- Can write clear, smoothly flowing, complex texts in an appropriate and effective style and a logical structure which helps the reader to find significant points.	- Can express him/herself with clarity and precision, relating to the addressee flexibly and effectively.

Figure 2. CEFR C2 Proficiency
Based on Council of Europe 2001: 61, 83 in Shaw & Weir (2007: 13)

These descriptors clearly involve both the logical structure of the text, with the aim to ‘guide’ the readers and help in interpretation, and the interaction aspect of the text where the writer addresses and engages the reader more directly. Communicative competence (complying to higher-order concerns) is evidently the expectation in academic writing at this level, while the grammatical competence (lower-order concerns) simply underlies these superior aims of writing. Therefore, academic writing in undergraduate and graduate study programs clearly places a greater cognitive constraint on L2 writing.

2. WRITING INSTRUCTION APPROACH

Apart from the cognitive difficulty in the L2 writing process, the second reason why students may refrain from writing in L2 context and consider it difficult is the possibility that the teaching instruction does not suit

their needs and does not prepare them to fully communicate through their writing. It is infrequent that they lack self-confidence in writing and even full metacognitive understanding of the writing process.

Therefore, the awareness of metacognition and the use of metadiscourse markers is an essential part of my analysis in this paper and needs to be defined further for the purpose of teaching implications in the writing instruction.

2.1. METACOGNITION IN THE WRITING PROCESS

Metacognition plays an important part in the writing process and we need to indicate that it is composed of two fundamental elements:

- 1) knowledge/awareness about the cognition and the thinking process and
- 2) conscious and deliberate control of one's cognitive activity which implies the concept of 'self-regulation' in an activity.

(Harris, Santangelo & Graham in: Waters & Schneider eds. 2010: 227)

It is exactly the awareness of the cognitive processes that the writer experiences during writing and his/her conscious adapting during the act of writing that separate the beginner-writers from expert-writers. Expert-writers devote much attention to the macrostructure of the text and its meaning, while beginner-writers rely on the surface level of textual elements and the isolated words and sentences. (McCutcheon 2006 in: Waters & Schneider eds. 2010: 233) The writer needs to have awareness of the text (as a linguistic entity), awareness of the self as a writer and awareness of the potential reader of the text. (Toumi 2009: 66) In his research Hyland (Hyland 2005) has analyzed academic writing and has indicated that in practice there is always lack of specific instruction to stimulate students to write communicatively. According to him, this aspect of writing instruction is marginalized in place of the propositional content. (Hyland 2005: 364) For this reason it is essential to modify the teaching practice in the writing courses and to discuss the elements of metacognition and metadiscourse so that the students are able to develop their metacognition and in that way govern their thinking and writing process.

2.2. STRATEGIC COMPETENCE AND WRITING

The communicative teaching approach emphasizes the development of the *strategic competence* as the most difficult element of communicative competence in L2 writing because it involves the metacognitive dimension. The ability to observe the thinking process and to act introspectively certainly needs special attention and additional assistance in the mastery of their metacognition in writing.

For the theoretical basis of my research I used the communicative competence model implemented on the writing skill by Connor & Mbaye (2002:266). Apart from the linguistic, sociolinguistic and discourse competence, the strategic competence most closely reflected the deep approach to writing that enables students to govern their thinking processes in writing and engage in reflective writing.

Strategic competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - establishing the writer – recipient relationship through the strategic use of metadiscourse markers in writing; - increased level of writer empathy towards the reader and the ability to understand the interpersonal context of writing and therefore the linguistic elements used to establish the relationship between the writer and the reader.
-----------------------------	--

Figure 3. *Strategic competence* in writing Connor & Mbaye (2002:266)

Researchers have stated the following about the strategic competence:

Strategic competence is the type of competence through which the writer manipulates with language items in order to accomplish a communicative goal. (Brown 1987: 200)

Analysis of the strategic competence encompasses the interpersonal factors between the reader and the writer, such as transitive and other metadiscourse markers, because the metatext in writing has the same function as the strategies that repair oral communication. (Connor & Mbaye 2002: 267)

Further on, within the strategic competence, I based my research on specifically teaching and analyzing 2 groups of metadiscourse markers used by Hyland and Tse (2004) in their research of writing: *Interactive resources* & *Interactional resources*. Both of these two groups of markers contribute to the writing process and metacognitive awareness of students in relation to their own writing.

The first group of metadiscourse markers deals with the propositional content itself and how it is organized in a text so that the writer 'leads' the reader through the text to the final understanding of the content.

<i>Interactive resources</i>	FUNCTION: Linguistic elements that 'guide' the reader through the text and help to communicate an idea	Examples of linguistic features
TRANSITIONS	Express the relationship between the clauses	<i>and, furthermore, likewise, but, thus, therefore...</i>
FRAME MARKERS	Refer to the discourse act and sequences of idea organization	<i>first, then, to summarize, well, now, let us return to...</i>

ENDOPHORIC MARKERS	Refer to the information in another part of the text	see Figure 2, refer to the next section, as noted above...
EVIDENTIALS	Refer to the information from other sources (outside of the text)	(Thomas, 1994: 129)...
CODE GLOSSES	Define the propositional meaning in text	this is called, in other words, for example...

Figure 4. *Interactive resources* (Hyland, 2001; Hyland and Tse, 2004)

The second group of metadiscourse markers deals with the engagement of the reader in the interpretation of the text with relation to the writer's purpose, attitude and engagement towards the content. Very frequently these features have an appealing function amongst readers and stimulate the reader to accept the writer's point of view and attitude.

<i>Interactional resources</i>	FUNCTION: Linguistic elements that engage the reader in the experience of the propositional meaning	Examples of linguistic features
HEDGES	Responsibility towards the claim, frequently moderating claim (by use of modal verbs/phrases, quantifiers...)	Possible, might, perhaps, rather, possible...
BOOSTERS	Emphasizing validity and certainty in relation to the propositional meaning; strengthens the argument (adverbs and adverbial expressions...)	Clearly, obviously, in fact definitely...
ATTITUDE MARKERS	Emphasizing the writers's attitude towards the propositional content – agreement, surprise, emphasizing importance... (verbs of attitude, adverbs, adjectives...)	Agree, prefer, (un)fortunately, hopefully, surprisingly, appropriate, remarkable...
ENGAGEMENT MARKERS	Explicit presence of the reader and his/her engagement in the text (imperatives, 2 nd person pronoun, questions, modals of obligation...)	Consider, note, you can see that, <i>inclusive we</i> ⁴ , let's, should, must, have to, <i>direct question</i> ...
SELF-MENTIONS	Explicit emphasis of the writer in a text (1 st person pronoun, possessives...)	I, my, me, <i>exclusive we</i> ⁵ , our, ours, let me...

Figure 5. *Interactional resources* (Hyland, 2001; Hyland and Tse, 2004)

4 *Inclusive we* has an expressive language function where the writer expresses explicit awareness of self and his/her experience of the text. It is a communicative element focused on the writer. (Toumi 2009: 71)

5 *Exclusive we* shows the writer's awareness of his/her direct interaction with the reader and it is a communicative element focused on the reader. (Toumi 2009: 71)

Therefore, the primary focus of this research is the metacognitive awareness in L2 writing through the use of metadiscourse markers that allow the development of the strategic communicative competence.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to determine some aspects of the cognitive effort used in L2 writing in the EFL context and to propose a possible solution for teaching practice in Academic writing at the tertiary level of education in Serbia.

In relation to teaching and testing expectations in the course of Academic writing, it was interesting to analyze the level of student metacognitive competence in relation to their performance in writing. In order to establish the full scope of the use of metadiscourse in writing and to satisfy the research triangulation for the purpose of the validity of results, in this paper we will consider a research that is threefold:

- 1) preliminary research on surface and deep approach to writing (Milenkovic & Lojanica 2015), in correlation with
- 2) the research on the use of metadiscourse in writing, and
- 3) the reflection upon the use of metadiscourse in writing through the conducted survey.

3.1. SURFACE AND DEEP APPROACH TO WRITING

For the purpose of obtaining a general insight into the contemporary teaching practice and student feedback in terms of their approach to the writing process I will first reflect upon a previous research (Milenkovic & Lojanica 2015) conducted among the undergraduate students at English departments at the 4 leading public universities in Serbia (University of Novi Sad, University of Belgrade, University of Kragujevac and University of Nis). This research is important for the purpose of establishing a contextual scope of deep approach to writing that in practice relates to the use of metadiscourse markers in student essays.

In the study there were 158 participants, all in the 3rd year of undergraduate studies, and the number of students among different departments was relatively evenly distributed, as can be seen in Figure 6.

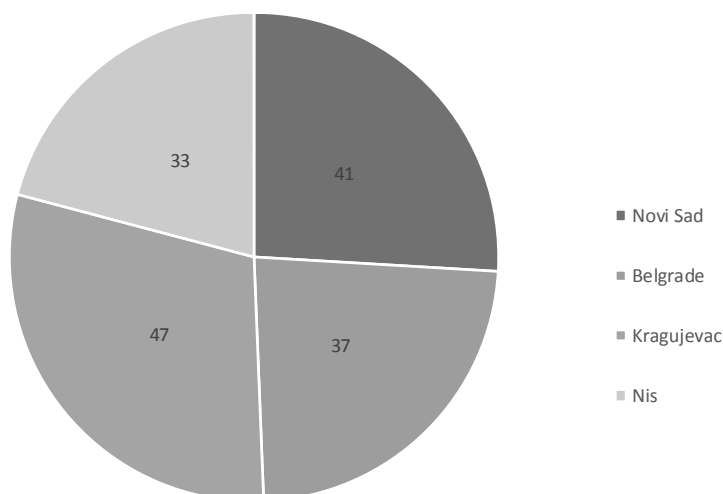


Figure 6. The distribution of students in a survey among different universities (Milenkovic & Lojanica 2015)

The survey was composed of a selection of 46 claims (from the original 75 claims) embodied in the *The Inventory of Processes in College Composition* (Lavelle 1993), that randomly reflected statements about deep and surface writing approaches that students were to label if they applied to them. Lavelle (1993) summons the dichotomy of these two approaches in Figure 7.

DEEP APPROACH TO WRITING	SURFACE APPROACH TO WRITING
Metacognitive, reflective	Redundant, reproductive
High or alternating level of focus	Focus at the local level
Hierarchical organization	Linear, sequential structure
Engagement, self-referencing	Detachment
Actively making meaning (agentic)	Passive ordering of data
Audience concerns	Less audience concern
Thinks about essay as an integrated whole	Sees essay as an organized display
Thesis-driven	Data-driven
Revision	Editing
Transforming, going beyond assignment	Telling within the given context
Autonomous	Rule-bound
Teacher independent	Teacher dependent
Feelings of satisfaction	
Coherence and connectedness	

Figure 7. Characteristics of *deep* and *surface* approach to writing (Lavelle 1993)

As Figure 7 indicates the *deep* approach to writing fully reflects the descriptors proposed by CEFR at C2 level (see 1.1.). As can be seen from the results yielded by the survey, we can observe a close distribution between the two approaches at all four public universities, as illustrated in Figure 8:

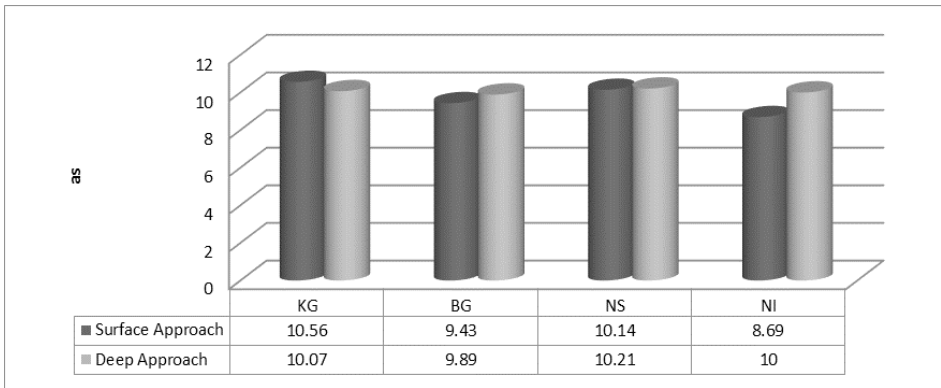


Figure 8. Results of deep and surface approach to writing at different universities in Serbia (Milenkovic & Lojanica 2015)

As can be seen from the obtained results⁶, there is a relatively even distribution of the two approaches in student writing at all 4 universities. However, at the level of C1/C2 writing the writing expectations (according to CEFR) would have to be in favour of the deep approach. Therefore, the research results lead us to two concluding remarks: 1) that students do not display the writing competence sufficient for the C2 level (in terms of the higher metacognitive awareness, awareness of the recipient, awareness towards integrated essay writing, as well as personal engagement in writing and teacher independence), and 2) that the teaching practice possibly may not motivate enough the deep approach to writing.

As has been stated previously, in order to be able to correlate the student metacognitive competence to metacognitive performance in writing, it was important to reflect upon the previous research that leads us to believe that the teaching instruction in writing courses at the undergraduate level at all 4 public universities in Serbia does not conform to the deep (reflective) approach to writing. From this perspective, we may now consider the research conducted for the purpose of this study which includes the analysis of student essays in relation to the use of metadiscourse markers and the introspective survey upon their reflection on the use of metadiscourse markers in writing.

3.2. EXPERIMENTAL METHOD

Upon the obtained results of the student approach to writing at the state universities in Serbia, I have conducted a one-semester experiment in order to determine whether a different teaching practice in the course of Academic writing at the undergraduate level would be able to motivate

6 Statistical data analysis was conducted using the SPSS version 17.0 (yr. 2008 – IBM SPSS Statistics Professional Edition) for the purpose of obtaining the correlation between the surface and deep approach to writing. (Milenkovic & Lojanica 2015)

progress in the *deep approach* to writing among students. Therefore, in the 2nd and the 3rd part of my research I discuss an experimental method where I used a modified syllabus with an experimental group of students to determine whether a different teaching practice could provide us with a greater level of student metacognitive awareness and thus increased use of metadiscourse markers in student writing. The final part of research was to conduct a questionnaire among students and inquire them about their awareness of the use of metadiscourse in writing.

In order to ensure the internal research validity, the research was conducted with the 3rd year students at the English department at the University of Kragujevac and the experimental group of students was evenly distributed according to their grades in their previous writing course program, with 33 students involved in the research. The modified syllabus used with the experimental group was based on the 2 groups of metadiscourse markers: *interactive* and *interactional resources*.

The structure of the syllabus was as follows:

- Pre-test (essay writing, in order to determine the starting basis of students' communicative writing)
- Lecture on reader-based writing (communicative approach to writing)
- Lecture on metacognition and metacognitive awareness
- Lecture on metadiscourse markers (*interactive* and *interactional resources*)
- Activity on reception = recognizing 1st group of metadiscourse markers in a text
- Activity on reception = recognizing 2nd group of metadiscourse markers in a text
- Post-test (essay writing, in order to determine the use of metadiscourse markers in student writing)
- Introspective survey to determine student thoughts/beliefs about their use of metadiscourse in writing

The rationale of using the pre-test and post-test method has the purpose of determining the student writing practice prior and post to the modified teaching program. The results of the pre-test and post-test essay writing and use of metadiscourse markers will be followed-up by the results of the introspective survey and student metacognitive awareness in writing.

3.2.1. RESULTS OF THE PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST

Based on the previous research conducted on student deep approach to writing I suspected to obtain results that would reflect the contemporary state of matter and therefore an approximately even distribution of the use of interactive and interactional resources in their writing samples. As interactive resources assist in only guiding the reader through the understanding of the propositional content in the text, the interactional resources would more closely reflect the deep approach to writing, as they

are samples of language resources that are more reflective, engaging, conscious and purposeful intervention of the writer in a text.

Figures 9 and 10 present the results of these two groups of metadiscourse markers in student writing.

Interactive resources	Experimental group		Recorded progress
	Pre-test (numerical + %)	Post-test (numerical + %)	
<i>Transitions</i>	485 (86.92%)	518 (90.64%)	+3.72 %
<i>Frame markers</i>	65 (11.65%)	79 (12.32%)	+0.65%
<i>Endophoric markers</i>	2 (0.36%)	7 (1.1%)	+0.74%
<i>Evidentials</i>	0 (0%)	4 (0.62%)	+0.62%
<i>Code glosses</i>	6 (1.08%)	33 (5.15%)	+4.07%
TOTAL	558	641	+83

Figure 9. Results of the pre-test and post-test in the use of *Interactive Resources* in student writing

Interactional resources	Experimental group		Recorded progress
	Pre-test (numerical + %)	Post-test (numerical + %)	
<i>Hedges</i>	6 (5.87%)	84 (7.1%)	+1.23%
<i>Boosters</i>	31 (3.03%)	66 (5.6%)	+2.57%
<i>Attitude markers</i>	18 (1.78%)	52 (4.4%)	+2.62%
<i>Engagement markers</i>	236 (23.3%)	320 (27%)	+3.7%
<i>Self-mentions</i>	678 (66.9%)	663 (56%)	- 10.9%
TOTAL	1023	1185	+ 162

Figure 10. Results of the pre-test and post-test in the use of *Interactional Resources* in student writing

As can be seen from Figures 9 and 10, in both groups of metadiscourse markers the modified syllabus has yielded progress. In almost all of the categories there has been an increase in the use of metadiscourse markers and so we may conclude that emphasizing the significance of metadiscourse in writing for the communicative purposes has given the expected results. At the macro level students have demonstrated both more progress (2:1) and more awareness in use of *interactional resources*, as opposing to *interactive resources*.

1. Among the interactive resources we have witnessed a consistent progress in all of the metadiscourse categories, however Transition markers and Code-glosses have been mostly stimulated by the modified syllabus. Both of these groups of markers relate to

the use of language items that help establish an idea flow for the propositional content. Therefore, we may conclude that the modified syllabus design has contributed to raising cohesion in student writing, as 80% of progress in the post-test has been recorded in the use of these resources. Although interactive resources relate mostly to the surface approach to writing raising student awareness and stimulating their use certainly established progress in their connectedness in writing.

2. Interactional resources have also proven to be more evident in the post-test, in numerical measures these resources have yielded progress twice as much as in the use of interactive resources. All of the interactional resources have recorded progress in student post-test writing, however with the exception for the category of Self-mentions where we have recorded a decline. These results may be explained by the fact that academic writing in some cultures requires depersonalizing the text, and thus in Serbian academic writing personalizing the text is not favored as much in formal register as in English academic writing. In relation to the progress in the use of other metadiscourse categories, it is interesting to note that, apart from the Self-mentions, as much as 88% of the language resources that yielded progress was in the categories of Boosters, Attitude markers and Engagement markers. We may indicate that these language resources certainly refer to reflective and engaging type of deep approach to writing and the increase in these categories may be attributed to the modified syllabus design which has increased student metacognitive awareness in writing.

However, regardless of individual analysis of each category of metadiscourse markers, for the purpose of this research it was interesting to correlate the obtained results of the student production (performance) with their thinking process (competence) in terms of the use of these language items. The students' full capacity to understand the use and the role of metadiscourse markers in writing cannot only be observed from the standpoint of their use in writing, but also from their understanding of whether they possess full awareness when they apply them in writing. For this reason it was important to include the introspective survey and one more time inspect whether students consciously distinguish among the use of these items in writing and therefore demonstrate full potential of metacognitive writing.

3.2.2. INTROSPECTIVE SURVEY

The introspective survey was administered right after the students wrote their post-tests in order to display their understanding of the use

of metadiscourse in writing. The survey was brief, with a combination of multiple-choice and open-ended questions that relate to their awareness of the use of interactive and interactional resources. The students were allowed to choose as many types of metadiscourse markers as they felt the need for. The survey included the following questions:

1. Within the 1st group of metadiscourse markers which markers do you use:

a) often, b) rarely, c) never

2. Within the 2nd group of metadiscourse markers which markers do you use:

a) often, b) rarely, c) never

3. Do you practice avoidance with any of the metadiscourse markers and which are they?

4. Provide explanation for the possible avoidance.

The obtained results for the first three questions are presented in Figure 11 and analyzed quantitatively, whereas the results for the final question are presented and analyzed qualitatively.

<i>Interactive resources</i>	OFTEN	RARELY	NEVER	Avoidance
Transitions	29	1	/	/
Frame markers	28	3	/	/
Endophoric markers	5	8	12	7
Evidentials	7	11	10	11
Code glosses	5	16	8	2
<i>Interactional resources</i>				
Hedges	15	9	2	/
Boosters	15	12	3	/
Attitude markers	12	12	4	1
Engagement markers	3	12	12	3
Self-mentions	14	3	9	9

Figure 11. Results of the metacognitive awareness about the use of metadiscourse markers in student writing

In the quantitative analysis of the obtained results we will establish a correlation between the results of the students' performance in the post-test and their competence in the survey data. The results have been arranged from left to right in terms of *most frequent* and *least frequent* in use, where both answers (often + rarely) with a positive result have been taken into consideration.

**INTERACTIVE RESOURCES
PERFORMANCE (use of Interactive resources in the post-test):**



COMPETENCE (use of Interactive resources in the survey):



Avoidance: 1) Evidentials, 2) Endophoric markers, 3) Code glosses

INTERACTIONAL RESOURCES

PERFORMANCE (use of Interactional resources in the post-test):



COMPETENCE (use of Interactional resources in the survey):



Avoidance: 1) Self-mentions, 2) Engagement markers, 3) Attitude markers

As can be seen from the presented results on the correlation between the competence and performance in terms of use of metadiscourse markers, evidently the students have displayed more understanding with the *interactive resources* when we consider their production in the written essays and their metacognitive awareness of all the categories in the 1st group. They have expressed more understanding in the use of language items by which they are able to ‘guide’ their readers through the text and to use specific words and expressions in strategic places to organize the propositional content in the communicative manner. Their full understanding and control over these metadiscourse markers is also displayed in the choice of items they avoid using in writing. Evidentials and Endophoric markers, as the greatest avoidance groups, present a possible difficulty as

they relate to using external sources for supporting arguments (Evidentials) and establishing text connectedness for extensive writing forms (Endophoric markers), which is a more complex academic writing trait and used in more extended papers such as theses papers.

On the other hand, students have displayed insecurity and lack of metacognitive awareness in applying the *interactional resources* in all of the categories. Their performance in writing, based on the modified syllabus input (what they use in writing), and their competence expressed through the answers in the survey (what they believe they use in writing) does not correlate at all in any of the categories. This may indicate that the students do not have full control over the use of interactional resources and therefore we may conclude that additional writing practice and implementation of these items in the syllabus design is more than necessary. The avoidance category, although it primarily relates to avoiding Self-mentions, may not be fully representative of their understanding of all metadiscourse markers of this category. They may have displayed the most certainty about depersonalizing their writing in the formal written form, however, that may not be a reflection of their understanding of other categories. It may be possible that we have witnessed here the act of avoidance in presenting the categories that they avoid. The lack of correlation between their performance and competence may suggest that they have also had a high degree of uncertainty in relation to the question of avoidance and in that sense additional research may be needed in the domain of this category of metadiscourse markers.

3.2.2.1. QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE OPEN-ENDED QUESTION

Finally, we will discuss the responses in the students' open-ended questions in relation to the reasons of avoidance, in search of additional insight into their understanding of the process of writing and the deep writing approach.

Metadiscourse markers that are avoided in writing	STUDENT COMMENTS
<i>Endophoric markers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - used for writing books, not essays - are not adequate for the type of essay I am writing - it's difficult to put them in the text
<i>Evidentials</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - they confuse me - they are not available to me when I write - I don't have a valid source to cite - I like to focus on my opinion, not smn. else's

<i>Code glosses</i>	- it's difficult to find the part of the text to refer to - no one ever asked me to use them
<i>Attitude markers</i>	- I'm afraid to present my attitude towards content and I may be misunderstood
<i>Engagement markers</i>	- I don't like to use them and it's difficult to apply them - I don't include the reader because I don't think he/she cares about my opinion
<i>Self-mentions</i>	- I avoid them because of repetition - I'm afraid whether I will present myself adequately to the reader - I'm afraid of my personal opinion - I like to write objectively
General comments for all metadiscourse markers	- I don't like to use them because they demand more time to be put into the text - I usually forget to use the 2 nd group of metadiscourse markers - I'm rarely aware that I use them in writing - they don't fit my topic - I don't know where to put them in the text

Figure 12. Student comments on avoidance of metadiscourse markers

Based on the answers to the provided open-ended question in the survey, it is evident that we may classify the student comments into 4 different categories that will in the end allow us to propose teaching implications for the writing instruction approach at the tertiary level of education. The answers have been categorized in the following manner:

- 1) comments that refer to insufficient teaching input (students are frequently not aware of the use and function of metadiscourse in writing);
- 2) comments that refer to the awareness of the high cognitive effort of the strategic competence;
- 3) comments that display lack of self-confidence in writing;
- 4) comments that relate to insufficient awareness of the role of a reader in written discourse.

The introspective survey and even more the open-ended question provided us with an insight into the students' thinking process during writing in terms of using the communicative element of metadiscourse. From the obtained results we may conclude that the teaching input is crucial in helping students develop the strategic competence in writing and here we relate not only to the teaching material, but also the teaching philosophy and teacher priorities in the writing courses. In addition, more attention should be devoted to developing their metacognition and raising their

awareness of themselves as writers so that they do not feel constraints in expressing themselves in writing. By providing students with sufficient writing practice and engaging in their process of writing through discussions and frequent feedback, teachers may alleviate the cognitive demand writing places upon students. In relation to that, lack of autonomy and self-confidence in writing is also highly important as it may demotivate students in writing and lead to the situation where they experience writing as a pure mechanical activity, unaware of the importance of addressing the reader. In order to avoid suchlike situations we need to allow students to talk about their writing process, purpose and target audience more frequently and to discuss the cognitive effort they experience during writing. Only this type of insight into the cognitive state of the student may allow us to approach the writing instruction in a different manner and to focus our teaching practice most closely on the needs of students when they are confronted with the role of a writer.

4. CONCLUSION

Teaching and learning goals are an inevitable syllabus design element. However, it is not infrequent that they become disregarded and that we end up with the teaching practice that does not suit these goals. In Academic writing at the undergraduate level the learning goals in ELT are framed within the communicative approach that must be attended to in practice. This research has granted us the insight into one of the communicative elements of strategic competence that still needs to be considered with more vigor and greater understanding from the teaching perspective. Although we have discovered that a modified syllabus design may assist progress in the use of language resources that relate to the deep (reflective) approach to writing, results have also confirmed that student L2 writing at the proficiency level mostly reflects the basis of establishing idea flow and fulfilling the micro structure of writing by using cohesive devices. However, the interactional resources, as the more complex category of metadiscourse markers, still need to be attained to in writing instruction. Even though research has yielded progress in students using these language resources, a follow-up interactional survey has provided us with data that students do not possess a full understanding of the use of these items in writing. Student metacognitive awareness of writing does not fully demonstrate their understanding and control over their process of writing and it is exactly this domain of writing instruction that may require additional attention. Placing a learning goal of applying the use of metadiscourse markers in writing through instruction is not sufficient without the full student feedback and without open discussions on the thinking processes that underlie the writing process. Further research and development of teaching practice in the field of cognitive development

through teacher-student conferencing and think-a-loud protocols might raise metacognitive awareness in student writing, allowing them to take full control over their writing processes and metacognitively reflect upon their experience of writing.

Selected references:

Ädel 2006: A. Ädel, *Metadiscourse in L1 and L2 English*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Brown 1987: D. H. Brown, *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc.

Connor & Mbaye 2002: U. Connor & A. Mbaye, Discourse Approaches to Writing Assessment. *Annual of Applied Linguistics Review*, 22, USA: CUP.

Council of Europe 2001: *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*, Cambridge: CUP.

Harris & Graham 1996: K. R. Harris & S. Graham, *Making the Writing Process Work – Strategies for Composition & Self-Regulation*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Brookline Books.

Grabe & Kaplan 1996: W. Grabe & R. B. Kaplan, *Theory and Practice of Writing, An Applied Linguistics Perspective*, Addison Wesley: Longman.

Hyland & Tse 2004: K. Hyland, & P. Tse, Metadiscourse in Academic Writing: A reappraisal. *Applied Linguistics*, 25(2).

Hyland 2005: K. Hyland, *Metadiscourse*, New York & London: Continuum.

Kellogg 1994: R. T. Kellogg, *The Psychology of Writing*, New York, Oxford: OUP.

Lavelle 1993: E. Lavelle, Development and validation of an inventory to assess processes in college composition, *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 63, 489–499.

Lavelle & Zuercher 2001: E. Lavelle & N. Zuercher, The writing approaches of university students, *Higher Education*, 42, 373–391, Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Milenkovic & Lojanica 2015: B. Milenkovic & M. Lojanica, Temeljni i proceduralni pristup pisanju na pragu C2 nivoa prema Zajedničkom evropskom referentnom okviru za žive jezike (CEFR), *Lipar* XVI/58, Faculty of Philology and Arts: Kragujevac, 27–44.

Shaw & Weir 2007: S. D. Shaw & C. J. Weir, *Studies in Language Testing: Examining Writing*, Cambridge: CUP.

Toumi 2009: N. Toumi, A model for the Investigation of Reflexive Metadiscourse in Research Articles, *Language Studies Working Papers vol. 1*, 64-73, University of Reading.

Waters & Schneider 2010: H. S. Waters & W. Schneider eds., *Metacognition Strategy Use, and Instruction*, New York, London: The Guilford Press.

Weigle 2002: S. C. Weigle, *Assessing Writing*, Cambridge: CUP.

Бранка Л. Миленковић / МЕТАКОГНИТИВНА СВЕСТ СТУДЕНАТА У ПРОЦЕСУ ПИСАЊА: компетенција и перформанса

Резиме: Овај рад се бави употребом метадискурских маркера у писању студената на Ј2 (страном језику) на Департману за англистику Универзитета у Крагујевцу,

у Србији. Писање на страном језику представља потешкоће које нису присутне приликом писања на матерњем језику и то услед бројних одлука које писац доноси приликом продукције текста. Комуникација са читаоцима кроз употребу метадискурских маркера представља у том смислу додатне потешкоће приликом писања на Ј2. Стога, у овом раду настојимо да представимо комуникативну способност студената приликом писања на енглеском језику. У истраживањима која се односе на академско писање студената квантитативна анализа је уобичајени поступак истраживања, али у овом раду ми настојимо да квантитативни поступак евидентирања метадискурских маркера допунимо квалитативном анализом менталних процеса кроз које студенти пролазе приликом темељног приступа писању (Миленковић и Лојаница 2015). У раду се опредељујемо за приступ тријангулације где успостављамо корелацију између резултата истраживања темељног и процедуралног писања студената, потом анализе употребе метадискурских маркера у есејима студената, а на основу модела анализе метадискурских маркера Хајланда и Цеа (2004) и на крају резултата интроспективног упитника којим настојимо да установимо метакогнитивну свест студената и њихову когнитивну способност рефлексивног писања. Резултати истраживања указали су на присуство диспропорције у употреби различитих категорија метадискурских маркера и то у односу на темељни и процедурални приступ писању, као и на неусклађеност између компетенције и перформансе студената у процесу писања. Добијени подаци омогућавају нам да ближе сагледамо метакогнитивне способности студената приликом процеса писања, као и да развијемо наставну праксу у погледу одговора на потребе студената у настави писања.

Кључне речи: L2 писање, рефлексивно писање, интерактивни ресурси, интеракцијски ресурси, метадискурс

Примљен: 23. јуна 2020.

Прихваћен за штампу јула 2020.