

Use and Relationship of Shell Nouns as Cohesive Devices in the Quality of Second Language Writing

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Abstract : The current study is a comparative analysis of the use of shell nouns as a cohesive device (CD) in an English for Second Language (ESL) setting in order to identify their use and relationship in the quality of second language (L2) writing. As these nouns were established to anticipate the meaning within, across or outside the text, their use has fascinated writing researchers. The corpus of the study included published articles from reputable journals and graduate students' papers in order to analyze the frequency of shell nouns using "highly prevalent" nouns in the academic community, to identify the different lexicogrammatical patterns where these nouns occur and to the functions connected with these patterns. The result of the study implies that published authors used more shell nouns in their paper than graduate students. However, the functions of the different lexicogrammatical patterns for the frequently occurring shell nouns are somewhat similar. These results could help students in enhancing the cohesion of their text and in comprehending it.

Keywords : anaphoric, cataphoric, lexico-grammatical, shell nouns

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