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Metacognitive processes in reading

William N. Winser
University of Wollongong

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METACOGNITIVE PROCESSES IN READING

A thesis in fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

from



THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

WILLIAM N. WINSER, M.A., M.ED.

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION
1992**

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Note

Transcripts of readers' Think Aloud protocols have been bound separately and are available on request

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks go to my supervisors, Prof. R. C. King, who provided such a high level of scholarly and interpersonally skilled assistance and saw the task through to its completion, and to Dr B. L. Cambourne who was helpful in setting up the study. Thanks also to Mieke Scheeringa for her contribution with the word processing.

There was important support provided by my colleagues Jenny Hammond, Jan Wright and Beverley Derewianka. And particular thanks go to Rose Winsor who also provided this and more.

ABSTRACT

How learners gain an understanding of and control over the task of reading is the question that was examined in this study, by reference to the notion of metacognition. When this notion is applied to reading it is possible to explore readers' knowledge of and control over their reading processes. A related question is whether there is any pattern of development over a broad age range, from early school years to adulthood. A final issue that was investigated was the effect metacognitive processes may have on reading processes.

To examine the development of metacognition in reading forty readers were studied, with equal numbers of 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th grade and adults; each of these subgroups was divided equally according to reading proficiency. All readers read a complete narrative text orally; this reading was taped and their reading analysed using the Reading Miscue Inventory. They were asked to 'think aloud' about their processes in correcting miscues, and were asked to do the same at five points during a silent reading of a similar text.

The correction patterns and the protocols were analysed and revealed extensive evidence of readers' awareness of and control over their reading. Younger readers were not significantly less aware than older readers, but the less proficient were less flexible and less capable of utilising appropriate strategies to remedy comprehension problems. It was shown that there was an important link between metacognition and reading. Finally, there was a significant change over time in readers' understanding of language and this was strongly related to their reading proficiency.

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any University, and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except when due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

William N. Winser