

The Application of Cognitive Linguistics On the Right-Hemisphere Involvement in Developing Japanese EFL Learners' Knowledge of Degrees of Certainty

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Abstract

The present study explored the effect of the metaphor-based approach on right hemisphere involvement in developing EFL learners' knowledge of the different degrees of sureness attached to CERTAIN, PROBABLE, and POSSIBLE ITEMS of expression in English. The results demonstrated that the metaphor-based approach group outperformed the control group in the comparison and speaking tests. This indicates that the metaphor awareness-raising approach using 3D image content can promote L2 learning because of its input enhancement and concept projection, through which the participants comprehended the abstract concept of degrees of certainty in terms of the spatial concept of distance. Accordingly, the participants connected the spatially visualized concept of distance with different degrees of sureness attached to CERTAIN, PROBABLE, and POSSIBLE ITEMS of expression. Furthermore, participants opened the left sides of their mouths wider than the right sides while recalling the items, which is indicative of right hemisphere activation, thereby leading to deep processing of spatial concept-based metaphoric expressions and creating stronger memory traces of them.

Key words: proximal-distal metaphor, mouth asymmetry, right hemisphere, left-hemisphere, degree of certainty