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Exploring GPA as a Tool in Measuring Pauses of Writers Language Competency

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Abstract: Studying pauses during the production of freehand writing may be a method to measure the degree of language competency of writers. The experiment uses Graphical Protocol Analysis (GPA) to study pauses in writing. GPA records pauses between pen strokes and provides an insight into what happens cognitively in the process of writing. Different kinds of English sentence stimuli were used, such as: jumbled letters in words, jumbled words in sentences and sentences from a technical domain. Writers with different levels of experience, expert (native speaker), intermediate and novice, copied these sentences. Pauses across different stimuli reveal the differences in competency levels. Preliminary data will be presented that shows patterns of pauses occurring in the language production process.