

The Role of Metacognition in L2 Learning

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ABSTRACT

Metacognition is the capacity to create a strategy for addressing a learning task using past information, take necessary actions to problem solve, reflect on and analyze findings, and adjust one's approach as appropriate. Evaluating one's own study habits and demands is one of the metacognitive tactics employed in this study. Metacognition aids in evaluating our reasoning and the use of tactics to aid learning. For pupils learning a second language, developing these abilities is critical. As students concentrate on learning a new language, metacognitive skills assist them in planning, controlling, and evaluating their progress. This article explores the relevance of metacognition in L2 speaking classrooms. It begins by demonstrating the importance of metacognitive strategies in the language-learning process, then proceeds to research the reputation of metacognitive knowledge in effective learning and finally, to specific procedures that L teachers and educators can employ to enhance learning.

Key Words: Metacognition, Language Learning, Task Knowledge, Strategic Knowledge, L2 Learning

INTRODUCTION

Metacognition is merely the act of reflecting on one's own thoughts, and it can be characterised as follows: Learners who are metacognitively aware know what to do when they are unsure of what they should do next; in other words, they have techniques for identifying or figuring out what they should do next. Students who struggle to maintain what they have studied may benefit from employing metacognitive strategies to ignite their thinking. This is especially true for students who struggle to recall what they have learned. It is possible that one of the most essential talents in which classroom teachers may assist second language learners in developing is the capacity to recognise and control cognitive processes is the ability to recognise and regulate cognitive processes. This means that they must not only teach cognitive skills to their students, but they must also teach them metacognitive abilities as well. Comparisons between cognitive and metacognitive strategies are necessary for a variety of reasons, including the fact that they provide some indications of which strategies are more important in determining the efficacy of learning, as well as providing some indicator of the effectiveness of learning. When it comes to learning, rather than focusing on increasing interaction and input, it appears that metacognitive procedures (methods that allow students to prepare for, regulate, and evaluate their own learning) have the most significant role to play. It follows that being able to pick and assess one's approaches is tremendously beneficial. Teachers of second languages should not solely concentrate on teaching students how to speak

the language; rather, they should support students in developing critical thinking abilities by encouraging them to think critically about what happens during the language learning process.

A MODEL OF METACOGNITION

Metacognition combines various attended thinking and reflection processes. Each of the five main components has the following steps: (5) analysing strategy implementation and learning outcomes. Teachers should model good behaviour in all five areas of study discussed below. To put it simply, metacognition is a set of phenomena that are connected to knowledge about the domain of cognition, which includes all mental activity associated with thinking, knowing, and remembering. In contrast to cognitive skills, metacognitive skills are utilised to describe how actions are carried out. Researchers define metacognition as higher order thinking that incorporates active control over learning processes (Livingston, 1997). Researchers and educators have known for over two decades that metacognition may be used to describe and explain the learning process. It is an essential part of the human experience and plays a vital role in successful learning by guiding the individual through the process. It is sometimes referred to as "thinking about thinking" and can help students learn how to think. It also affects one's beliefs and attitudes toward learning, which affects one's long-term behaviour. It has been shown to directly affect language learning, and research suggests it may be teachable. To learn how to better utilise students' cognitive resources through metacognitive control, metacognitive activity and development must be studied (Maki and McGuire, 2002; Anderson, 2002, Livingston, 1997; Wenden, 1998). Given the importance of metacognition in education, teachers should learn about it, use it, and then create a curriculum and learning environment that includes it. The objective of this review paper is to "underline metacognition in language learning and teaching and analyse the critical ingredients of successful language learning and teaching," as stated in the abstract.

METACOGNITION: KEY STUDIES, AND RATIONALE (LITERATURE REVIEW)

From a historical point of view, metacognitive processes have been investigated along two separate lines. First, there has been research in cognitive psychology that has dealt with issues regarding the determinants and consequences of the monitoring of one's knowledge. Second, there has been an extensive investigation in developmental psychology, pioneered by the work of John Flavell (1979) and his associates (Brown, 1987; Koriat and Shitzer-Reichert, 2002). In fact, Flavell's work emphasized the critical role of metacognitive processes in the development of memory functioning in children and led to further research not only in psychology but education as well. Today, the conceptualisation of metacognition in educational sciences and language teaching is often attributed to John Flavell, (Flavell, 1979). According to Flavell (1979), metacognition comprises both metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive experiences or regulation.

2.1. Metacognitive Knowledge Metacognitive knowledge refers to acquired knowledge about cognitive processes, knowledge that can be used to control cognitive processes. In Flavell's words "metacognitive knowledge consists primarily of knowledge or beliefs about what factors or variables act and interact in what ways to affect the course and outcome of cognitive enterprises" (1979, p. 907). In other words, the individual's beliefs about oneself and about others as learners and of the requirements involved in the learning process relate to metacognitive knowledge acquired through both conscious and

unconscious means, and in formal and informal settings. Examples of metacognitive knowledge may be the belief that one is good at reading comprehension but poor at listening comprehension, that one has to be intelligent to learn a language, that learning English is easier than learning other languages such as French, or that memory strategies are more appropriate for learning vocabulary. Wenden (1998, p. 528) considers metacognitive knowledge as "a prerequisite for the self-regulation of language learning: it informs planning decisions taken at the outset of learning and the monitoring processes that regulate the completion of a learning task..." it is obvious that metacognitive knowledge as perceived today has influence on language learning. A review of literature generally reveals that it facilitates recall, the comprehension of written texts, the completion of new types of learning tasks, the rate of progress in learning and the quality and speed of learners' cognitive engagement, and thus improves learning outcomes (Oxford, 1990; Wenden, 1987; Wenden, 1998; Wenden, 1999; Victori, 2004). Person Knowledge Person knowledge, or knowledge of person variables, applies to an individual's overall understanding of how people learn and process information. It also refers to one's awareness of his or her particular thinking and learning processes. For example, an individual may not only know that humans process information in various ways (i.e., auditory, visual, tactile) but that he or she also learns more quickly through a particular medium. Pointing to the beliefs one has about oneself and others as cognitive processors (learners), Flavell (1979) includes two dimensions of person knowledge: intraindividual differences and interindividual differences (knowledge of personal styles, abilities, and so forth, of oneself and of others), and universal of cognition (knowledge of human 'attributes influencing learning). When applied to second/foreign language learning, examples of these subcategories would be the beliefs that one can learn better by memorizing, that one's classmates are better language learners than him or her, and that factors such as motivation and intelligence play an important role in language learning (Victori and Lockhart, 1995).

METACOGNITION AND METACOGNITIVE COMPONENTS

From the perspective of history, two distinct lines of inquiry have been pursued in the study of metacognitive processes. For starters, there has been cognitive psychology research that has dealt with themes such as the determinants and effects of one's monitoring of one's own knowledge, among other things. Second, there has been substantial research in developmental psychology, which was pioneered by the work of John Flavell (1979) and his coworkers, and which continues today (Brown, 1987; Koriat and Shitzer-Reichert, 2002). In fact, Flavell's work underlined the crucial significance of metacognitive processes in the development of memory functioning in children, and it paved the way for additional research not only in psychology but also in educational psychology and neuroscience. John Flavell is widely credited with the conceptualization of metacognition in educational sciences and language teaching today (Flavell, 1979), and this is a fair assumption. Metacognition, according to Flavell (1979), is comprised of two types of experiences or regulation: metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive experiences. Metacognitive Understanding (2.1) Metacognitive information is knowledge gained about cognitive processes that can be applied to the regulation of cognitive processes. It is also known as cognitive control knowledge. The knowledge or beliefs about what factors or variables act and interact in what ways to affect the course and outcome of cognitive enterprises is defined by Flavell as "metacognitive knowledge," which is "primarily

knowledge or beliefs" about what factors or variables act and interact in what ways to affect the course and outcome of cognitive enterprises (1979, p. 907). The individual's perceptions about oneself and others as learners, and about the requirements involved in the learning process, are all related to metacognitive knowledge that has been acquired via both conscious and unconscious ways, and in both formal and informal settings. The belief that one is good at reading comprehension but poor at listening comprehension are examples of metacognitive knowledge. Other examples include the belief that one must be intelligent in order to learn a language, the belief that learning English is easier than learning other languages such as French, and the belief that memory strategies are more appropriate for learning vocabulary. In the words of Wenden (1998, p. 528), metacognitive knowledge is "a prerequisite for the self-regulation of language learning: it informs planning decisions made at the outset of learning and monitoring processes that regulate the completion of a learning task..." It is clear that metacognitive knowledge as it is currently perceived has an impact on language learning today. Literature study demonstrates that it aids in the comprehension of written materials, the completion of new types of learning tasks, the pace of advancement in learning, the quality and speed of learners' cognitive engagement, and consequently the achievement of higher levels of academic achievement (Oxford, 1990; Wenden, 1987; Wenden, 1998; Wenden, 1999; Victori, 2004). Metacognitive knowledge, according to Flavell (1979), is divided into three categories: (a) knowledge (knowledge of person variables), (b) task knowledge (knowledge of task variables), and (c) strategic information (strategy variables). An analysis of these factors leads to a more in-depth understanding of metacognition in the context of language acquisition and instruction.

2.1. 1. Understanding of a person An individual's total understanding of the ways in which people acquire and absorb information is referred to as "person knowledge," or "knowledge of person variables." One's understanding of his or her own distinctive thinking and learning processes is also referred to as self-awareness. If a person understands that humans process information in a variety of ways (for example, aural, visual and tactile), he or she may also be aware that he or she learns more quickly while using a particular medium (for example, visual). Citing one's perceptions about oneself and others as cognitive processors (learners), Flavell (1979) proposes two characteristics of personhood that are related to cognitive processing. *Journal of Educators*, Volume 29, Number 5, 2005, pages 147-156. Hüseyin Z / *University Journal of Education*) Knowledge is divided into two categories: intraindividual differences and interindividual differences (knowledge of one's own and others' particular styles, capacities, and so on), and universal cognition (knowledge of human 'attributes influencing learning). Some examples of these subcategories in relation to second/foreign language learning include the beliefs that one can learn better by memorising, that one's classmates are better language learners than him or her, and that factors such as motivation and intelligence play an important role in language learning (Victori and Lockhart, 1995).

TASK KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge of task factors indicates that one is aware of the characteristics of a certain task, how to handle it most effectively, and the likelihood of one's success in completing it. Furthermore, one is aware of the level of difficulty involved in carrying out the activity. In other words, this variable can be regarded as the knowledge that learners have about the

information or resources that are required for various tasks, as well as the amount of effort and difficulty that will be required to complete those tasks. Individuals who are given a difficult task such as reading an expository passage about the earthquake and expected to demonstrate their understanding of the material may determine that the task is too difficult and decides that reading the passage slowly and closely will increase his or her chances of understanding and remembering the information.

STRATEGIC KNOWLEDGE

Strategic knowledge is the awareness and use of metacognitive methods while attending to a task. Assuming someone is familiar with techniques and understands how they might help them (Wenden, 1987; Wenden, 1998). The metacognitive knowledge strategy variable is concerned with knowing how to apply the most effective approach in various scenarios. One way to improve learning is to recognise a topic's essential idea and rephrase it. 2. 2 - Teaching methods and learner training. In the context of learning techniques (Benson & Voller, 1987; Willing, 1989; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Wenden, 1991), Oxford (1990) defines learning strategy as the actions taken by the student to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, and more transferable. Among other qualities, it is defined as specific mental steps or

how learners integrate information, consciously engage in activities to achieve goals, and exercise a choice of procedure in the form of long-term planning (Wenden, 1991; and Stern, 1992). To maximise study efficiency, experts agree that weak language learners should be taught how to exploit successful students' learning processes (Rubin, 1987; Wenden, 1987). The scholars' views on concept learning and classification vary. Oxford (1990) classifies direct and indirect learning strategies, while Wenden (1991) classifies cognitive and self-management learning systems. It is classed under metacognitive strategies, which were grouped alongside social, affective, and planned monitoring and evaluation strategies in the Oxford categorization. Researchers argued that learners employ self-management tools to monitor and govern their own learning development. O'Malley and Chamot (1990:8) identify metacognitive techniques as thinking about learning, planning for learning, monitoring understanding or output while learning, and self-evaluation after learning. It is also known as self-directed learning skills or regulatory skills because it includes planning, monitoring, and assessing (Wenden, 1991; and Stern, 1998).

LEARNERS' BELIEFS AND LANGUAGE LEARNING:

Learning is based on learner beliefs, according to Wenden (1999, p. 435). Teachers and students should consider how beliefs shape their lives. A person's values and beliefs influence how they learn (2002, p. 765). In other words, belief systems help pupils adjust to new situations, anticipate and behave appropriately. Clearly, numerous things influence students' beliefs. In Cotterall's (1995) view, students' responsibilities and expectations of teachers affect the learning process. Autonomous learners see the teacher as a guide, while assertive learners see the teacher as the boss. Instructor and student goals determine feedback's value (Cotterall, 1995, pp. 198-199). Cotterall. No teacher feedback is likely for autonomous learners. Everyone has thoughts about how education should be given. It is assumed that a certain style of education is ideal for them (Lightbown and Spada, 2003, p. 59). When asked why they chose a

certain way of achieving a goal, learners share their beliefs about learning (1999, p. 436). Moreover, learners' learning choices influence their learning approaches. Same for second or foreign language study. One study claims that learning a second language is mostly about vocabulary (Horwitz, 1987, p. 119). Students may not agree with the emphasis on free discussion in the classroom. The process of determining fluency is tedious and error-prone. Communicating, according to some students, requires mastering language rules. Unsurprisingly, all groups thought learning a foreign language was unique (Horwitz, 1999, p. 565). The learner's preferences will influence how they choose to study new knowledge. L. Per Benson and Lor, modifying pupils' underlying ideas can change their attitudes and behaviours (1999, pp. 459-460). In terms of success and use of learning strategies, optimistic learners may surpass pessimistic ones. This affects metacognition. The ultimate goal of metacognitive skill development is autonomous and self-directed learning (Victori, 2004, p. 3). Autonomous, self-directed learners are in charge of their own education. For example, Flavell says oral persuasion requires metacognitive knowledge, as does oral comprehension, writing, and language learning (1979, p. 907). Language teachers must first change their underlying notions to influence students' attitudes and behaviours (Wenden, 1987; Wenden, 1999; Benson and Lor, 1999). These ideas can help educators better serve students' needs. Teachers could use students' metacognitive information to create richer learning experiences.

CONCLUSION:

Metacognition, or is an internal activity that directly impacts pupils' learning. It includes metacognitive information and experiences. The former is made up of three parts: person, task, and strategy factors. Lasting executive control and metacognitive techniques Preparing and planning for learning, selecting and implementing methods, monitoring strategy use, orchestrating numerous techniques, and evaluating strategy use and learning are all parts of metacognition. Learner beliefs can either improve or impede education and learning. People behave in predictable ways because of a chain reaction that starts with beliefs and ends with actions. Preconceived notions abound in schools. According to studies, such assumptions are especially relevant in language classes. Even when people are adamant about their convictions, educators can effect change. By exposing students to new ideas and experiences, teachers can help them replace outdated beliefs with more accurate and useful ones. Metacognitive training has three components. Teachers direct and moderate students' metacognitive experiences while maintaining ongoing discussions about metacognitive tactics. Students become active learners, and instructors become tutors, counsellors, or facilitators. Teachers and teacher educators have failed to completely embrace research findings about the importance of metacognition in the learning process. Regardless of this hurdle, educators can improve by acquiring metacognitive skills. The ultimate goal of metacognitive training is self-regulating, positive, self-assured, adult learners who own their learning. In general, teacher education programmes should teach metacognitive awareness because pre-service teachers rarely employ it when dealing with children in the field (Freeman and Johnson, 1998; Freeman, 2001; Joseph, 2003). A substantial part of their school experience-elementary, secondary, and possibly university-was spent cultivating passive learning skills.

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