

METACOGNITIVE STRATEGY TRAINING IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGES: THEORITICAL AND PRACTICAL PERSPECTIVES

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Annotation: *This article explores the role of metacognitive strategy training in the process of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). It examines theoretical foundations, practical implementations, and empirical findings related to how metacognitive awareness contributes to learners' autonomy, problem-solving skills, and critical thinking. Special attention is given to how teachers can scaffold students' reflective practices in order to enhance their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. The paper further analyzes methodological approaches, classroom interventions, and long-term benefits of training students in metacognitive strategies. The study concludes with recommendations for curriculum developers and EFL practitioners.*

Key words: *Metacognition, strategy training, English language teaching, learner autonomy, reflective practice, EFL, self-regulation.*

The importance of learner-centered education in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has grown significantly in the last decades. Among the different learner-centered approaches, metacognitive strategy training has emerged as a powerful tool to improve students' ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning processes.⁴⁶ According to Flavell who first coined the term metacognition, it refers to "knowledge about one's own cognitive processes." This concept has since been applied extensively in the context of second language acquisition. The purpose of this article is to investigate how metacognitive strategy training can enhance English language teaching and learning. It will highlight both theoretical insights and practical applications, aiming to show how teachers can implement these strategies in their classrooms.

Metacognition in Education - Flavell distinguishes between two components of metacognition:

1. Metacognitive knowledge – awareness of strategies, tasks, and personal learning characteristics.
2. Metacognitive regulation – planning, monitoring, and evaluating learning processes.⁴⁷

In the context of EFL, Oxford emphasized that metacognitive strategies play a central role in helping learners manage their language acquisition process. For example, planning before reading a text, monitoring comprehension during the activity, and evaluating performance afterward are crucial steps.⁴⁸ Cognitive vs. Metacognitive Strategies - While cognitive strategies involve direct manipulation of language (e.g., memorization, summarization), metacognitive strategies operate at a higher level by

⁴⁶ Anderson,2002; Wenden,1998

⁴⁷ Flavell,1979

⁴⁸ Oxford,1990

organizing, evaluating, and regulating those cognitive activities.⁴⁹ Chamot & O'Malley argue that without metacognitive awareness, cognitive strategies become less effective. Metacognitive Strategy Training in Language Learning - research by Vandergrift & Goh demonstrates that explicit training in metacognitive strategies leads to improved listening comprehension. Similarly, Wenden found that learners who receive such training show higher autonomy and motivation.⁵⁰

Methodology - Metacognitive strategy training can be incorporated into English classrooms through the following approaches: Explicit instruction – Teachers model strategies such as predicting, questioning, or self-assessment. Scaffolding – Providing guided practice before encouraging independent use. Think-aloud protocols – Students verbalize their thinking process while reading or solving tasks. Reflective journals – Learners record their learning process and reflect on strengths and weaknesses. Oxford highlights that these techniques not only improve performance but also build life-long learning skills.⁵¹

Impact on Language Skills - Reading: Metacognitive strategies improve inferencing, skimming, and scanning. ⁵²Writing: Learners become better at organizing ideas and revising drafts⁵³. Listening: Vandergrift showed that metacognitive instruction significantly enhances comprehension and reduces anxiety.⁵⁴ Speaking: Learners plan their utterances more effectively and become more confident in communication.⁵⁵

Learner Autonomy and Motivation - Wenden argues that metacognitive awareness transforms learners from passive recipients to active participants in learning.⁵⁶ Similarly, Zimmerman connects metacognition to broader self-regulation theory, where students gain ownership of their progress.⁵⁷ Challenges in Implementation - Despite its benefits, teachers often face difficulties in integrating metacognitive training due to:

Limited classroom time

Lack of teacher preparation in strategy instruction

Students' initial resistance to reflective tasks

However, research by Chamot suggests that with consistent practice, learners develop strong habits of reflection and regulation.⁵⁸

Metacognitive strategy training is not merely an add-on to language teaching but a fundamental approach that equips learners with transferable skills across disciplines. It enhances comprehension, fosters learner autonomy, and supports life-long learning. For English language teachers, the key lies in explicitly modeling strategies, encouraging reflection, and gradually shifting responsibility to learners. Future research should explore technology-enhanced metacognitive strategy training, such as digital self-

⁴⁹ Chamot & O'Malley 1994

⁵⁰ Vandergrift & Goh 2012

⁵¹ Oxford 2017

⁵² Pressley & Afflerbach, 1995

⁵³ Victori, 1999

⁵⁴ Vandergrift 2005

⁵⁵ Goh & Taib, 2006

⁵⁶ Wenden 1998

⁵⁷ Zimmerman 2002

⁵⁸ Chamot 2005

assessment tools and AI-assisted reflection platforms. Such innovations can expand the scope of metacognition in modern EFL classrooms.

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