

Metacognitive Strategies for EFL Writing

Abstract:

Throughout the years, educators have long been confronted with the predicament of how to teach their students and how to make them responsible for their own learning. Scholars have proposed various probable solutions to the previously underlined dilemma. One such highly influential suggestion, proposed by researchers, is the establishment of a teaching philosophy that takes into consideration the students' social, intellectual, physical, mental, and emotional needs. As far as language learning is concerned, instructors must bridge the gap between psychology, linguistics, and cognition. Within the auspices of the latter, metacognition is thought of as an indispensable pillar which serves the purpose of clarifying critical issues related to how students learn, how they know what they have learnt, and how to direct their own future learning.

Keywords: Metacognitive ; Strategies ; EFL Writing

ملخص:

على مر السنين، واجه المربون منذ فترة طويلة مأزق كيفية تعليم طلابهم وكيفية جعلهم مسؤولين عن تعلمهم. وقد اقترح العلماء العديد من الحلول المحتملة للمعضلة التي تم التأكيد عليها سابقاً. وأحد هذه المقترحات المؤثرة للغاية، التي اقترحها الباحثون، هو إنشاء فلسفة تعليمية تأخذ في الاعتبار احتياجات الطلاب الاجتماعية والفكرية والجسدية والعقلية والعاطفية. وفيما يتعلق بتعلم اللغة، يجب على المدرسين سد الفجوة بين علم النفس، واللغويات، والإدراك. في إطار هذا الأخير، يعتقد ما وراء الإدراك كدعامة لا غنى عنها التي تخدم الغرض من توضيح القضايا الحرجة المتعلقة كيف يتعلم الطلاب، وكيف أنهم يعرفون ما تعلموه، وكيفية توجيه التعلم في المستقبل.

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Introduction :

The contemporary research in metacognition is rooted in the emerging cognitive psychology of the 1960s (Hart, 1965) as well as in the post-Piagetian developmental psychology of the 1970s (Flavell, 1979). To a certain degree, these two roots have remained separate. To a certain degree, these two roots have remained separate. In recent years, however, there have been many endeavours to bridge these two roots of metacognition with each other (Hacker, Dunlosky, 1998).

It is commonly believed that each of these trends is contributive to the establishment of an applied metacognition.

Teaching metacognitively can be interpreted either as teaching 'with' metacognition or teaching 'for' metacognition. The latter means that teachers design instruction which will activate and improve their students' metacognition. As for the former, it means that teachers have knowledge and think about their own thinking concerning their teaching. Metacognition makes instructors able to gain awareness of and control over their thinking and teaching processes. It also enables educators to monitor, evaluate, and regulate their teaching practices in conformity with specific students, goals, contexts, and teaching styles.

The aim of this paper is to outline some of the metacognitive strategies and how these skills can influence the student's writing. Metacognitive strategies are believed to be a challenging task for language teachers. The latter would have to refine their mind-set and pose questions which trigger the learner to analyse the existing links to other common experiences and materials, identify which strategies are needed to accomplish a given learning task, and formulate questions accordingly. Hartman (2001) believes that teaching with metacognitive strategies means that teachers should think about how their instruction will provoke and improve their students' metacognition.

1. What is Metacognition?

There exists no generally agreed-upon definition of metacognition; it has been described differently by different scholars. Generally, the concept of metacognition refers to "thinking about thinking". The Merriam-Webster online dictionary defines it as "awareness or analysis of one's own learning or thinking processes". Differently put, metacognition is the knowledge that a person has of his own cognitive processes. The concept of metacognition was first introduced by Flavell (1976), and it was traditionally described as "one's knowledge concerning one's own cognitive processes and products or anything related to them" (323). Later on, Flavell (1979) redefined metacognition as "individuals' information and awareness about their own cognition".

To go further, Brown (1978:102) defines metacognition as the knowledge about and regulation of one's higher mental activities in learning processes. Brown's definition paved the ground towards the emergence of a proliferation of metacognitive terms through the years. Metacognitive beliefs, metacognitive awareness, metacognitive experiences, metacognitive knowledge, feeling of knowing, judgment of learning, theory of mind, metamemory, metacognitive skills, executive skills, higher-order skills, metacomponents, comprehension monitoring, learning strategies, heuristic strategies, and self-regulation are notions often associated with metacognition. These terms are not taken to be homogeneous; they rather heterogeneously reflect metacognition from discrepant perspectives. Some terms refer to more holistic knowledge and skills in

metacognition, whereas others are rather concerned with specific situations or types of tasks.

In the early 1990s, subsequent development and use of the term metacognition have remained relatively faithful to the notion's traditional meaning. In their attempts to capture a substantial description of the term metacognition, cognitive psychologists have provided the following definitions:

- "The knowledge and control children have over their own thinking and learning activities" (Cross & Paris, 1988, p. 131)
- "Awareness of one's own thinking, awareness of the content of one's conceptions, an active monitoring of one's cognitive processes, an attempt to regulate one's cognitive processes in relationship to further learning, and an application of a set of heuristics as an effective device for helping people organize their methods of attack on problems in general" (Hennessey, 1999, p. 3)
- "Awareness and management of one's own thought" (Kuhn & Dean, 2004, p.270)
- "The monitoring and control of thought"(Martinez, 2006, p. 696)

As far as the educational enterprise is concerned, metacognition is thought of as the ability of a student, who has been taught a given strategy in a particular context, to recall and use that strategy in a similar but new context, (Kuhn and Dean, 2004). In the educational cognitive psychology, metacognition is believed to take the form of executive control including monitoring and self-regulation (Schneider & Lockl, 2002). Moreover, Schraw (1998) holds the view that metacognition is a multidimensional array of general, rather than domain-based, skills. Such skills are empirically discrepant from intelligence, and might even be contributive in dispelling the deficiencies of general intelligence or prior knowledge on a subject when involved in the process of solving problems.

2. Metacognition and Cognition

In the last two decades, researchers have long endeavored to establish a clear-cut boundary between the two slippery concepts of cognition and metacognition. In so doing, it is of necessity to sift through the relevant literature in search for theoretical modals which highlighted the kind of relationship and difference that exist among the previously mentioned concepts.

The skill necessary to read a text is discrepant from the skill individuals use to monitor their interpretation of the text. The former is an example of a cognitive skill, the latter of a metacognitive one. The knowledge of all the grammatical conventions is cognitive; the knowledge that we are better in reading than in composing is a metacognitive character. Feeling that you are deficient in delivering information while teaching is a cognitive experience; the belief that one is near and has the ability to solve a problem is a metacognitive experience. These examples may be contributive in bringing to light the imaginary wall that separates cognition from metacognition.

In language learning, students receive information and must solve problems in which cognition and metacognition are omnipresent. The features which characterize metacognition need to be formulated in such a way that makes it possible to differentiate it from cognition in information processing and problem solving. Metacognition involves active monitoring and consequent regulation and orchestration of cognitive processes to reach cognitive objectives (Flavell, 1976). "Monitoring, regulation and the process of orchestration could take the form of checking, planning, selecting, and inferring" (Brown 1987: 76); self interrogation and introspection (Brown, 1978; interpretation of ongoing experience (Flavell, 1977; or simply making judgments about what one could know or does not know when involved in the accomplishment of tasks (Nelson 1996).

On the other hand, research on cognitive skills encompassed several tasks, such as memory tasks, reading text, writing, language acquisition, problem solving, social cognition, measurements, mathematical modelling, drawing, reading schematics and diagrams, etc. Cognition was not restricted to observing and manipulating objects, entities, reality, rather it extends to include the processing of information, i.e., of signs like words or figures, often associated with previously acquired skills.

Describing and interpreting the notion of metacognition is determined by the domain in which it is applied. The concept per se is ambiguous and does not lend itself to a single definition as stated by different scholars (Garner, 1987; Weinert, 1987; Posner, 1989; Forrest-Presley, 1985; Hacker, 1998). As for cognition, it is defined as "the capacity to use intelligence in executing tasks, or the capacity to execute cognitive tasks", Simon and Kaplan (1989: 37). This definition implies that cognition is not restricted to observing, memory, thinking, making a sound choice and deciding, but also includes processing emotions and intuition. Cognition is the act of knowing, involving awareness and judgment, and could also be a result of such an act (Wellman, 1983). The above-mentioned descriptions, thus, dispelled some of the ambiguity of the cognition-metacognition connection and brought to the scene several ways of separating these concepts.

Initially, metacognition and cognition are different with regard to their content. The former was about cognition (part of the mental world), while the latter is about things in both the real world and mental images thereof. In this respect, Flavell, (1979: 703) points out: "The content of cognition included objects, persons, events, physical phenomena, signs, etc., skills to handle these entities, and information on the tasks. The contents of metacognition were the knowledge, skills, and information about cognition.

Last but not least, Kluwe (1982) identified two general constituents of metacognition in terms of declarative and procedural knowledge. Some scholars (Brown, 1978) argued that cognition and metacognition are supposed to be equivalent in that knowledge, but different when it comes to the skills and information. In metacognition, knowledge is determined with metacognitive

knowledge, and skills are identified with metacognitive strategies. At the cognitive level, information is highly pertinent to the tasks (assignment, explanation, etc). At the metacognitive level, nevertheless, information involves concepts and skills, creating material with the aim of knowing about cognition.

3. Metacognitive Strategies

In this part, the researcher highlights the most important part of the paper at hand which is metacognitive strategies. It is noteworthy that there exists no general consensus among linguists and cognitive psychologists about that which constitutes a metacognitive skill. Some scholars reported that metacognition is a slippery concept within the auspices of which social, affective, psychological, and cognitive strategies operate in a continuum. These strategies are believed to be intricately intertwined in which one interacts with and completes the other. These scholars claim that metacognitive strategies are processes that include three major phases in terms of planning, monitoring, and evaluating. These metacognitive strategies are further divided into sub-activities that are omnipresent whenever engaged in the accomplishment of tasks. In this respect, Graham (1997: 42) argues that "metacognitive strategies that enable students to plan, control, and evaluate their learning are more essential than strategies that promote interaction and input"

To start with, metacognitive skills are strategies for acting on what one knows; directing, improving, and increasing one's knowledge. Clegg (2015: 4-5) suggests a synthetic presentation of metacognitive, cognitive, and social affective learning strategies. These strategies are interrelated in language learning. Additionally, as Clegg asserts, cognitive and social-affective strategies support the formation of metacognitive skills and self-regulation. The latter helps build something more than an inclination towards cooperation, namely self-esteem, and self-confidence provided by the ability to choose and to evaluate one's learning strategies.

4. List of Metacognitive Strategies

As referred to earlier, metacognitive strategies are not limited to a single activity or process the students can use to be metacognitively-oriented; they rather refer to a set of strategies that are interrelated in which one completes the other. It is, thus, crystal clear that a metacognitive strategy stands for any activity a learner uses to acquire knowledge, determines what is needed to develop such knowledge, and identifies where, when, and how to best apply it in a given situation. In this respect, Flavel, (1981: 17) argues: "Any process in which students examine the method that they are using to retrieve, develop, and expand information is deemed to be metacognitive".

As for the strategies that will be highlighted in the research at hand, the researcher opted for an array of metacognitive strategies that best fit the scope of the teaching/learning process. As stated by scholars, each social, affective, or cognitive strategy has a metacognitive process involved in it, making, thus, all these strategies as metacognitively oriented processes, (Lin 2001). As such, the researcher intends to analyse a battery of metacognitive skills comprised of

various strategies with social, affective, and cognitive dimensions. The strategies in question are:

1. **Planning**: this strategy includes the following:

- a) Advance organization, characterized by previewing; previewing the main ideas and concepts; identifying the organizing principle;
- b) Organizational planning, or planning what to do; planning how to accomplish the learning- task; planning the parts and sequence of ideas to express;
- c) Selective attention: listening or reading selectively, scanning, finding specific information; attending to key words, phrases, ideas, linguistic markers, types of information;
- d) Self-management: Planning when, where, and how to study; arranging the conditions that facilitate learning.

At this stage of learning, learners must plan what they need to do, set goals, organise their thoughts and activities in order to achieve the assigned tasks. By preparing, students are more likely to accomplish more complex tasks. Additionally at this level, students acquire the ability to divide larger tasks into much smaller parts that could be easily managed. Teachers, at this level, should make the learning objectives clear to their students and even help the latter to set their own learning objectives. By so doing, learners will be able to accurately measure their own learning progress. By way of example, the teacher might set the objective of mastering the production of an effective thesis statement. A student might go further and set the goal of producing an efficacious introduction. (Flavel, 1981)

2. **Monitoring**, with the following components:

- a) Monitoring comprehension: thinking while listening, thinking while reading; checking one's comprehension during listening or reading;
- b) Monitoring production: thinking while speaking, thinking while writing; checking one's oral or written production while it is taking place.

The monitoring strategy allows students to reflect on their own learning style, they gain awareness of how to best learn, the conditions that ascertain, foster, and appropriate learning, concentrate on the task, and determine what opportunities are available for practising the content to be learned in the target language. For example, teaching EFL students the various writing strategies is of great importance; summarizing and synthesizing makes the writing task easier to be accomplished. In this respect, teachers must help their students choose what strategy to implement in a given situation. By so doing, students would be able to direct, systemize, and establish connection among the various learning strategies; this is believed to distinguish between competent and struggling language learners. For example, with respect to a writing task, the teacher might ask students to account for their audience and purpose of writing (to explain, to persuade). In the process of writing, learners must keep returning to reflect upon the questions of "why" and "for whom" they are writing. Teacher must ensure their students ability

to recognize when a given strategy is not effective and, thus, shift to another one, (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).

3. **Evaluating:** namely self-assessment: checking back, keeping a learning log, reflecting what is learned; judging how well one has accomplished a learning task.

Students should be encouraged to decide for themselves how well they learned a certain content or how well they performed on a task, to become aware of their own strengths and weaknesses, which may help them perform better the next time. Students also reflect on the efficiency of the learning strategies they used, as well as the changes they would apply to their learning process in relation to a prospective task. (Khezrlou, 2012).

4. **The knowledge monitoring skill:** Following Tobias & Everson, Lin (2001) holds the view that knowledge monitoring is an indispensable skill that must be mastered by the students. She posits that, by determining what is known and unknown, learners can direct their attention and resources more adequately. In this context, Zimmerman (1998) asserts that, by being aware of what they know, students gain awareness of the potential knowledge and skills that they possess, which fosters their self-confidence.

To go further, Tobias and Everson argue that knowledge monitoring is central to learning in various domains. To prove the importance of accurate monitoring of prior knowledge, they conducted 23 experiments on the students' strategic behaviour during learning. The results indicated that students with appropriate knowledge monitoring are more likely to be high achievers than those who ignore their knowledge's scope. Scholars, thus, support the stance that advocates a positive correlation between knowledge, monitoring, and academic achievements.

As far as writing is concerned, the teacher might teach his students how they monitor their knowledge of the writing process. By so doing, the students will be able to determine their areas of strengths and weaknesses and use strategies to develop what they know and overcome their limitations. An example of knowledge monitoring might include giving the students all the necessary information about the rules and conventions that govern the production of coherent and cohesive pieces of discourse. In parallel with that, the teacher may help his students to determine the extent to which they have mastered the presented information and how they can possibly link it to the previous knowledge they already have.

5. **Cooperative learning:** According to Clegg (2015), cooperative learning is a social strategy that contributes to the scaffolding and formation of metacognitive skills. Bilgin&Geba (2004), believe that cooperative learning activity engages the students in the learning process and fosters critical thinking, reasoning, and problem-solving skills of the learner. Tanner and Slavin (1979) hold the view that peer interaction is substantial to the success of cooperative learning as it relates to the metacognitive understanding. They emphasised that every cooperative learning

strategy, when used appropriately, can help learners move beyond the text, to memorise the basic facts, and learn lower level skills.

Cooperative learning, therefore, leads to cognitive restructuring that create a room for improvement in understanding all students in a cooperative group, a part from academic benefits, learning cooperatively is believed to promote self-esteem, interpersonal relationship, and attitudes towards learning and peers. In the cooperative learning strategy, learners have the ability to discuss their answers and concerns with a comrade. This strategy helps learners discuss their thinking, analyse their position, and explain their point of view to their classmates. By so doing, students would have the ability to evaluate themselves while gathering information from other classmates. The teacher may also evaluate his learner's understanding by evaluating the content of the discussions. Each of these benefits of cooperative learning implies a metacognitive process that fosters the building of an efficient metacognitive system.

In terms of its application and as shown above, cooperative learning may serve as a remedial tool by means of which the researcher helps learners overcome certain dilemmas attributed to the writing process. It is a socially oriented strategy with a metacognitive dimension. As proved previously, cooperative learning is contributive, *inter alia*, in helping students plan, monitor, and revise their writing tasks. Differently put, it equips learners with the metacognitive skills necessary to master the writing proficiency. It is, thus, crystal clear that from a metacognitive perspective, planning, monitoring, and evaluating are not mere strategies of metacognition, but also the results and defining characteristics of a sustained metacognitive system.

6. Self reflection (Self management): Self-reflection is a metacognitive skill which helps students organise information into a coherent knowledge structure, to analyse situations, generate hypotheses, and decide how to solve problems, (Schon, 1987). Self-reflection allows students to explore their own learning efforts and provides not only a better comprehension of what students know but also creates a room for improvement in metacognitive strategies. For example, when a learner reflects on a task he has just accomplished, he is consciously revisiting the information, thus, incorporating self-reflective activities in a language classroom is proved to be contributive in enhancing the benefits of learning; it provides the students the opportunity to review previous actions and decisions prior to preceding to the next phase, (Goodman 1994).

In the same vein, Zimmerman (2000) believes that self-reflection is a pre requisite in achieving self-regulated learning. According to him, self-reflection is divided into two components: self-judgment and self-reaction, where the former includes evaluating one's performance and attributing causal significance to the results, while the latter involves satisfaction with one's performance and conclusions about how learners adapt their self-regulatory approach during subsequent efforts to learn and perform.

Therefore, scholars believe that having a proficient self-reflective behaviour is needed to become a self-regulated learner, (Zimmerman and Reisenbergh, 1997; Zimmerman, 1998). Schon (1987) asserts that the reflective learner uses a variety of resources to acquire appropriate information and opinions needed to gain a personal understanding of a given situation. Possessing good metacognitive skills consists of more than writing down one's thoughts on how a process or project is going; it is a dynamic process that occurs while individuals are engaged in any activity.

To go further, self-reflection involves reflective questions and reflective prompts. These are simple ways used by teachers to establish discussion that starts with revising the details of the learning experience and moves toward critical thinking and creation of an action plan (Scardamalia and Bereiter, 1987). This facilitates the student's reflection on the strategies used whenever involved in the accomplishment of a learning task (such as solving a problem) and explain the reasons behind using those strategies.

To be operational, the prompts should take the form of open-ended questions, especially when the teaching of writing is concerned. Prompting is believed to provoke self-explanation for metacognitive development. Deducing learners' explanations and justifications through prompting can help them draw conclusions and make inferences that can lead to increased comprehension (Chi et al., 1989). It is noteworthy that it is very problematic to detect the appropriate moment to interrupt the student for prompting him. Teachers must know the appropriate time of stepping in and asking appropriate questions and when it is best to stand back and let learner figure things out for themselves.

7. Metacognitive Scaffolding: Scaffolding refers to providing the support needed to bridge the gap between the students' current knowledge and their potential and the outcome they are supposed to produce (Hartman, 2001). Scaffolding may be carried out in the form of models, cues, prompts, hints, partial solutions, etc.. The latter supports the underlying processes associated with individual learning management thinking during learning. Scaffolding helps learners reflect on their learning goals and relate the use of a given tool to the accomplishment of the task at hand. Scaffolding is intended to serve as an external model of knowledge monitoring behaviour until it is internalized. Therefore, metacognitive scaffolding helps students become independent, self-regulated thinkers who are more self-sufficient and less teacher-dependent. It is an effective teaching approach which develops higher level cognitive strategies (Hartman, 2001).

Metacognitive scaffolding is twofold; it can be either domain-specific or more generic. If the problem is known and familiar, scaffolding can stress specific ways to think about the problem. Contrariwise, generic scaffolding emphasises the processes of creating models and new ways to tackle the encountered difficulties. In order to do so, the teacher should find ways to link models with prior

knowledge and experience, linking representational models to current understanding, and enabling learners to manipulate ideas through modelling tools (Shunk, 2000).

In the writing classroom, the teacher might help learners perceive the gap between their current knowledge and the performance that is expected from them. To bridge such a gap, learners might seek the guidance provided by their teachers. For example, when teaching Second Year LMD students, teachers must help their learners determine the discrepancy between what is needed to compose an expository essay (the expected performance) and the way they are currently performing. By so doing, learners will be aware of the amount of help needed to move from their actual performance to the expected one, and gradually their teachers' feedback will no longer be needed.

8. Modelling: Providing models of metacognition, while teaching, is an important strategy for developing metacognitive knowledge and skills. Teachers externalize their thought processes, serving as an “expert model”, in order to make students learn how to effectively use metacognitive knowledge and skills. Modelling is often a component of scaffolding. Peer modelling is another possibility. Lin (2001) illustrates this approach with the following example; when observing a peer engaged in effective problem identification and conceptualization of principles for problem solving, a struggling student may begin to think that he also has the ability to be creative and an effective problem solver.

9. Self-questioning: Self-questioning is thought as an effective strategy for developing self-directed learners. Research on self-questioning demonstrates that questions posed by the student are much more effective than those given to the learner by others. Self-questions such as “Have I left out anything important?” can make a learner self-direct in identifying the omission of important points or examples. The more students are engaged in the practice of generating and using self-questions in various situations the more likely they are to develop the habit of self-questioning so that it becomes a skill, that automatically and unconsciously takes place whenever needed. It is of an utmost importance to regularly help learners adapt their self-questions to the needs of a particular task. Self-questioning may serve as a source of guidance before, during, and after the accomplishment of tasks; it is believed to raise self-awareness and control over thinking and thereby improve performance. Self-questioning is proved to develop long-term retention of knowledge and skills, the application and transfer of the learned knowledge and skills, and attitudes and motivation as a result of improved performance (Schoenfeld, 1985).

10. Thinking aloud and Self-explanations: Thinking aloud is the act of externalizing one's thought processes when involved in a task that entails thinking. The thinker expresses his thoughts out loud when accomplishing a task (e.g. solving a problem, answering a question, conducting an experiment, organising

paragraphs in essay writing, etc.). Such a method can be used either by teachers, or by students working in peers, or by a student working alone. Instructors can use the think aloud strategy to demonstrate how to implement metacognitive knowledge and strategies when accomplishing tasks. For example, the teacher can express his thoughts out loud while planning, monitoring, and evaluating his progress towards composing an expository essay. This modelling moves thinking about the material (knowledge, skills, procedures, etc.) from an abstract state to a concrete one. It helps students hear what is going on in their teacher's head when a text is read, a homework assignment is attacked, study for a test is planned, an essay is written, an error is found, or a problem is solved. (Hartman, 2001a).

When modelling academic performance, it is necessary to deliberately commit errors, in order to raise the student's familiarisation with these mistakes and the available strategies to overcome them (Hartman, 2001a). Meichenbaum and Biemiller (1998) argue that think-aloud modelling may take the form of self-questions (e.g. "Did I carefully check my work?") or self-instructional directive statements (e.g. "That is not what I expected. I will have to refine my working method"). Scholars emphasise the need for teachers to use think-aloud while instructing students in order to help the latter summarise, access prior knowledge, self-monitor, obtain help, and self-reinforcement. This could only be achieved if the teacher communicates with learners so that the lesson is an interactive dialogue instead of a monologue.

As for self-explanation, it refers to the process of clarifying the content of an exercise, a text, an example, etc. Studies in cognitive science stress the importance of spontaneous self-explanation in facilitating the process of learning (Chi et al., 1989). Scholars argue that self-explanations, in certain cases, are more effective than explanations provided by others, because they provoke the active use of the students' existing knowledge. Additionally, when self-explaining, students naturally address their specific problems in understanding the content which leads to a more constructing learning (Chi, 2000). Nevertheless, studies show that most students do not spontaneously engage in self-explanation and often need guidance to do it (Bielaczyc et al., 1995) or need just to be prompted to do it (Chi et al., 1989).

Conclusion

This article is an attempt to shed light on the brand of metacognition. The latter does not lend itself to a single definition; it has been a notoriously hard word to define. In the last two decades, scholars have been emphasizing the magnificent role metacognition plays in developing EFL students learning abilities. It is a trend that is developing enormously, to the extent that it is too difficult to keep pace with improvement within its various sub-fields.

In its application to language teaching in general, scholars, educators, and students perceive metacognition to be an enigmatic, philosophical, and ambiguous approach. The reason behind this is the subject's high abstract nature and scope of

interest which is tied to scrutinizing the higher level mental processes associated with the act of apprenticeship. Accordingly, metacognition is perceived to be one of the most complex fields to be applied in the educational enterprise.

As an attempt to dispel some of the intricacies attributed to the subject matter, scholars have endeavoured to simplify the notion of metacognition. They argue that it is the "feeling and thinking about thinking". Scholars go further with arguing that metacognition encompasses two main components, namely metacognitive knowledge and self-regulation (metacognitive skills). The former is further divided into three major sub-components that exert an influence on learning process. The latter, however, refers to strategies, skills, tips, and activities a learner uses to, very generally, to acquire knowledge and be aware of when, where, and how to best apply the learner knowledge. Researchers are, now than ever before, emphasizing the substantial role metacognition, if implemented appropriately, plays in helping students overcome various difficulties encountered when attempting to internalize the target language.

Last but not least, metacognition is a set of skills that enable learners to become aware of how they learn, evaluate and adapt these skills to become increasingly effective at learning. In a world that demands lifelong learning, providing people with new and improved metacognitive strategies is a gift that can last forever.

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