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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MODERN PEDAGOGICAL TERMS AND METACOGNITIVE SKILLS IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

Ismailova Muxayyo Bashirillo qizi

Assistant at Tashkent State Medical University

muhayyoismailova@gmail.com

Abstract

This article explores the theoretical underpinnings of emerging pedagogical concepts in contemporary education, with a particular focus on self-regulated learning, reflective practice, and critical thinking. Considerable emphasis is placed on examining the nature, structural elements, and functional role of metacognitive skills within the learning environment. The core components of metacognition — namely planning, self-monitoring, and evaluation — are analyzed through a scientific lens, and their contribution to building the professional competencies of prospective educators is thoroughly discussed. The study concludes that the systematic integration of a metacognitive approach into everyday educational practice is not only beneficial but essential.

Keywords: Metacognitive skills, metacognition, self-regulated learning, reflection, critical thinking, pedagogical innovation, professional competence, educational effectiveness.

Introduction

The educational landscape of the 21st century is undergoing profound transformation. The forces of globalization, the rapid advancement of digital technologies, and the growing emphasis on competency-based learning have

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substantially reshaped both the content and methodology of the educational process. Today, education is no longer viewed merely as the transmission of knowledge; rather, it is understood as a comprehensive process aimed at fostering students' capacity for independent thinking, self-regulation, reflection, and critical analysis. Within this context, new concepts and terminology in the field of pedagogy — most notably "metacognitive skills" — have taken on particular significance.

Global trends in education indicate that an effective teacher must be more than a provider of information. They must be capable of guiding students through the learning process, selecting appropriate instructional strategies, and continuously refining their own professional practice. At the same time, contemporary pedagogical approaches are increasingly oriented toward enhancing students' ability to learn independently and encouraging creative and critical modes of thinking.

Metacognitive skills represent one of the foundational principles of this educational shift. They empower learners to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning process, ultimately leading to measurable improvements in academic performance, educational effectiveness, and professional readiness.

It is important to emphasize at the outset that the development of metacognitive skills has emerged as one of the most pressing areas of current pedagogical research. These skills play a vital role in cultivating independent thinking, self-regulatory capacity, and a reflective approach to learning. For this reason, the present article is dedicated to a scientifically grounded examination of metacognitive skills and their role within the pedagogical process.

Literature Review

The concept of metacognition was introduced into scientific discourse in the 1970s by American psychologist John Flavell, who defined it as an individual's awareness of their own cognitive processes and their ability to regulate them. Flavell divided metacognition into two core components: metacognitive

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knowledge and metacognitive experience. This foundational framework subsequently paved the way for deeper investigations into the mechanisms of metacognitive control and self-regulation.

Ann L. Brown was among the researchers who further advanced our understanding of metacognitive processes in education. She linked metacognition to learners' capacity to plan and monitor their own reading strategies, viewing it as inseparable from executive control and identifying it as a fundamental prerequisite for effective learning.

Subsequent scholarship developed metacognition in close connection with the concept of self-regulated learning. Barry J. Zimmerman, in particular, associated metacognitive strategies with the processes of goal-setting, self-monitoring, and performance evaluation. In his view, metacognitive control directly influences a student's academic achievement.

Gregory Schraw and David Moshman made significant contributions to the systematization of metacognitive theory by categorizing metacognitive knowledge into declarative, procedural, and conditional types, thereby establishing metacognition's central role in cognitive development.

The relationship between reflection and metacognition in the learning process has been notably examined by Jennifer A. Moon, whose research demonstrates the role of metacognitive activity in reflective learning and links deep comprehension directly to metacognitive analysis.

Contemporary pedagogical research further confirms that the cultivation of metacognitive skills is a critical factor in developing learners' capacity for independent study. The systematic incorporation of metacognitive strategies into the instructional process contributes to improved academic performance, stronger learning motivation, and enhanced professional preparation.

A review of the existing literature reveals that while metacognition has been thoroughly explored at a theoretical level, there remains a clear need for its methodological systematization within the context of preparing future English

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language teachers. In particular, developing concrete mechanisms for integrating metacognitive approaches into pedagogical practice stands out as a pressing and unresolved scholarly challenge.

In recent years, the following concepts have gained widespread use in the fields of pedagogy and psychology:

1. **Competency-Based Approach** — This approach shifts the emphasis from theoretical knowledge to practical skills and real-world application. The ability of a learner to apply their knowledge in authentic life situations is considered paramount.
2. **Reflection** — This refers to the process by which an individual critically examines their own actions, decisions, and thought processes. It serves as a key driver of professional growth for both teachers and students alike.
3. **Critical Thinking** — This denotes the ability to analyze, compare, evaluate information, and arrive at independent, well-reasoned conclusions.
4. **Metacognition** — This is the capacity to consciously understand and regulate one's own thinking processes, and it forms the very foundation of metacognitive skills.

The Concept of Metacognitive Skills

The term "metacognitive skill" is composed of two elements: "meta," meaning a higher or overarching level, and "cognition," referring to the process of thinking and knowing. Accordingly, metacognition is often described as "thinking about thinking." A metacognitive skill, therefore, is an individual's ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning process — a capacity that significantly enhances the effectiveness of independent study.

Metacognitive skills are generally understood to comprise three core components:

1. **Planning** — This involves identifying learning objectives, selecting appropriate study strategies, and allocating time effectively.
2. **Monitoring** — This encompasses checking one's level of comprehension, identifying areas of difficulty, and adjusting strategies as needed.

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3. Evaluation — This includes analyzing outcomes, recognizing errors, and refining approaches for future learning activities.

The development of metacognitive skills yields a range of meaningful outcomes: it strengthens learners' capacity for independent work, fosters self-regulatory mechanisms, nurtures lifelong learning competencies, and contributes to higher levels of academic achievement.

For prospective teachers in particular, metacognitive skills hold special professional significance. A teacher must be not only a conveyor of knowledge but also a reflective practitioner — someone who continuously examines and refines their own instructional practice.

Research Methodology

This study is directed toward identifying the theoretical and practical foundations of metacognitive skill development and determining their role in preparing future English language teachers for professional practice. A comprehensive, multi-layered approach was employed throughout the research process, encompassing the following orientations:

A Systemic Approach, through which metacognitive skills are examined as an integrated component of a holistic pedagogical system.

A Competency-Based Approach, focusing on the formation of professional competencies in prospective teachers.

A Reflective Approach, applied to identifying and analyzing processes of self-examination and self-assessment.

Research Methods

The following scientific methods were utilized in the course of the study:

Theoretical Methods included the analysis of scholarly and pedagogical literature, comparative analysis of academic sources, as well as generalization and systematization of findings.

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Empirical Methods involved pedagogical observation, questionnaire-based surveys, diagnostic tests and task assignments, and structured interviews with participants.

Statistical Methods were applied to both quantitative and qualitative analysis of the collected data, as well as to the mathematical and statistical processing of experimental findings.

Object and Subject of the Research

The object of the research is the process of professional preparation of future English language teachers within higher education institutions.

The subject of the research encompasses the mechanisms of metacognitive skill formation and their influence on the development of professional competencies.

Stages of the Research

The study was carried out in three consecutive stages:

Diagnostic Stage — establishing the baseline level of metacognitive skills among student participants.

Experimental Stage — implementing a methodological model developed on the basis of metacognitive strategies into actual educational practice.

Analytical Stage — conducting a comparative analysis of the obtained results and determining the overall effectiveness of the implemented model.

The reliability of the research findings is ensured through the triangulation of theoretical source analysis, statistical processing of empirical data, and comparative evaluation of experimental outcomes.

Analysis and Results

This study analyzed empirical outcomes derived from the practical implementation of a pedagogical model designed to foster metacognitive skills among prospective English language teachers. The primary aim of the research

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was to determine the extent to which the application of metacognitive strategies contributes to the development of students' professional competencies.

1. Baseline Level of Students' Metacognitive Skills

Diagnostic tests and surveys conducted at the outset of the experiment revealed the following:

Only 35% of students demonstrated effective use of metacognitive planning strategies.

42% encountered considerable difficulties in the monitoring phase — that is, in tracking and regulating their own learning activity.

The evaluation component registered the lowest performance, with an effectiveness rate of just 25% among participants.

These findings confirmed that metacognitive strategies were insufficiently developed among the prospective teachers at the beginning of the study.

2. Outcomes Following the Implementation of the Metacognitive Approach

After applying the pedagogical model over a 12-week practice period, the following improvements were observed:

Component	Initial Level (%)	Post-Practice Level (%)	Growth (%)
Planning	35	78	+43
Monitoring	42	74	+32
Evaluation	25	70	+45

The results clearly demonstrate that the systematic application of metacognitive strategies led to significant gains in students' capacity for self-regulation and reflective analysis.

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3. Impact on Students' Professional Competencies

The empirical findings further indicated that:

Students showed marked improvement in their ability to independently plan lessons and conduct self-assessment.

They became noticeably more effective in selecting and applying language learning strategies.

Reflective analysis contributed to a substantial increase in both learning motivation and active participation in the educational process.

These changes underscore a direct and meaningful connection between the development of metacognitive skills and the overall enhancement of professional readiness among future English language teachers.

4. Analytical Conclusion

The research findings scientifically substantiate the effectiveness of the metacognitive approach in developing students' capacity for independent learning, building professional competencies, and strengthening self-assessment and reflective skills. Furthermore, the consistent and systematic application of metacognitive strategies has been shown to yield a considerable improvement in overall pedagogical effectiveness.

Emerging Terminology in the Modern Education System

In recent years, the following concepts have gained considerable currency in the fields of pedagogy and psychology:

1. Competency-Based Approach — This approach shifts the focus from theoretical knowledge toward practical skills and real-world application. The ability of a learner to utilize their knowledge effectively in authentic, everyday situations is regarded as the central measure of educational success.
2. Reflection — This refers to the process by which an individual critically examines their own actions, behaviors, and thought processes. It is recognized as

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a vital factor in the ongoing professional development of both teachers and learners.

3. Critical Thinking — This denotes the capacity to analyze, compare, and evaluate information, and to draw independent, well-reasoned conclusions.

4. Metacognition — This is the ability to consciously understand and regulate one's own thinking processes, and it constitutes the very foundation upon which metacognitive skills are built.

The Concept of Metacognitive Skills

The term "metacognitive skill" is composed of two distinct elements:

"Meta" — signifying a higher or overarching level

"Cognition" — referring to the process of knowing and thinking

Taken together, metacognition is most simply understood as "thinking about thinking." A metacognitive skill, therefore, is an individual's capacity to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning process — an ability that substantially enhances the effectiveness of independent study.

Structural Components of Metacognitive Skills

Metacognitive skills are generally understood to consist of three core components:

1. Planning — This involves defining learning objectives, selecting suitable study strategies, and managing the allocation of time efficiently.

2. Monitoring — This encompasses assessing one's current level of understanding, identifying points of difficulty, and making necessary adjustments to one's learning strategies.

3. Evaluation — This component focuses on analyzing outcomes, recognizing errors, and identifying ways to improve future performance.

Outcomes of Developing Metacognitive Skills

The cultivation of metacognitive skills yields a range of significant benefits:

Learners develop a stronger capacity for independent, self-directed work.

Effective self-regulatory mechanisms are established and reinforced.

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Overall academic achievement improves considerably.

Lifelong learning competencies are nurtured and sustained.

For prospective teachers in particular, metacognitive skills carry special professional importance. A teacher must be not merely a transmitter of knowledge, but a reflective practitioner — someone who continuously analyzes, questions, and refines their own instructional practice in pursuit of ongoing growth.

Conclusion

The development of metacognitive skills stands as one of the most pressing priorities in contemporary education. These skills foster independent thinking, self-regulation, and a reflective approach to learning. Moreover, the metacognitive approach serves as an effective methodological foundation for enhancing the professional preparation of future specialists.

For this reason, the systematic integration of metacognitive strategies into the educational process is widely regarded as one of the most significant directions in current pedagogical research.

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