



Journal of

# STEPS

for Humanities and Social Sciences

Volume 1 | Issue 3

Article 6

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### Recommended Citation

Mousa, Manal Omar and Yahya, Nagham Qaddori (2022) "Metalinguistic Awareness is an Important Factor for Developing EFL Students' Performance in Learning English Language," *Journal of STEPS for Humanities and Social Sciences*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 3 , Article 6.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.55384/2790-4237.1068>

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## **Metalinguistic Awareness is an Important Factor for Developing EFL Students' Performance in Learning English Language**

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Received: 28/03/2022

Accepted:13/03/2022

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### **Abstract**

The development of metalinguistic awareness is an essential component of teacher preparation. Enhancing students' metalinguistic understanding of their different skill successes is essential. As a result, teachers should use a range of techniques for increasing metalinguistic awareness, such as word recognition, syntactic understanding, and vocabulary recognition exercises. However, these strategies are exclusively geared toward school-aged children. Because metalinguistic awareness is a component of all levels of education. Numerous studies have demonstrated that effective learners self-regulate their learning processes using metacognitive information and strategies. Effective learners demonstrate a high level of language control and analysis in a language learning context. It is therefore critical to foster learners' metalinguistic awareness, as metalinguistic awareness enables learners to exert greater control over their oral and written communication abilities. Additionally, it enables children to understand the significance of the messages they read or hear. Additionally, to the fact that they may greatly favour career prospects, these two benefits have an effect on learners' social status.

**Keywords:** Metalinguistic, Developing EFL Students', Awareness

## 1. Introduction

Metalanguage theories have been used to solve problems for decades in countries all over the world, particularly in disciplines that include cognitive science. Recent studies on language dialectics and metapragmatics have brought up fresh and creative approaches to metalanguage. This research has transferable conclusions, which go beyond the initial broad idea of metalanguage, which deals with language that talks about language, while also demonstrating the intricacy of metalanguage and how it develops, organizes, and develops language. Because metalanguage both refers to and is utilised for communication, speakers have varying levels of knowledge. The participants said that at some point throughout the conversation, they engaged at a metalinguistic level that organised their discourse. In other cases, metalanguage may operate in an indirect manner, even while speakers are unaware of its purpose. Even in these instances, speakers' incomplete knowledge or outright misreading of metalanguage may contribute to the influence of linguistic interaction. This article discusses the numerous metalinguistic consequences of an empirically informed approach to metalinguistic awareness. This study is contextualised within a larger variety of traditions, most notably previous research on metalanguage.

Cognitive development, literacy acquisition, second language learning, language training, and theory of mind are all associated with the word "metalinguistics" (Wellman,1990:130). Morphosyntactic ability consists of three things: metalinguistic knowledge, metalinguistic ability, and metalinguistic abilities (Tunmer et al.1984: 29). (ibid:134). To use language involves understanding how to do it (for example, being able to speak fluently), whereas metalinguistic ability is organically continuous with linguistic ability and is separate from linguistic competence, which is a strategy for using language. when it comes to metalinguistic awareness, the keyword is attentiveness (ibid:136). Attention is a cognitive activity that focuses on the language's explicit elements. It produces the

phenomena of metalinguistic awareness by paying attention to the language and using explicit mental representations. Because of this, attention is essential in distinguishing the syntactic thinking from the grammar. It is difficult to clarify metalinguistic capacity (also known as metalinguistic awareness) because of a significant amount of literature study. Indeed, both phrases are used to describe the same notion by almost all the studies (Bialystok and Friesen, 2012:132). According to Bialystok, in some situations, phrases of morphosyntactic knowing, morphosyntactic ability, and language comprehension may be interchangeable; these terms, however, vary in their definitions even if their meanings overlap (Bialystok,2001: 145). As a result, she proved that executive control plays a role in metalinguistic tasks, and she explicitly equated the two with each other in her research (Bialystok and Friesen,2012:135). A term used to describe early notions of perceptual processing describes it as "the ability to make language forms opaque and focus on them in and of themselves is a specialized kind of language performance that also makes special cognitive demands and appears to be less common and widely accessible than speaking and listening skills." Metalinguistic awareness may be characterized as the capacity to think about and reflect on the nature and functioning of language at the general level, as seen in the definition of Pratt and Grieve (Tunmer, Pratt, and Herriman, 1984: 2).

## **1.2 Metalinguistic Awareness**

It is just the capacity to communicate and think in the language. When a teacher invites students to argue the appropriate use of a few terms or to assess the importance of an argument, the teacher promotes metalinguistic consciousness. Metalinguistic understanding, on a more academic level, refers to a thorough understanding of the language's organisational systems (Gaux & Gombert, 1999). It is about permission, or more precisely:

"Individuals must take a step back from the understanding or creation of a statement in order to analyse the language form and structure that underpin the utterance's meaning. Thus, an effects is one that asks the individual to consider

the message's linguistic character, to attention to and reflect on language's structural elements. To be appeal aware, then, is to understand how to approach and resolve specific sorts of issues, each of which necessitates the development of specific cognitive and linguistic abilities" (Malakoff, 1992, p. 518).

It is a high level of intellectual skill that is a component of the more conventional metacognition of perception. In metalinguistics and metacognition, the meta morphemus is a Greek prefix that denotes anything beyond cognitive processes and suggests the presence of a conscious, explicit, and deliberate capacity. Metalinguistic expressions "comprehension or knowledge of the linguistic characteristics of a language. Similarly, metacognition "is commonly considered to mirror one's own thinking, to assess one's own performance on cognitive tasks, and to organise the learning and thinking processes associated with those activities." " (Seel, 2012:43). Thus, reflective thinking incorporates the concept of cognitive awareness, which enables an individual to examine and alter how he or she thinks and learns. By developing metacognitive abilities, you may improve your abilities in a variety of situations requiring cognitive processes.

### **1.3 The Scope of Metacognition**

Reflective thinking is a critical mental process that occurs in several facets of an individual's life. At home, for example, assessing parents' reactions to their requests helps parents to modify future demands in order to foster communication skills amongst parents and children. This is an illustration of a technique known as self-regulation. Planning is another technique that instructors do in the classroom. For instance, instructors are aware of the need of selecting the optimal technique for a given piece of content in order to facilitate their students' learning process. Likewise, metacognition enables head teachers to be much more efficient at job (which, of course, may include school!). For example, individuals frequently employ the approach of self-management to determine what they will

accomplish and when. The primary objective of a strategy is to ascertain why it has been implemented in a specific manner. During monitoring sessions, school administrators can also utilise metacognitive skills to monitor their personnel, particularly instructors. These meetings provide a wonderful opportunity for educators to practise modelling and metacognition (Gauthier, Bissonnette, & Richard, 2013:231). Indeed, metacognition assists teachers in honing their own abilities, becoming aware of their activities, and following the same approach with their pupils. "An excellent method for teachers to enhance their pupils' metacognition is through the use of awareness kinds," Broyon explains (2006:109). Process Global procedure that is unique global Metacodesis Meta-Learning Memory Syntactic Metalinguistic Semantics Pragmatically Meta-care. Meta-social knowledge Teachers must have developed their own metacognition, associated interventions skills, and capacity for self-examination via reflective habits."

#### **1.4 Why Metalinguistic Awareness should be Developed**

In turn, teachers will pass the metacognitive methods they have learnt to their pupils. And not just metacognition, but metalinguistic sensitivity should be fostered in the case of language instructors. Teachers should be motivated for many reasons to produce instructional activities aimed at increasing lean metalinguistic awareness. First, the student may comprehend how he utilizes a language via metalinguistic awareness in diverse settings. After it is developed to a high degree, it assists the learner in a variety of circumstances (home, school, job...) for utilizing the language with great certainty since he/she controls the message that they want to communicate. Moreover, several studies have proved the importance of a knowledge of metalinguism in various subject matter (de Haro, Delgado & López, 2012:235) in school achievements. And, multiple researches showed that certain metalinguistic activities, generally phonemic awareness, predict literacy achievement in early students (Zipke, 2007:208).

#### **1.5 Is Metalinguistic Awareness Important for Your Learners only**

Any skill must be practiced in a variety of situations over an extended length of time to be properly developed. This is true for metalinguistic awareness as well as for metacognition in general. According to Hogan et al. (2015:75), "persons think integratively in two different ways: first, they must be aware with their own cognitive processes (for example, through identity or self-regulation); and 2, they would have to be able to apply available cognitive functions again for purpose of learning or problem solving (for example, through critical thinking or reflective judgement)."

### **1.5.1 Self-talk and its Importance in Developing Metacognition**

Self-talk is similar to a continuous commentary that occurs in our heads. It is quiet thinking; it is the process by which we attempt to make sense of what we hear, see, and feel, which naturally has an effect on our actions. Self-questioning is an integral aspect of self-talk, and both strategies aid in the development of the learner's metalinguistic awareness, since self-questioning employs the thinking aloud tactic. The learner speaks with himself and attempts to make sense of his thoughts by thinking aloud. Self-talk is a critical method for developing metacognition. To guarantee that their actions are understood, principals incorporate this technique into their problem-solving process. Additionally, teachers frequently seek this approach in order to enhance their classroom management skills. However, and perhaps more importantly, learners' self-talk should be encouraged as a necessary component of their learning development (El Euch, 2010:201).

Self-talk is a critical approach for success in creating an understanding of what is anticipated in the text; it may take the form of oral or written communication to guarantee the message's clarity and comprehensiveness. When pupils have the ability to notice an incomplete, hazy, or confusing message, they may be taught to modify it via self-talk. They will later use this method to their own communications when they are created, whether verbally or in writing. By considering the language employed in a book, students may gain an

understanding of the many elements of speech that contribute to the message's clarity.

Self-talk forces individuals to expand their thinking, evaluate the language they use or encounter, and comprehend it beyond its natural applications.

Self-talk may manifest itself in the following ways, albeit not exhaustively:

"Will my message be comprehended simply and without ambiguity?"

"Can I rephrase this to make it more clear?" "Can my words/explanations be more explicit/specific?"

"Will the reader/listener be adversely affected by my messages? An unintended consequence..."

As a result, individuals acquire metacognitive capacity in general and metalinguistic awareness in language contexts.

### **1.5.2 The Important of Paraphrasing for Cognitive Process**

Effective paraphrasing, whether for school administrators, instructors, or students, is one's own comprehension and production of another's spoken or written material. It entails not only comprehending the message, such as evaluating the words and phrases to determine their meaning, but also utilising a variety of words or phrases to convey comparable concepts. Paraphrasing necessitates two subjective procedures: language analysis and language management.

### **1.5.3 Playing with language and its Relation with Metacognition**

Language play is the use of similes in a variety of ways, including metaphors, personification, similes, oxymorons, and imagery. Additionally, it includes combining sounds from many languages inside the same phrase. Playing with language requires the learner to establish a reserve of the actual definition of words from the outside in order to obtain the intended message. The training begins with language analysis, followed by language control, knowledge of the

meaning of words, and the reasons for their usage in an explicit context. Thus, language play is more closely associated with metalinguistic awareness than with metacognition in general. Nonetheless, principals and instructors of schools. The sentences are derived from Pinto et al. (1999). They may be used to emphasise specific themes. For instance, during the yearly launch meeting. In a classroom setting, teachers may question learners to share how they would understand metaphors and to explain the usage of the metaphor's constituent terms.

### **1.6 Ambiguous Language and Metalinguistic Awareness**

Teaching ambiguous language is more concerned with metalinguistic awareness than with metacognition, and as such is more readily accepted by teachers than by school principals, even though both should exercise caution while dealing with teachers and parents to prevent unintended slip-ups. In a learning situation, learners will undoubtedly benefit from being made aware of the unpredictable nature of language by being made aware of the possibility that words and phrases may have several interpretations. Later in life, being aware of the existence of two contradictory interpretations for a word or phrase and being able to identify which meaning is selected will be critical for reading comprehension (Yuill, 1998-190). The influence of teaching ambiguous language extends beyond reading comprehension, since ambiguity pervades our environment, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Teaching ambiguous language really assists students in navigating an unclear reality. It is possible to teach ambiguous language at both the semantic and syntactic levels. For instance, at the semantic level, children may be asked to interpret statements such as the following:

### **1.7 The Benefit of Metalinguistic Awareness in Helping the Students to Analyze and Actually "Get" Language**

The phrases "metalinguistics" and "metalinguistic awareness" are rather obscure terms and idioms. You may be inexperienced with metalinguistics as a parent. It is rarely brought up in conversation with other parents or instructors.

Metalinguistic awareness is the capacity to view language as a thing, to analyse it as a process or even a framework, and to traverse it effectively. Adults frequently lack the metalinguistic ability to debate the syllables in their own sentences or the real meaning of a word in a phrase. Although the term was coined in the 1970s to allude to the process of learning new languages, it relates to numerous aspects of language.

When you have metalinguistic ability and a grasp of the intricacies of your native speech, for example: - how meaning and its nuances and derivations are transmitted,

- that meaning may be altered by rearrangement of words
- that English is not exhaustive, that altering the title of an item does not alter the item

Metacognition provides you with the tools necessary for comprehension. Additionally, metalinguistic capacity helps you to begin learning a foreign skill successfully. Thus, you may undertake a detailed examination of the tongues and recall that one follows a-b-c while the other follows d-e-f.

## **2.1 Metalinguistic Awareness Depends on Metalinguistic Skills**

Additionally, morphemic consciousness refers to the recognition that language may be altered in a number of ways and that it is manageable. For instance, if you send a letter to someone and afterwards find that the sentences #4 through #7 are illogical, you can change those lines. You have the ability to change them.

As children mature, they begin to examine their own work. They should begin looking at their compositions and workout assignments with a more critical and fundamental eye. They will begin to see that there may be more effective methods of expressing things. For instance, someone would write: "I went to the large pond for a great day of pond fishing."

Metalinguistic awareness will alert them to the sentence's inconsistency: is it a pond or a lake? Someone with metalinguistic awareness may reflect on language.

Additionally, they could recognize - via metalinguistic awareness - that not all language is rigorous. For example, when someone says, "My little dog is an Olympic athlete," it does not always mean that the dog competes in Olympic sporting events. Rather than that, it suggests that the dog is athletic, that its athletic talents are acceptable, and that the owner believes the dog has a lot of potential. This is a key breakthrough in metacognition, the capability to check one's own comprehension while one listens to or reads—knowing about one's own comprehension. Metacognition is the last stage toward high school reading competency. Glitches in Learning Impair Metalinguistic Awareness Children that have an aural handling disorder (APD) struggle with metalinguistics and metalinguistic awareness. However, programs designed to assist children, adolescents, and adults with APD place a premium on metalinguistic skills in order to increase these learners' accomplishment. As a parent, developing your child's metalinguistic talents helps you to ask them to do and check their homework.

## **2.2 The Difference in Comprehension between Bilinguals and Monolinguals**

Metalinguistic Awareness and Its Importance Metalinguistic competence in the L2 is often developed in the classroom via emphasis on the L2's formal structure. Metalinguistic awareness enables novel and innovative language usage that would not be possible without it (Malakoff, 1999). Prior research suggests that it is better to increase multilingual women's metalinguistic awareness, as learning two languages requires learners to focus on the two languages' features. Metalinguistic awareness, or the explicit, conscious comprehension of a language's form/meaning relationships, is occasionally referred to as the capacity to express thoughts about communication and is one of the most well documented contrasts across bilingual speakers and monolingual children (Malakoff,1999:123).

It has been demonstrated that metalinguistic awareness is strongly linked with text instruction (Zipke, 2007). Bilinguals had a greater ability for language comprehension than monolingual children, owing mostly to their heightened metalinguistic awareness. Metalinguistic awareness, which Carter characterises as 'an improved self-awareness and sensibility to the form and uses of language' (Carter, 2003), is likely to assist the development of an L2 learner's language comprehension, which may result in language performance (Berry, 2005). There is strong evidence (Hu, 2002) that metalinguistic performance is critical for the development of reading abilities. Children who are deficient or inefficient in their interpretation and production methods may be forced to rely on their metalinguistic abilities to grasp some aspects of language. Numerous recent studies have demonstrated a positive correlation with linguistic knowledge and second language proficiency. Bery (2009:213) observed that students differed considerably in their subsystem knowledge and that this material was strongly associated with their highest English grades, establishing a 'link between linguistic knowledge and English competence'.

### **3- Conclusion**

Metacognition is a critical cognitive process that affects many facets of an individual's life. When instructors design lessons, they deliberate on the most effective technique for a particular piece of subject in order to enhance their students' learning process. Likewise, metacognition allows school administrators to be more efficient. For instance, people often employ the self-management technique to choose what to accomplish and when to do it. The most essential component of this strategy is also comprehending why they will carry it out in a particular method. School administrators may also utilise metacognition to monitor their staff members, notably instructors, during supervision sessions. Given that a growing number of researchers have indicated a low level of linguistic knowledge among undergrads and related this amount to understudies'

poor learning and memory requiring diagnostic and accusatory skills, teacher should prepare some student-appropriate educational activities.

Effective learners have a high degree of language analysis and control in a language learning situation. It is consequently critical to foster learners' metalinguistic awareness, since metalinguistic awareness enables learners to exert more control over their oral and writing communication abilities. Additionally, it helps children gain a firm grasp on the significance of the information they read or hear. These gains have an influence on the trainees' social standing, as well as the fact that they should favour engagement possibilities significantly.

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