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METACOGNITIVE KNOWLEDGE AS A CENTRAL COMPONENT OF SELF-DIRECTED FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING IN THE TEACHING PROCESS WHILE SHIFTING RESPONSIBILITY FROM TEACHER TO LEARNER

The article is devoted to the theme of metacognitive knowledge as a central component of self-directed foreign language learning, affording us not only the knowledge base (theory) for effective individualised learning but also the day-to-day skills needed (practice). Because the influence of this knowledge (beliefs) plays such an integral role, it is important to clarify what exactly it is we are talking about. Traditionally, metacognitive knowledge breaks down into three main types: Person knowledge, Task knowledge and Strategy knowledge.

Investigating and describing metacognitive knowledge – the beliefs or knowledge that learners and teachers hold about language learning – is an important component of the Autonomy Approach.

The changes in language education that have been happening over the years – asking the learners to become more active participants in their learning – require a shift in both teacher and learner roles: a shift in all our perceptions and expectations, as well as in how we prepare and apply these new ways of teaching and learning.

This may seem like an obvious statement but, a lot of the time, the types of changes that take place in classrooms and educational institutions around the world are put into action without the consent of the learners. Language learners are not always made aware of why they are being asked to reconsider how they participate in their learning and, even when attempts are made at raising awareness of why it might be a good idea to take more control, learners are rarely shown how to.

By taking what is considered important in the field of autonomous language learning and using this as a way of approaching effective self-directed language learning, rather than a way of developing autonomy, there can be a focus on self-directed language learning, target-language development and the empowerment of learners to make informed decisions about their own learning. The outcomes, for learners, revolve around language skills, language learning skills and their understanding of available resources and ways of using these to meet their language learning goals.

By gaining a clearer understanding of the beliefs learners hold about language learning, we are offered a window into the varied experiences of our learners and the critical determinants which influence and motivate their behaviour. In other words, if we raise awareness of what learners (and teachers) believe about language learning, then we can develop a more nuanced appreciation of individuals' learning performances – and work towards providing more personalised and effective guidance.

Self-directed learning is a process in which individuals take the initiative without the help of others in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating goals, identifying human and material resources, and evaluating learning outcomes.

Key words: *metacognitive knowledge, strategy knowledge, self-directed learning, autonomy approach, foreign language learning.*

(статтю подано мовою оригіналу)

Metacognitive knowledge is a central component of self-directed language learning, and traditionally breaks down into three main types: Person knowledge, Task knowledge and Strategy knowledge.

More inclusive, discriminated, permeable and integrative perspectives are superior perspectives that adult learners choose because they are motivated to better understand the meaning of their experience. These perspectives permit us, teachers to deal with a broader range of experience, to be more discriminating, to be more open to other perspectives, and to better integrate our experiences [4].

Person knowledge is made up of: beliefs about both human and cognitive factors that influence either the promotion or prevention of learning (factors such as aptitude, anxiety, cognitive style and motivation); beliefs about proficiency levels in specific skills areas, such as reading, speaking or pronunciation (often based on a history of formal assessments); beliefs about effectiveness as learners (an intuitive understanding of particular strengths and weaknesses); and beliefs about one's capacity to reach specific language learning goals [1].

A statement that may be used to determine a language learning belief about language aptitude may say: "I believe that some people are born with a special ability to learn languages".

A statement that may be used to determine a language learning belief about proficiency may say: 'I need to improve my speaking and listening more than my reading and writing' [6].

A statement that may be used to determine a language learning belief about self-efficacy may say: 'I am confident in selecting materials useful for my learning'.

Person knowledge can play a role in helping learners identify what kinds of things they are interested in (activities they enjoy or don't enjoy) or what they know and what they don't know about a topic or language skill [5].

Task knowledge includes information about a task's demands, ie how to learn in general, how to go about doing a particular task, and the knowledge and skills needed to do so.

Task knowledge is made up of: beliefs about the nature of specific learning tasks; beliefs about how different tasks fit in with learning needs; and beliefs about how to accomplish specific learning tasks (basically, the 'what', 'why' and 'how' of learning tasks).

A statement that may be used to determine a language learning belief about the nature of a specific learning task may say: 'To improve my reading fluently, I need to read difficult texts'[7].

A statement that may be used to determine a language learning belief about how to accomplish a specific learning task may say: 'You cannot speak English fluently unless you first memorise a lot of vocabulary'.

During the planning process, task knowledge (facilitating the analysis of particular tasks) will assist learners in organising what information they are supposed to learn from a task (and judge if this information is congruent with what

they want to learn). It also helps break down the task into smaller parts, highlighting what learners have to do and what potential problems the task presents[4].

Strategy knowledge are beliefs about when and how to use learning strategies. Although strategy knowledge is very similar to task knowledge (and actually considered by some people to be a subset of task knowledge), it is differentiated by the specific role it plays in the implementation and processing of a learning plan or objective[3].

A statement that may be used to determine a language learning belief about what a learning strategy is may say: ' I think that writing about my learning activities (reflecting) is a useful way to improve my language learning'.

A statement that may be used to determine language learning beliefs about how to use a learning strategy may say: ' To become a good listener, I need to be able to guess the meaning of words sometimes[5].

During the implementing process, strategy knowledge is evident in the actual execution or use of strategies that deal directly with the challenges of a learning plan or a specific task. Also, strategy knowledge can help learners assess the appropriateness of adopting particular learning strategies for particular tasks[4].

The monitoring process is perhaps the most complex of them all. During this stage in the learning, all three aspects of metacognitive knowledge should be coming into play. For example, if an activity involving academic reading is proving to be too difficult, the learners may recall that they have never been 'good at reading academic articles'. When referring back to a belief about one's ability (*person knowledge*) may be a way of making sense of why they are experiencing a problem. *Task knowledge* will play a role when the learner is assessing internally how successful they have been in completing the task. Finally, *strategy knowledge*, like task knowledge, also plays a role during the internal assessments of a task; however, the difference is that strategy knowledge is assessing the task as it is happening (in full swing, so to speak) rather than a retrospective assessment of the outcome[3].

During the evaluating process, task knowledge will also be useful in helping learners to develop a diagnostic activity relevant to their goal and their current situation. As teachers, we can help students at this stage and encourage them to use it, as appropriate. For example, at the onset of the self-directed learning cycle, and at the end of the cycle, to ensure that learners have concrete evidence of progress and issues that may have constrained progress. Equally significant will be the role task knowledge plays in the analysis of the diagnostic activity. The deeper and more specific the analysis, the richer and more specific the understanding will be of one's ability and development[1].

Finally, when talking about self-directed language learning, the differences between metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive strategies need to be made clear. Metacognitive knowledge refers to information learners acquire about their learning, while metacognitive strategies, planning, monitoring and evaluating, are general skills through which learners manage, direct, regulate and guide their learning.

Unlike metacognitive knowledge, which is the particular beliefs learners have acquired about language learning generally or their learning specifically (retained information), metacognitive strategies are practical, applicable skills and strategies that learners use to structure their self-directed language learning. These strategies are broken down into four activities: Planning, Implementing, Monitoring and Evaluating [3].

Borrowing from the fields of Cognitive Psychology and Adult Education, the metacognitive strategies were broken down into planning, monitoring and evaluating in an applied linguistic context.

Planning phase includes a systematic WIN (Wants, Interests and Needs) analysis; diagnostic activities; task analysis; strategy analysis; material and resources selection and management; and daily/weekly language-specific target setting. Selecting the kinds of goal-oriented activities that students will engage in for an allotted period of time is important, but equally important is that these targets are what are referred to as SMART target -Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely[2]

Implementing phase deals with finding an appropriate balance of 'prepare, use and review' activities taken from the PURE model:

Prepare encourages students to activate existing input and notice new target language. It can also include controlled or supported practice (eg for goals of listening or spoken pronunciation, this could involve using a script or subtitles)[5].

Use relates to using language in the genre of the goal. If new language has been learned as part of Prepare, in Use, learners aim to use what they learned. It is important to note that Use does not necessarily mean 'produce'. 'Use' means interacting with the language in the genre of the goal, so. for listening to lectures, Use □ 'listening to lectures'[6]. .

Review often refers to checking what has been learned or activated in the 'prepare' stage at a later date, and to check whether anything has been forgotten.

Evaluate– involves two distinct aspects: progress and process. Is the learner's language improving (progress) because the language learning plan is effective (process)? 'Evaluate' is there to clarify that the goal-oriented language skills are improving and verify that there is a connection between Prepare and Use – that what is prepared is then used[2].

The right balance of PURE is vital. That balance depends very much on individual learners and their goals. With learner – rather than teacher – evaluation, the learners see the difference their actions are having on their goal attainment. Through this heightened awareness, they can consider what they have to do next and take more responsibility for their language learning outcomes.

Monitoring breaks down into noticing strengths and weaknesses, adjusting, modifying, continuing, transferring and halting specific learning activities (and the use of resources and materials) as the language is being used. The monitoring process can happen during almost any part of the learning, once it is underway. It has shown to be particularly successful when learners talk or write about their learning activities in light of their goals and weekly objectives. This is why monitoring

and reflection are so intricately connected [1].

Monitoring is similar to noticing, but it goes beyond 'being aware' and requires further step:

When monitoring, it is not enough to notice what is being done well or what needs to change (this is just the first step).

The act of monitoring implies taking some kind of practical action when change is required. This action is then reflected in subsequent planning and implementation[5].

Evaluating is an analysis of two parts: language learning progress and language learning process:

Has the learner improved their language performance?

Have the activities and resources contributed optimally, or are changes required?

Obviously, this evaluation needs to be done regularly throughout the course – not only to allow for modifications to be made to learning plans, but also for learners to realise that what they are doing (or not doing!) impacts on their progress. In addition, if students can notice that they are becoming more proficient and perhaps even reaching their goals, this can really boost motivation and develop pride in self-progress.

Students evaluate at the end of a whole course of self-directed language learning – to get a more holistic view of their progress and the whole process.

The model of PIME (as outlined above), combined with the practical activities, reflecting the four principles of the Autonomy Approach (student-led, guided, focused and collaborative) in language learning.

The four principles of the Autonomy Approach are:

1. It is **student-led**: Students make the decisions about their own learning. Under these conditions, the students take ownership of their learning. Some decisions may be taken by the group of participants when it affects the whole group, but most will be for individual students to make. After all, they are deciding about what they will do outside the classroom. Personal decision are much more likely to be followed through than those imposed by others, and even the act of making these decisions known to others reinforces the likelihood that the actions will be carried through [3].

It is **guided**: Through activities and discussion, students are guided through a systematic cycle of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluating, where linguistic progress is genuinely relevant to each learner's wants, interests and needs (WIN)– rather than a teacher's perception of these. When learners are short of ideas, choices can be 'introduced' – but they remain genuine choices, and the teacher can ask more about their selection so that informed choice becomes integral. It is important to encourage students at all time to make principle decisions about their own learning and to think through the consequences of these [3].

It is ***focused***: Through WIN analysis, diagnostic and other focus activities, it becomes much easier for students to consider their own strengths and weaknesses, prioritise from these and clearly identify relevant language and resources. As a result, students can choose what to learn and, perhaps more importantly, what not to learn. This is more efficient way of language learning than allotting time to learning language which may not be relevant to an individual's goals. The use of targets can also focus learning further and lead to motivation derived from achievement and perceptions of competence – as targets are met and goals become closer[4].

It is ***collaborative***: Where possible, students are encouraged to work with each other inside the classroom, and to learn with classmates or other outside, too. Establishing a dynamic whereby individuals cooperate to exchange information and succeed through interaction moves the onus away from teachers and advisors to provide the answers, and guides learners to look to the wider community and the resources at their own disposal to develop their language and their language learning.

This reinforcement of 'community' for the sharing of ideas and experience related to language learning also provides a social context for learning and critical thinking, highlighting and balancing the social aspect of learning with the individualised aspect of personal learning goals[3].

For new approaches to take root and blossom, they need to be shown to work, and work well.

Guidance. There needs to be guidance, and spare for experimentation and exploration. Teachers need to create the sort of environment where opportunities for success are maximised, and when things don't go exactly according to plan there still remains a variety of opportunities for learning and development:

step changes in learning and development often involve plans shifting.

reconceptualisation requires effort, and the reward is improved ability and skills [1].

Guidance can uncover new possibilities, support transitions, and promote responsibility for learning. The reason for encouraging more student accountability for language learning is straightforward – teachers can teach and encourage learning, but only students can actively engage with the language and develop their skills.

Expertise. Nevertheless, far from negating the role of the teacher, the Autonomy Approach focuses directly on the role of the teacher as an expert in learning who understand the cyclical nature of learning, who is essential for ensuring the dynamic of the learning community, and who can guide through input and feedback. The teacher is crucial to help students think through their

language learning decision, so that what they choose to do is effective in the pursuit of their goals. Teacher guidance using the Autonomy Approach is fundamental:

It helps students to reflect on their actions and the consequences.

It helps them realign their language learning with their goals [3].

The teacher-expert therefore helps learners make informed choices that lead to more effective language learning that takes into account styles, lifestyles, wants, interests and needs.

Mediation. The type of ‘mediated’ guidance we envision in applying the Autonomy Approach will work towards creating a space for interaction – between teachers, reflecting on activities, resources used, progress made, etc.

Interaction plays an essential role in student development:

Helping them to remain motivated.

Helping them to co-construct and perceive the relevance of what they are doing and thinking in light of their learning goals [1].

Through interaction, ideas get externalised –put out into the air so that they become clearer and more concrete –and this externalisation (usually in the form of dialogue) is how a lot of ideas get modified, refined and, consequently, converted into appropriate action.

Experience. We noticed that many students are motivated to develop their language learning skills, but do not always have the knowledge, initially to be effective. Consequently, they may invest time and energy in language learning activities that will not yield the results they are looking for or, at least, not without a lot of wasted time[4]:

We have worked with students who want to improve test scores and plan to work their way through a pile of past exam papers, without considering their strengths and weaknesses as they plough through the tests. It may make a difference to their test results eventually, but we have found it much more effective to ask students to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses, prioritise the focus of their learning by considering the time cost and the score benefit of strengthening each area, and then develop a plan of action [4].

We have had other students who have been taught to manipulate grammar at a high level, but are ‘false beginners’ when speaking or listening. Many of these students choose oral skills as a goal, but then revert to learning activities that helped them to become so knowledgeable about grammar.

The self-directed language learning activities we use in *The Autonomy Approach* hinge on giving learners enough time and space to try out different ideas –we believe that with experience comes development[2].

Change. However, when the *mediated guidance* and the *experience* come together in a way that relates directly to the learner, we have seen evidence of transformation taking place –positive changes in learners’

characteristics, including how they see themselves as 'independent' learners and how they behave:

They may start slowly but, eventually, they become more aware of what they are capable of, and also what this new way of learning can offer them.

They start making connections, and develop an understanding of how to transfer certain learning skills to other language-specific areas [6].

Once self-administered and self-assessed diagnostic activities become a 'learning habit' (a positive consequence of successful experiences and results with activities), then this idea – this practice – is carried over to other areas of their learning. [5]

Conclusion. Metacognitive knowledge is a central component of self-directed language learning, and traditionally breaks down into three main types: Person knowledge, Task knowledge and Strategy knowledge. During the planning process, *task knowledge* (facilitating the analysis of particular tasks) will assist learners in organising what information they are supposed to learn from a task (and judge if this information is congruent with what they want to learn). It also helps break down the task into smaller parts, highlighting what learners have to do and what potential problems the task presents. *Person knowledge* can play a role in helping learners identify what kinds of things they are interested in (activities they enjoy or don't enjoy) or what they know and what they don't know about a topic or language skill.

During the implementing process, *strategy knowledge* is evident in the actual execution or use of strategies that deal directly with the challenges of a learning plan or a specific task. Also, strategy knowledge can help learners assess the appropriateness of adopting particular learning strategies for particular tasks.

The options afforded by the Autonomy Approach should allow learners to develop a personalised syllabus of their own, consider the consequences, focus on what to learn and interact with each other where possible. Teachers still have a crucial role to play in guiding their learners in the pursuit of their goals.

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Кобилянська І. В. Метакогнітивні знання як центральний компонент самостійного вивчення іноземної мови в процесі навчання при перенесенні відповідальності з викладача на студента.

Стаття присвячена темі метакогнітивних знань як центрального компонента самостійного вивчення іноземної мови, що надає нам не лише базу знань (теорію) для ефективного індивідуалізованого навчання, але й необхідні щоденні навички (практику). Оскільки вплив цих знань (переконань) відіграє таку важливу роль, важливо уточнити, про що саме йдеться. Традиційно метакогнітивні знання поділяються на три основні типи: знання про особу, знання про завдання та знання про стратегію.

Дослідження та опис метакогнітивних знань – переконань, які студенти та вчителі мають про вивчення мови – є важливим компонентом Автономного підходу.

Зміни в мовній освіті, що відбуваються протягом багатьох років – потребуючи від студентів стати більш активними учасниками свого навчання – вимагають змін ролей як від вчителя, так і від студента: зміни всіх наших сприйнятих та очікувань, а також того, як ми готуємо та застосовуємо ці нові способи викладання та навчання. Це твердження може здатися очевидним, але часто зміни, що відбуваються в класах та навчальних закладах по всьому світу, впроваджуються без згоди тих, хто вивчає мову. Студентів під час вивчення мови, не завжди інформують, чому їх просять переглянути свою участь у навчанні, і навіть коли робляться спроби підвищити обізнаність про те, чому було б гарною ідеєю взяти на себе більше контролю, студентам рідко показують, як це зробити.

Використовуючи все те, що вважається важливим у сфері автономного вивчення мови, як способу ефективного, самостійного її вивчення, а не як спосіб розвитку автономії, можна зосередитися на самостійному вивченні мови, розвитку цільової мови та наданні учням можливості приймати обґрунтовані рішення щодо власного навчання. Результати студентів зосереджуються на мовних навичках, здібностях вивчення мови та їхньому розумінню, доступних ресурсів і способів їх використання для досягнення своїх цілей у вивченні мови.

Отримуючи чіткіше розуміння переконань студентами щодо вивчення мови, ми отримуємо можливість зазирнути в різноманітний досвід наших учнів та критичні детермінанти, які впливають на їхню поведінку та мотивують її. Іншими словами, якщо ми підвищимо обізнаність про те, що учні (і вчителі) думають про вивчення мови, тоді ми зможемо розвинути більш тонке розуміння успішності окремих осіб у навчанні – і працювати над наданням більш персоналізованого та ефективного керівництва.

Автономне навчання – це процес, у якому індивідууми беруть на себе ініціативу без допомоги інших у діагностиці своїх навчальних потреб, формулюванні цілей, визначенні людських та матеріальних ресурсів та оцінці результатів навчання.

Ключові слова: метакогнітивні знання, стратегічні знання, самостійне навчання, автономний підхід, вивчення іноземної мови.

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