

# Metacognitive strategy instruction in L2 reading

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## Abstract

Recent research in L2 language education has begun to recognize that *metacognition* plays a significant role in L2 learning processes. These studies have investigated metacognitive awareness of learning strategies and the relationships among perceived strategy use, actual strategy use, and L2 performance. This paper reports a classroom-based, longitudinal study of the effect of metacognitive strategy instruction on reading comprehension.

To achieve the purpose of the study, two groups of EFL university students were assigned to an experimental and a control group. Both groups received instruction on reading strategies through a ten-week period. However, only the experimental group received metacognitive strategy training during this period. The results showed that: (1) explicit metacognitive strategy training has a significant positive effect on reading comprehension; (2) although all subjects in the experimental group showed considerable gains, lower-ability subjects seemed to benefit the most from strategy training.

Strategy training research so far has seemed to focus on the cognitive aspects of language learning processes. Relatively little research on metacognitive strategy training has been done in an L2 context. However, this study showed a potential role of metacognition in effective L2 learning. If students could reflect upon their learning processes properly, they would become better prepared to make conscious decisions about what they can do to improve their learning.