Capitolul 21 - MODALITĂŢI DE DEZVOLTARE A CAPACITĂŢILOR METACOGNITIVE DE PREDARE A LIMBII ENGLEZE PRIN ÎNVĂŢAREA PERSONALIZATĂ

Chapter 21 - WAYS OF DEVELOP METACOGNITIVE ABILITIES FOR TEACHING ENGLISH THROUGH PERSONALIZED LEARNING

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Abstract

Teaching English through personalized learning means encouraging students to actively participate in the educational process. It refers to the student-centred instructional process, harmonized with learning needs, adjusted to the learning preferences and specific interests of students, the focus being on the formation of skills and exploring meta-cognitive potential.

Keywords: personalized learning, competence, linguistic competence, teaching strategies, meta cognitive potential.

JEL: A 20, A 29

Introduction

"Personalized learning" is a concept that derived from the concepts of "individualization" and "differentiation". It is adapted to the specifics of the student, in accordance with his teaching-learning needs. Differentiated learning is tailored to the learning preferences of a group of students. Meanwhile personalized learning adapts not only the learning objectives, the content, but also the methodology and the learning pace of each student. As for the individualization, it refers to a set of teaching strategies that guarantee the achievement of the same learning objectives by adjusting the pace of the student's progress. While differentiated learning assumes that training process is adapted to the learning preferences of different students, the goals developed for the learning process are the same for all learners, but the method of approaching the training process varies depending on the preferences of the group.

In modern teaching, the educational vectors change their functionality; the student becomes the subject and partner of education, because the student together with the teacher forms an educational community. To make English language teaching more efficient through personalized learning, the subject becomes a partner in the teaching process and in his own training process. Teaching English through personalized learning directs students to take responsibility for acquiring knowledge, leading the teacher to become a skilled organizer of learning experiences. The directions in which the student is oriented in the personalized learning of the English language are:

- self-fulfillment through active participation in the learning process;
- communicate and actively participate in training, self-training, be active in the relationship with teachers and members of the working group;
- participate in the development of the learning plan in terms of strategy, methods, preferred learning style and pace;
- to make decisions regarding his/her learning path.

The role of the English teacher is to move from the status of provider of knowledge to that of co-participant in the knowledge delivery process, giving more responsibility to the students,

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turning them into active "seekers" of knowledge. Another aspect, which must be changed in the university environment, is the replacement of lectures with activities based on active learning methods. Even if various working techniques can be introduced to involve students in the activity, it still remains a passive approach, with the student being a receptive subject. Another role of the English teacher is to integrate self-paced learning programs. The teacher organizes the learning situations in such a way that the tasks are completed in a reasonable period of time. As well to organize cooperation in working group situations. The efficiency of teaching English through personalized learning must fulfil two principles: that of teaching a content (achieving teaching in the cognitive domain and in the meta-cognitive domain) and that of forming a way of thinking necessary to accomplish the proposed task.

The personalized learning model emphasizes the formation of the partnership between teacher, parent, pupil, student and the educational unit. Being also a theory of 21st century education, which, through its flexible, differentiated and optional program, recognizes skills, passions and requirements of each student, as well as the barriers and challenges of learning. These requirements reveal the need of the involvement of students in the didactic activity, the creation of a smaller student groups, the implementation of active-participative methods, respect for different learning styles, different learning environments, free access to information technologies, the possibility of choosing/adjusting the curriculum.

Teaching English through personalized learning means encouraging students to actively participate in the educational process, it refers to the student-centred instructional process, harmonized with learning needs, adjusted to the learning preferences and specific interests of students, with the emphasis on the formation of skills and exploring meta-cognitive potential. Metacognition draws the student's attention to the awareness of the learning process, the formation of consciousness, "by calling for self-control, self-appreciation and self-improvement of one's own cognition" (Kurubacak et ah, 1, p. 176).

Joita points out that it is natural for the personalization of cognition and meta-cognition, it addresses to the awareness of one's own ways of processing information, to the individual particularities of their processing, organization, application [3, p. 190]. Applying the principles of differentiation and pedagogical constructivism, the teacher must design his didactic strategy so that every student benefits from his formative involvement, and learning becomes a constructive process.

Making English language teaching more efficient through personalized learning also focuses on leveraging meta-cognition, which consists in training or modelling meta-cognitive activities. Meta-cognition is multifunctional being related to cognition, monitoring, regulating and controlling cognitive processes, motivation, emotions, behaviour. G. Schraw highlights three principles related to meta-cognition (Sǫitu and Cherciu, 2006, pp. 113-125):

I. Knowledge of cognition and the regulation of cognition. Knowledge about cognition - is knowledge about oneself, about one's own mental processes, the factors that influence one's performance. Procedural knowledge shows the way of performing tasks, achieved through strategies. The regulation of cognition is carried out in the following stages:

- planning (selection of appropriate strategies and allocation of resources);
- monitoring is a periodic engagement in self-testing during learning;
- the assessment consists in estimating the results and efficiency of the learning process.

IT The relationship between meta-cognition and cognitive abilities. Metacognition is related to cognition, monitoring, regulating and controlling cognitive processes, motivation,

emotions, behaviour. Metacognitive knowledge and regulation differ qualitatively from cognitive ones - they are more durable and general than cognitive ones.

III. Basic strategies for improving meta-cognition, which include stimulating the construction of new knowledge, explaining conditional knowledge, automating monitored heuristics, and creating a motivational learning environment.

An important role in the development of metacognitive knowledge and strategies is played by reflection and extended practice, when the teacher presents systematic opportunities for students to reflect on their successes and failures. Firstly, the importance of meta-cognitive knowledge and regulation is highlighted, secondly, the teacher shapes his own meta-cognitive matrix, and thirdly, he allocates additional time for discussion and reflection.

The improvement of knowledge about cognition is achieved through the assessment matrix of opportunities to capitalize on metacognitive strategies for the efficiency of language teaching English - Strategy Evaluation Matrix (Adapted from Metacognition for the classroom and beyond: Differentiation and support for learners, 2009), which provides the information regarding meta-cognitive strategies. The matrix can be used throughout the academic year, but most of the time, students, individually or in groups, complete each row with the meta-cognitive strategies used throughout the course.

Table 1. English - Strategy Evaluation Matrix (Adapted from Metacognition for the classroom and beyond: Differentiation and support for learners, 2009)

Strategy	How to use	When to use	What is it for?
Skim/Survey	Search for headings, highlighted words, previews, and summaries.	Before you read a long piece of text. Gives an overview of the key concepts, helps you to focus on the important points	Before you read a long piece of text. Gives an overview of the key concepts, helps you to focus on the important points
Slow down	Stop, read and think about information.	When information seems important. If you realize you don't understand what you have just read.	Improves your focus on important information.
(Activating previous knowledge)	Stop and think about what you already know about a topic.	Before you read something or do an unfamiliar task.	Makes new information easier to remember and allows you to see links between subjects. Information is less daunting if you already know something about the topic.
Fit Ideas Together	Relate main ideas to one another. Look for themes that connect the main ideas, or a conclusion.	When thinking about complex information, when deep understanding is needed	Once you know how ideas are related they are easier to remember than learning as if they are separate facts. Also helps to understand them more deeply
Diagramele (Diagrams)	Identify main ideas, connect them, classify ideas, decide which information is most important and which is supporting	When there is a lot of factual information that is interrelated.	Helps to identify main ideas and organize them into categories. Reduces memory load. May be easier to visualize.

The efficiency of teaching English through personalized learning consists both in the capitalization of knowledge and the capitalization of metacognitive strategies for regulating cognition (planning, information, understanding, development, evaluation) and meta-cognitive strategies specific to reading, writing, listening activities. Each student forms his own matrix of meta-cognitive strategies and meta-cognitive "infrastructure". The metacognitive strategy represents the totality of the processes and cognitive mechanisms of regulation, knowledge, design

and evaluation of the cognitive system or represents a specific mental action of processing oriented towards awareness.

Afterwards, we present the ways of developing meta-cognitive capacities, explored by M. V. Veenman, who makes English language teaching more efficient through personalized learning at the university level (Veenman, 2022, pp. 207-208):

- *Group discussions* help students to become aware of their own learning strategies and attitudes. Through group discussions, we get an exchange of opinions, views, perceptions, hypotheses, answer options, which depend on the students' ability to dialogue.

- *Concept maps* call for creative thinking, which establishes causal connections of mental knowledge, meta-cognitive strategies, and the formation of new concepts. Concept maps are especially used when studying grammar topics.

- *Self-questioning* is a questionnaire used to clarify and obtain more knowledge-building answers.

- *Structured or semi-structured interviews* (structured and semi-structured interviews) provide information on the strategies used, methods, skills and meta-cognitive behaviour of students. The structured interview consists in applying a questionnaire, the semi-structured interview establishes the themes on the basis of which the interview will be conducted.

- The *reflective journal* is the tool that presents the ways of using learning strategies and the learning process. It presents a reflection on one's own learning process, a dialogue of the student with himself. The role of the reflective diary is one of an advisor, in which the student creates the optimal condition for expressing their own states, goals in relation to the process of reading, writing and listening, by performing self-analysis with reference to the meta-cognitive strategies used.

- In *reflective reading,* the reception of the text is done not only through a reading passive, but by engaging in reading. Reflective reading allows students to converse, to involve in an exchange of opinions on the matter read, written or heard and look for solutions.

-*Modelling (explicit teacher modelling)* makes students' mental processes real and visible. In this way, the teacher explains out loud what happens in the brain while memorizing new expressions, reading the text, writing or listening to a message.

- The *think-aloud protocol* is the recording of thoughts students while performing an activity, calling on several operations of thinking: synthesis, analysis, generalization, abstraction, comparison.

- The *case study* has a significant value in the selection of real cases (descriptive case, authentic case, interactive case, problem-situation), develop the skills of critical examination of problem-solving strategies, identify deficiencies that cause low results.

Conclusion

From the above analysis, it follows that the efficiency of English language teaching through personalized learning from the perspective of capitalizing on knowledge and metacognitive strategies consists in: selecting an appropriate capacity and strategy; naming and entering the capability into a category; capacity building through think-alouds; guided practice of the skill with a partner or in small groups; explaining how and when the metacognitive ability or strategy can be used; continuous training in efficient use of capacity.

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