

## Improving English Speaking Skills in a College General English Course Using Metacognitive Strategies

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This study aimed to assess the effectiveness of metacognitive methods in college general English classes to improve students' communication skills and metacognitive awareness. The approach involved structuring learning activities where students adapted movie dialogues, practiced roles, collaborated with peers, and received feedback on problem-solving. The results showed significant improvements in speaking skills, with pre-assessment scores of 24.79 increasing to 27.17 in the post-assessment ( $p < .01$ ). These findings indicate notable gains in fluency and accuracy in English communication, as well as improved attitudes towards the language. Although there were improvements in post-assessment scores for metacognitive processes, these changes were not statistically significant. This study highlights the importance of incorporating diverse learning methods into college general English classes, particularly emphasizing the value of metacognitive techniques. These methods help students apply classroom learning to real-world social situations and enhance their communication abilities.

**Key words:** metacognitive methods, communication skills, speaking skills, fluency and accuracy, college general English classes

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

It is clear that English is a very important language for international communication. The importance of English has been recognized in Korea for a long time, and continuous efforts and numerous studies have been conducted to improve students' language skills. Nevertheless, there is still a thirst for effective English education that is relevant to the modern era and can improve English skills and communicate smoothly using effective English learning methods.

College general English programs are changing from teacher-centered and translation-oriented classes to more practical speaking-oriented classes that promote communication. Many existing English programs still use teacher-centered teaching methods. If learners have difficulty using their speaking skills in real-life situations outside the classroom, they may be practicing their speaking and listening skills using irrelevant materials that do not reflect their needs. Therefore, there is a priority on teaching and learning that are centered on learner activity. This allows students to actively participate using English in conversations directly applicable to their daily lives and provides opportunities for genuine communication. As a result, learners will acquire practical communication skills that can be immediately applied to real-life situations.

Because most curricula are organized according to school situations and convenience rather than learner needs, student satisfaction with college English classes is relatively low (Kim, 2022). Many colleges are following the trend of emphasizing communication-oriented English education that emphasizes the function of English as a language. They are expanding English conversation subjects into the general English curriculum and additionally requiring a certain level of recognized English proficiency for graduation. Each school is implementing a mandatory graduation certification system to encourage students to learn English on their own. As such, the importance of English to college students is increasingly emphasized, and learners' demands for learning are also increasing.

Considering the current situation, the college general English curriculum should be implemented to properly recognize the learning needs and necessities of learners and provide highly satisfying and effective education (Kim & Han, 2021). Providing students with a single-level general English program without considering the learners' various language levels can have a negative impact on students' learning achievement and interest, and it is difficult for teachers to know what level students are at. This may also be inefficient in terms of educational effectiveness (Seo, 2018). Therefore, it is important to improve the quality of college English education programs, and more effective and efficient programs that can optimize learners' language acquisition are urgently needed (Seo, Kim, & Han, 2006).

From the perspective of education in the era of the Fourth Revolution, universities should pay more attention to fostering creative thinking processes through learners' understanding

and practical application in general English education. Currently, college students are used to learning in an teacher-centered environment rather than a learning environment in which they explore academics on their own, so it can be very difficult for them to think for themselves and try creative approaches. In other words, although listening, speaking, reading, and writing are easily assessed by teachers, they remain at a simple comprehension level and do not effectively promote language acquisition or comprehensive output (Krashen, 2004).

Students should be provided with many opportunities to actively participate in continuous and progressive critical thinking, and teachers should systematically structure learning activities to enable learners to think creatively. In addition, we need to design classes that move away from teacher-centered classes and provide opportunities for students to actively use English and participate in team activities, so they can solve problems with each other by communicating using the English they have learned. The reason why English learners are unable to use the knowledge they have acquired in real situations is not because they lack English skills, but because they have difficulty using the knowledge accurately. In other words, this can be seen as a lack of metacognitive ability in terms of proficient application of English mainly because there is no experience of actual situations in which English must be used.

Metacognition is a concept derived from Baker and Brown (1984) and Flavell's (1987) research on child development. Metacognition is the mental act of evaluating oneself and discerning one's level of awareness and lack of understanding (Chick, 2013). Flavell (1979) defines metacognition as a higher-order cognitive process in which learners actively monitor and manage their cognitive states and mental processes. In other words, metacognition refers to a learner's ability to understand and evaluate their own learning process and make informed decisions about learning strategies. The most recent OECD Education 2030 framework argues that metacognition is important in preparing young people for the future.

Recently, interest in metacognition has been growing in Korea as well. In Korea, metacognition is mainly promoted as a strategy for effective learning. Metacognition refers to recognizing and distinguishing between what you know and what you do not know. In order to learn efficiently within a given time, we must check whether we are aware of the necessary resources and strategies, and review what went well and what was lacking during or after learning. People with excellent metacognitive abilities recognize and acknowledge their own strengths and weaknesses, know exactly what to do and how to do it, and achieve good results while developing through this.

The purpose of this study is to propose an effective teaching and learning method so that learners can use their metacognitive abilities efficiently and speak English fluently for practical communication. The purpose of using metacognition is to improve language fluency by accurately recognizing what you know and what you do not know, and learning effectively by supplementing what you do not know. Although research on fluent English communication and the importance of metacognition have always been emphasized, there is

not enough specific research on the effective use of metacognition.

Therefore, the need for this study is to provide explicit guidance on the effective use of metacognition in terms of improving communication skills in college general English courses. To summarize the terms related to metacognition used in this study, ‘metacognitive ability’ is an overall competency related to metacognition, ‘metacognitive skill’ is a specific technique or behavior derived from metacognitive ability, and ‘metacognitive strategy’ is a systematic way to effectively apply metacognitive skills.

### 1.1. Research Objective and Content

The purpose of this study is to propose an effective teaching and learning method so that learners can efficiently use their metacognitive skills and speak English fluently for practical communication. The study seeks to enhance learners’ proficiency in spoken English through the use of customized speaking tactics and engagement in targeted speaking activities. The study focuses on the introduction of a metacognition-based teaching approach in typical college general English courses and metacognition strategies are examined in relation to learners’ competency in spoken English.

### 1.2. Research Questions

The research questions based on the objectives of this study are as follows:

- 1) What impact does the use of metacognitive strategies have on the speaking proficiency of college general English learners in speaking classes?
- 2) What is the impact of using metacognitive strategies in college general English speaking classes on learners’ metacognitive abilities?
- 3) What is the correlation between metacognitive enhancement and speaking classes that apply metacognitive strategies?

## 2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

### 2.1. What is Metacognition?

Metacognition involves recognizing and understanding my thoughts, knowledge, and cognitive abilities by knowing what I know and what I do not know. Metacognition, as defined by John H. Flavell (1979), refers to the cognitive process of introspecting and evaluating one’s own thoughts. It involves the capacity to comprehend and differentiate

between one's own knowledge and one's own lack of understanding. He defines metacognition as the ability to understand, regulate, and oversee one's own cognitive processes by applying information, experiences, objectives, and tactics related with metacognition. He also identified three crucial aspects that impact cognitive activity and outcomes: the individual, the task, and the technique. Individuals need to have self-awareness, understand the tasks they are dealing with, and use appropriate techniques, therefore demonstrating the influence of these aspects on different results.

Metacognition, as described by Brown (1987), refers to an individual's consciousness and comprehension of their own knowledge, cognitive processes, and their ability to regulate and oversee them. Metacognition plays a vital role in the learning and problem-solving process by allowing learners to identify their learning preferences, strengths, shortcomings, and effective tactics (Brown, 1987). Both Flavell (1979) and Brown (1987) emphasize the importance of metacognition in comprehending and efficiently employing cognitive processes. Research on metacognition has brought about significant progress in various fields. The main focus of research is to find comprehensive knowledge about metacognition and the need to monitor and control cognitive processes.

Current research is thoroughly examining the practical impact of metacognition on teaching and learning outcomes. Initial research examined the influence of metacognitive methods on learning and found that students who were able to establish goals, track their progress, and assess their results experienced improved academic performance (Phakiti, 2007; Zhang & Goh, 2006). Research (Phakiti, 2007; Zhang & Goh, 2006) also investigates the influence of metacognitive methods on improving proficiency in specific areas, such as understanding written language and solving mathematical problems. These findings emphasize the crucial importance of metacognitive education in empowering learners to efficiently regulate their cognitive processes.

In education, self-assessment and peer-assessment are highly regarded evaluation procedures that greatly enhance learners' metacognitive abilities. Self-assessment enables learners to comprehend their learning circumstances, establish objectives, and use self-regulated learning procedures (Boud, 1995). Moreover, the act of engaging in a reciprocal exchange of remarks among individuals of equal standing encourages active involvement and nurtures the development of knowledge and abilities. Peer-assessment enables the concurrent assessment and enhancement of work by integrating other viewpoints and contributions (Topping, 1998). This fosters the establishment of social and collaborative learning environments in which learners generate assessment standards that align with their learning objectives. This study examines the relationship between metacognitive methods, self-assessment, and peer-assessment in order to improve educational outcomes. These attempts seek to assist learners in efficiently controlling and enhancing their cognitive processes in diverse learning settings.

## 2.2. Effective English Communication

The key to English proficiency lies in the ability to speak English fluently. According to the 2022 revised curriculum, the ultimate goal of English is to develop the ability to communicate in English with people from around the world with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds in preparation for a diverse future society (Ministry of Education, 2022). Among the detailed goals for cultivating English communication skills related to students' lives, first, communicate in English in a cooperative manner regarding daily life and various topics according to the purpose of participation and situation. Second, based on interest and interest in English, students identify the need to use English on their own, set learning goals, and continue learning English in a self-directed manner using various learning strategies.

English communicative competency refers to the proficiency in successfully communicating in English across many contexts encountered in everyday life. Moreover, it classifies English comprehension skill and English expression skill as secondary components. The plan proposes immersing learners in diverse real-life circumstances and promoting English conversation according to the unique environment and objective. English education in Korea prioritizes a student-centered strategy that diverges from traditional passive learning through lectures and instead encourages active learner participation to improve conversational skills.

The concept of 'learner-centered teaching' does not contradict 'teacher-centered' or 'subject-centered' approaches. Instead, it highlights the constructive roles of educators and learners, as well as the content being taught. Hence, it is important for educators to understand the underlying factors behind students' speaking difficulties and help them overcome these obstacles using teaching techniques that create dynamic, learner-centered classrooms. Swain (1985) highlighted the significance of output in connection to the Output Hypothesis, proposing that in second language learning, both understandable input and understandable output are essential.

Acquiring language skills cannot be only accomplished by being exposed to language. Alternatively, learners are required to provide logical and organized output in order to enhance their communication skills. A common cause of students' difficulties in speaking English is sometimes related to a deficiency in experiencing extensive practical immersion in the language. In countries such as Korea, where English is taught as a foreign language (EFL), the chances to participate in English conversations are primarily restricted to classroom settings. As a result, it is advisable for educators to incorporate oral learning activities that facilitate genuine conversations, rather than relying solely on lectures or repetitive exercises (Rost, 1990). Folse (2006) contended that engaging in purposeful speaking tasks using genuine learning resources can improve speaking proficiency.

According to this research, the most efficient approach to teaching speaking skills is to prioritize communication and offer learners many chances to engage in genuine discussions. It is essential to set goals that match the student's abilities and implement activities such as practice, performance, participation, observation, and evaluation. Additionally, it is important to include learners' metacognition and provide opportunities for speaking practice using realistic, relevant, and easily understandable materials.

### 2.3. Metacognitive Application in a Constructivist Context

According to the objectivist approach, based on behaviorist psychology, information is acquired passively through repetitive practice tasks guided by a teacher (Cho, 2001). However, the constructivist approach that emerged in the 1960s defines knowledge as the independent creation of learners (Piaget, 1973). Vygotsky (1978) emphasized the importance of cultural and social influences on cognitive development and argued for the effectiveness of learning through social interaction, particularly emphasizing the benefits of collaborative learning with peers. In constructivist theory, the role of students in the educational process is greatly emphasized (Brook & Brooks, 1993). Therefore, a change from a teacher-centered approach to a learner-centered approach begins. Constructivism, which is based on the notion that knowledge is created rather than revealed, strongly opposes the idea of accepting objective, absolute facts without question. Because constructivist theory views knowledge as a constructive process, the active participation of individual students in knowledge creation is of utmost importance.

Learner-centered education can examine the significance of metacognitive methods through the practice of constructivism. Driscoll (2005) explains that both Piaget's cognitive constructivism and Vygotsky's social constructivism emphasize the importance of education that is related to actual learner activities. Metacognition from a constructivist perspective is essential to improve learning outcomes. This refers to learners' abilities, such as understanding and control of their own learning process, that were previously neglected in traditional learning environments. Metacognitive, or cognitive abilities are important for setting learning goals, selecting effective learning strategies, and evaluating and adjusting the learning process. These abilities are essential for modifying educational environments and improving academic achievement. In order to appropriately utilize metacognition, learners go beyond passively accepting knowledge from educators, understand their own unique characteristics, and actively create information of personal significance. Active participation in discussions and collaborations with peers can improve learners' metacognitive abilities. It is also important to prioritize evaluation of the ability to effectively apply acquired knowledge and information rather than relying on existing standardized tests (Johnson, 2004).

Welling (2007) made a comprehensive argument for ‘creative cognition’, which includes several cognitive elements that play an important role in fostering creative thinking. These include personal memory, mental picture processing, logical reasoning, abstraction, and integration and reorganization of cognitive processes. Creative cognition and metacognitive strategies have a complementary relationship, and creative thinking can be promoted through metacognitive strategy processes such as self-awareness and reflection activities.

In particular, we argue that cognitive characteristics are closely linked to metacognitive methods that help learners understand and effectively manage their cognitive processes. Acting activities integrate various cognitive inputs such as memory, imagery, multiple representations, and reasoning, and the development of educational resources that improve cognitive abilities is closely related to promoting metacognitive thinking. These learning activities provide an opportunity to use video to improve communication skills and gain real-life experience. Through acting activities, learners can effectively construct and utilize the language or expressions they have acquired while actively participating in learning (Kim & Kim, 2005). In addition, videos have an important learning effect that ultimately promotes motivation in learners and improves metacognitive learning results (Mayer, 2001). Even in Korea, there is a strong argument that students with metacognitive abilities can achieve excellent academic performance. It aroused interest. Additionally, several studies have revealed a correlation between learners’ metacognition and learning outcomes (Schraw, & Dennison, 1994).

#### 2.4. Previous Research on the Learning Effects of Metacognition

Looking at recent studies demonstrating the effectiveness of using metacognitive methods in the field of English education, Lee and Lee (2020) monitored learners’ activities throughout speaking activities in a study that investigated the impact of these strategies on college students’ speaking skills. and argued that analysis helps to improve learners’ speaking skills. In other words, students who used metacognitive methods were found to improve their ability to structure and express their thoughts efficiently. A study by Mackey and Goo (2015) looked at language communication using learners’ metacognitive skills. The research results showed that learners who actively used metacognitive methods significantly improved their speaking skills.

In 2021, Hiver and Al-Hoorie conducted a meta-analysis to determine the impact of metacognitive abilities on improving English speaking skills. with a particular focus on their role in the planning and evaluation processes. Similarly, Jeon (2023) evaluated the effectiveness of a speaking training program that incorporated a cognitive focus approach for middle school students, demonstrating the effectiveness of teaching techniques in improving learners' speaking skills in terms of speaking quality and confidence.



### **3. METHODOLOGY**

An investigation was carried out to analyze the impact of including metacognitive strategies in a speaking course with a group of 90 college students. The research aimed to observe the improvements in the learners' abilities during the course. The task of reimagining their own narratives following a film was devised to enhance learners' speaking proficiency by employing everyday vocabulary and utilizing it adeptly in many contexts.

#### **3.1. Subjects**

The study consisted of a total of 90 students taking a general English course at H University located in A City. Prior to commencing the study, students were provided with details on the research goal, and a consent statement was included at the start of the questionnaire to acquire their explicit agreement for the utilization of their data in the research. The lessons were incorporated into the standard curriculum, with a total duration of 3 hours each week divided into two 75-minute sessions. The students' ages spanned from 20 to 25, and they represented a diverse variety of academic disciplines, including humanities, arts, natural sciences, engineering, and physical education.

#### **3.2. Approach**

From March to June 2023, The present study was conducted to examine the effects of a speaking class that employed metacognitive methods on students' metacognitive skills and performance in spoken English. Moreover, the study sought to investigate the relationship between these features. The main goal was to improve English speaking abilities by using metacognitive strategies, incorporating acting exercises, and promoting collaborative learning. Acting activities were employed during the research period to enhance learners' self-assessment skills, allowing them to evaluate their English-speaking competency in real-time and pinpoint particular areas for enhancement. These exercises fostered active participation among team members, establishing collaborative learning environments where students could engage in and improve their metacognitive skills.

The study emphasized the significance of engaging in acting activities to improve students' ability to express themselves clearly and confidently while speaking in English. Participating in these activities helps students train their ability to express their thoughts and feelings effectively and to choose appropriate language. The role of the teacher in the classroom is mainly as a facilitator, providing advice and direction to help students achieve self-directed learning. The objective of this approach was to enhance learners' ability to efficiently utilize their current English knowledge and abilities, hence increasing their confidence and

proficiency in verbal communication.

On the other hand, students were motivated to establish their own objectives, demonstrate their learning outwardly, and engage actively in the process of learning. By employing peer assessment and feedback activities, the students were encouraged to contemplate their learning and gauge their comprehension through self-assessment. Surveys were administered both before and after in order to investigate the metacognitive domain. Pre- and post-English-speaking evaluations and metacognitive tests were administered to evaluate students' English-speaking competence and their metacognitive skills. The assessment of English-speaking skills was carried out using a one-on-one interview approach. The assessment criteria were distributed to the students a fortnight before the evaluation, along with a recommendation to engage in self-assessment. The aim of this approach was to enhance their comprehension of the assessment criteria and empower them to impartially judge their own performance.

### 3.2.1. Acting activities

The purpose of the acting activities was to improve the learners' oral communication skills by having them reconstruct their own stories based on the movies they had seen. This involved identifying familiar expressions and easily incorporating them into a variety of situations. The goal of the program was to help students cultivate and utilize a variety of metacognitive skills, recognize their importance, and actively integrate them into their learning process. The strategy used was to actively involve students in the simulation experience, with the goal of increasing authenticity and stimulating creativity with regard to potential interactions between characters in the film. This stimulated students' imaginations and motivated them to consider their own ability to express hypothetical conversations in English, thus maximizing their current understanding. Additionally, complex terminology that made it difficult for students to express their ideas was intentionally chosen to promote collaboration and mutual support among team members with the goal of solving problems and achieving solutions.

For this activity, the films 'The Devil Wears Prada' and 'Holiday' were selected, and the curriculum was carefully designed to allow students to modify and supplement movie lines to suit their own situations and practice speaking through natural acting. The films were selected based on strict criteria to ensure that the characters and narratives were widely known and of interest to students. In addition, active student participation was encouraged with the intention of providing opportunities for college-level students to proficiently use existing vocabulary and phrases in assigned tasks. The class was divided into pre- and post-activities. Through preliminary activities, students confirmed their prior knowledge about the movie and understood the scenes and events related to the plot. To this end, they had

time for dialogue training, pronunciation practice, and understanding vocabulary and expressions in movie lines.

After the activity was over, the students created their own stories in teams and provided ongoing support and feedback to promote smooth cooperation and build confidence in participating in the task to make it easier to participate in the play activities. English acting practice was conducted by prioritizing the use of role-playing, focusing on participants expressing their personal stories verbally, and incorporating metacognitive methods into speaking tasks during acting practice (see Table 1).

**TABLE 1**  
**English Speaking Classes**

	Class Activities
Pre-class	Posting silent movie clips(Guessing the content) Watching the same movie clips with sound.
In-class	Team Discussion (Review of movie clips before class.) Required vocabulary, expressions, activities, writing/acting practice Team presentation
Post-class	Upload the reconstructed stories to the Learning Management System (LMS). Reflection Acting and Feedback Self-evaluation.

Before classes begin, students have the opportunity to view both silent and sound films. This experience not only stimulates children's creativity and interest, but also helps them predict important phrases. By watching the silent version, students can assess their language skills by creating mock conversations in English and Korean. Although students currently have a diverse vocabulary, they must reflect on their abilities and limitations as learners, such as having difficulty constructing sentences or missing appropriate phrases. By watching movies with sound, students can set their own learning goals and strengthen their motivation as engaged learners.

During class, students can draw inspiration from a given film and discuss it with team members to determine an appropriate framework for their story. Students can collaboratively coordinate the English words and expressions essential to your performance and draw conclusions about your preferred roles. The composition and development of the plot allows students to actively express the information obtained, allows them to participate in joint work and actively perform the assigned tasks. These activities provide students with an opportunity to evaluate their own learning and provide feedback to their peers.

### 3.2.2. A curriculum outline (Team-based)

The lesson plan is structured into three primary segments: introduction, development, and conclusion. The objective of this exercise is to enhance students' capacity to collaborate effectively in teams and acquire skills in cooperative learning. In order to encourage organic interaction among students in close proximity, teams consisting of 4-5 classmates were created for the general English session.

At the start of the session, students participate in a brainstorming activity wherein they respond to inquiries pertaining to noteworthy scenes, characters, or experiences from the film they have seen before. This approach promotes student engagement in group discussions, as students actively engage, explore, and respond to one another. During this instructional method, the teacher circulates among the groups to verify that they are actively participating in appropriate conversations related to the subject matter. The teacher actively interacts with students who are not participating in the discussion by offering questions about their experiences and fostering discourse to stimulate their involvement in the team activity.

After the brainstorming session, the teacher provides a comprehensive explanation of the complete project methodology to ensure that students remain focused and organized during the job. By explicitly communicating to students that the task will be assessed and factored into their marks, external incentive is employed to cultivate a feeling of accountability. The teacher fosters the development of students' creativity by urging them to generate distinctive narratives inspired by movie sequences and allowing them to independently select their desired parts. Students cooperate with their peers to generate essential English terms or vocabulary required for their individual narratives.

Specifically, students were encouraged to actively participate in English conversation and collaborate to overcome any difficulties they face with expressing themselves. They engage in rehearsing their own written scripts with appropriate emotions that correspond to their assigned parts and offer constructive criticism to one another in order to enhance everyone's performance.

Following the completion of the activities, we organized the classroom in a manner that facilitated the students' ability to reconstruct their own narratives and engage in theatrical exercises. We offered continuous support and valuable feedback to encourage smooth teamwork among students and foster their confidence in participating in the assignments. The English acting activities emphasized the use of role-playing, allowing participants to concentrate on expressing their own stories verbally. The instructional framework for integrating metacognitive strategies into speaking tasks during acting exercises is illustrated in Table 1.

The next table, Table 2, is a precise illustration of an teacher's guide and learning process outline designed exclusively for team-based activities in the field of movie acting.

**TABLE 2**  
**Team-Based Activity Learning Process**

Class Activities	
Goal	Can establish their individual learning goals. Can assess their understanding and English expression skills. Can naturally articulate English expressions appropriate for their roles.
Introduction (10min.)	Greetings / Introduction of class activities Motivation (sharing ideas with team members) Introducing the topic and content. Activity on vocabulary and expressions needed
Development (40min.) Team Activities	Writing about the content/ Creating an acting story for a movie based on the lesson topic (team activity). Speaking practice
Practice	Reading aloud and summarizing the content. Sharing what they know and what they don't know Role play Presenting the collaborative activity outcomes from each team.
Conclusion (15min.)	Checking the student's own understanding. Sharing newly learned information and expressing opinions. Summarizing and confirming the key points. Assignment: upload the reconstructed stories Writing a reflective journal and uploading it to LMS.
Wrap-up (10min.)	(Including feedback and self-assessment)

### 3.2.3. Data collection

This study used Zhang & Goh's (2006) Metacognitive Awareness Inventory for Listening and Speaking Strategies (MAILSS) for quantitative investigation, especially reflecting self-understanding items during learning plans and learning activities. Schraw & Dennison's (1994) Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI) was used, of which the Knowledge of Cognition item was reflected. The reliability of the metacognitive evaluation tools was assessed by calculating Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient, which indicated a strong internal consistency with a value of .80. This indicates that every individual component consistently and reliably contributes to their total measurement. Furthermore, the assessment tool for speaking also demonstrated a Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of .80, showing a commendable degree of dependability for all of its components.

In addition, a qualitative analysis was undertaken simultaneously to enhance the quantitative research and investigate more dimensions of students' responses. The pre- and post-speaking assessments were conducted using individual interviews. There were a total of five questions intended to alleviate students' nervousness by enabling them to select familiar subjects and evaluate their everyday oral proficiency.

During the speaking evaluation, students were given the chance to impartially evaluate their own performance. The questions are as follows: Can you recall a recent memorable

conflict? How did you feel and why do you think this is a memorable disagreement? The second question. Were you able to resolve your conflict? What strategies did you use to clearly understand the other person's point of view? The third question. How would you characterize your personal attributes and abilities? The fourth question. What have you learned through this experience or any previous experience about engaging with a classroom of students and keeping their attention?

The fifth question. Do you consider yourself lucky? Before the exam, the students were given a speech rubric that allowed them to understand the assessment criteria. The speaking assessment scale is measured on a 30-point scale, with fluency contributing to 15 points, accuracy contributing to 10 points, and attitude contributing to 5 points. Fluency (15 points) focused on the learner's ability to speak the language in real time (Fillmore, 1985). In other words, the learner's ability to speak the language smoothly and efficiently was evaluated. Accuracy (10 points) was evaluated by focusing on whether the learner clearly conveyed meaning according to sentence structure, focusing on grammatical accuracy and appropriate vocabulary use (Hammerly, 1991; Ellis, 2003). Attitude (5 points) evaluated students' speaking attitude, self-confidence and non-verbal communication as psychological factors significantly affect communication (Vygotsky, 1978; Norton, 2000).

The grading scale is as follows: Very Good (12 points), Good (10 points), Average (8 points), and Effort (5 points). Since the learner's developmental stage is not linear, an interval scale was not used. This was to more accurately reflect the learner's actual ability improvement by setting different score differences. For example, the difference between "very good" and "good" was 2 points, and the difference between "average" and "effort" was 3 points. This approach was able to better represent learners' actual improvement in skills.

The assessment tool for evaluating speaking skills had a high level of reliability, as shown by a Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient of .80, indicating excellent internal consistency. Additionally, the items for fluency, accuracy, and attitude each showed an appropriate level of reliability, supporting the validity of the assessment criteria. The validity of the assessment tool was confirmed through expert review and pilot testing. In addition to collecting quantitative data using a 5-point scale, a perception survey was also conducted on students. In actual speaking activities, students used metacognitive strategies to set their own learning goals, use learned expressions, and evaluate their performance through a post-activity reflection journal. This survey investigated participants' opinions and interests in class activities, and evaluated the relationship between improved metacognition and English proficiency using Pearson's correlation coefficient through reflection journals written after participating in learning activities.

A *t*-test was used to analyze the evaluation results before and after the speaking activity. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS (Version 26.0), and a significance test was

performed at the significance level of  $p < .05$ . Qualitative research involved examining data recorded in reflective journals to confirm quantitative findings or identify related themes. This study utilized qualitative research methodology following the guidelines established by Strauss and Corbin (1998) and used open coding to categorize responses. Analyze and compare student-produced content using keywords such as interest, utility, and challenge.

## 4. FINDINGS

### 4.1. English Speaking Abilities

The study, administered pre- and post-speaking assessments to the participants in order to examine the effects of including metacognitive strategies in speaking lessons on enhancing speaking proficiency. The speaking assessments were administered through individual interviews given by professors and students, assessing their fluency, accuracy, and attitude.

**TABLE 3**  
**Result of Pre- and Post- Speaking Assessments**

	Test	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Fluency	pre	12.47	6.63	-3.228	0.000***
	post	13.42	4.47		
Accuracy	pre	9.11	4.56	-2.160	0.021*
	post	9.23	4.67		
Attitude	pre	3.21	1.91	-2.621	0.004**
	post	4.52	1.31		
Total	pre	24.79	12.51	-3.076	0.002**
	post	27.17	11.09		

Note.  $N = 90$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$

After analyzing the findings of both the pre- and post-speaking assessments, it became clear that there were statistically significant disparities in the overall speaking scores. The mean score in the pre-assessment was 24.79, whereas in the post-assessment, it was 27.17 ( $p < .01$ ), suggesting a significant enhancement in speaking proficiency. Furthermore, there were significant enhancements in fluency ( $p < .001$ ), accuracy ( $p < .05$ ), and attitude ( $p < .01$ ), resulting in an overall  $p$  value of 0.002 ( $p < .01$ ), indicating substantial development in all areas.

### 4.2. Metacognitive Abilities

In this study, we aimed to investigate the effect of speaking classes using metacognitive

strategies on the metacognitive abilities of general English learners in college. The study examined the utilization of metacognitive assessments to measure spoken learning strategies and self-awareness both prior to and during the class. Self-awareness about what they know and what they don't know. During speaking activities, students use various strategies to achieve the goals they set. In other words, actively correct mistakes, and use similar expressions when they can't remember the expressions they learned during English speaking activities. Evaluate the ability to substitute expressions and the use of rich vocabulary.

The metacognitive evaluations were classified using a Likert scale with five points, and *t*-tests were used to measure the differences in several areas between the pre- and post-tests. The *t*-test findings for each metacognitive domain are displayed in Table 4.

**TABLE 4**  
**Result of Pre- and Post- Metacognitive Assessments**

	Test	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Self-awareness	pre	3.676	1.110	-3.509	0.000***
	post	4.021	0.981		
Learning Strategies	pre	3.050	1.310	-3.645	0.011*
	post	3.212	1.221		
English Speaking	pre	3.221	1.344	-3.144	0.001**
	post	3.501	1.314		
Vocabulary Proficiency	pre	0.234	2.265	-0.421	0.665
	post	0.355	1.409		

Note. *N* = 90, \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$

The results showed statistically significant findings in the areas of Self-awareness ( $p < .001$ ), Learning strategies ( $p < .001$ ), and English speaking ( $p < .01$ ), indicating meaningful outcomes ( $p < .05$ ). However, in the metacognitive assessment, the vocabulary-related results showed that the average after the evaluation increased compared to the average before the evaluation, but no statistically significant results were found.

#### 4.3. Learners' Perceptions through Reflective Journals.

To assess students' perspectives on classroom activities, we placed open-ended questions in students' reflection journals and categorized their responses by applying qualitative research methods, specifically open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The research revealed important themes such as interests, usefulness, challenges, and motivation. Overall, students had mostly positive views about the activity and found it enjoyable and helpful. Although they were hesitant to participate at first, they eventually got used to it as the activity progressed and showed a continued willingness to further develop their abilities, despite the occasional difficulties.



Students highly valued interaction in activities, and said that activities such as acting ultimately gave confidence to their passive friends who participated less. These exercises yielded better results than traditional textbook-based learning approaches because they were more interesting. Additionally, students emphasized the need for self-assessment to improve their English pronunciation and intonation. Most responses were positive, but they were satisfied with the interesting and useful aspects of the activity and enjoyed it. Nevertheless, there were some indifferent responses such as “It’s okay” and “It’s fun,” and there were also responses that the tasks were too heavy and communication with team members was difficult, but overall, the results were positive.

To address the feedback and provide a more thorough analysis, learners’ reflections were summarized in Table 5, which details their experiences with both ‘acting’ and ‘team-based’ activities. Students appreciated the ‘acting’ activity for its engaging and realistic nature, which positively impacted their practical language skills. However, issues with fluency and vocabulary retention were noted. The ‘team-based’ activities were praised for promoting teamwork and offering ample conversation opportunities, though challenges like dominant group leaders and coordination problems were identified. Despite these issues, students valued the interactive aspects and felt motivated to enhance their language skills. To improve effectiveness, it is essential to address these difficulties and refine the design of the activities.

**TABLE 5**  
**Learners’ Perception through Reflective Journals**

Class Activities	Acting	Team-based
Interests	Engaging and informative. It was interesting. Not boring and enjoyable. It was fun with friends. I enjoyed acting the dialogue. It was enjoyable. Very interesting.	It was great doing it with friends. It was enjoyable and not boring. It was fun. The team members were great.
Usefulness	It felt realistic. It was useful; I feel like I can actually use it. I can speak with foreigners. Natural expressions were helpful. It was beneficial. Acting was useful; I can apply it.	I had many opportunities to converse in English. I became more comfortable conversing with others in English. I learned the importance of teamwork. The team activities were beneficial.
Challenge	I didn’t feel as fluent in English as I expected. I made too many mistakes in dialogue. It was too difficult. It was challenging, and I wanted to give up. I couldn’t remember the words.	The leader was too dominant; I didn’t know what to say. It was frustrating when others didn’t speak up. It was difficult to coordinate group activities. My opinions weren’t considered, making it challenging.

		It was hard to consolidate everyone's opinions.
Motivation	I want to practice more to get better. I especially want to pronounce more naturally and closer to that of a native speaker. I want to speak at the speed of a native speaker. Studying with friends makes learning enjoyable.	I want to incorporate the positive aspects I saw in other groups' presentations. I envy my friend's pronunciation and want to emulate it.

#### 4.4. The Correlation between Metacognitive and English Speaking

Table 6 shows the correlation between metacognitive improvement and English speaking ability. Students' metacognitive gains were quantified using a Standardized MAI administered to students before and after the intervention, including the application of metacognitive strategies in speaking lessons. Improvement scores were derived by conducting pre- and post-evaluation, and the difference between pre- and post-evaluation scores was statistically analyzed to determine whether the improvement in metacognition was significant.

Table 6 displays a notable association between Metacognitive Enhancement and English speaking abilities, with a correlation ( $r$ ) of .321 ( $p < .001$ ). This shows a moderately positive relationship, meaning that as students' cognitive skills improve, their English speaking skills tend to improve as well. The positive correlation ( $r = .321$ ) indicates that more students used cognitive strategies better in speaking skills. These strategies likely helped students use language more effectively and helped them perform better on speaking tasks. Statistical significance ( $p < .001$ ) indicates that these results are reliable in terms of students' improvement.

There is a clear correlation between a student's level of Metacognitive Enhancement and their proficiency in English speaking. These results highlight the importance of developing cognitive skills to improve language learners' speaking ability.

**TABLE 6**  
**The Correlation between Metacognitive and English Speaking Ability**

	Metacognitive	English Speaking
Metacognitive Enhancement Speaking Classes	.321***	.321***

Note. \*\*\*  $p < .001$

## 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Being able to engage in conversation fluently is essential to demonstrating your English proficiency. Nonetheless, despite studying for a long time, many English language learners find it difficult to engage in authentic discussions. This problem often arises from not being able to use the English skills you have acquired proficiently in real-life conversations. Effective use of information is intricately linked to metacognition. Therefore, this study sought to determine how applying metacognitive methods in a college-level general English course affects the improvement of speaking skills and metacognitive skills. And the results of this study were to provide an effective method for communication classes for Korean college students studying English as a foreign language.

The results of this study showed that English learners' speaking skills improved when metacognitive strategies were used in speaking classes. This study allowed learners to use dialogues in movies in class. They engaged in communication learning activities through acting, and had learners create and use their own sentences according to actual situations. As a result, learners showed significant improvements in fluency, accuracy, and attitude. The mean score on the pre-assessment was 24.79, whereas on the post-assessment it was 27.17 ( $p < .01$ ). This indicates a significant increase in speaking proficiency. Furthermore, there were significant enhancements in fluency ( $p < .001$ ), accuracy ( $p < .05$ ), and attitude ( $p < .01$ ). Overall, the combined  $p$ -value was 0.002 ( $p < .01$ ), indicating substantial development in all areas. These findings are consistent with other studies that have highlighted the efficacy of metacognitive methods in language acquisition.

Zhang and Goh (2006) found a significant positive impact on the communication skills of English as a Second Language (ESL) learners through metacognitive strategies. This was said to have had a particularly great impact on the learners' speaking confidence. Additionally, Phakiti (2007) argued that research results show that using metacognitive methods improves learning by allowing learners to set and self-evaluate their own learning goals. The results of this study support the results of these previous studies, showing that teaching and learning methods using metacognitive strategies affect learners' speaking skills, including fluency, accuracy, and attitude.

As a result, statistically significant results ( $p < .05$ ) were shown in the areas of self-awareness ( $p < .001$ ), Learning strategies ( $p < .001$ ), and English speaking ( $p < 0.01$ ), indicating meaningful outcomes ( $p < .05$ ). Nevertheless, the results of the metacognitive assessment did not provide statistically significant results in terms of vocabulary skills, although the average score after the test was higher than before. This indicates that learners with low proficiency have difficulty using metacognitive methods effectively (Oxford, 2011). Although the learning activities were organized according to the learner's level, students with weak English proficiency may have had difficulty applying their

metacognitive skills to participate in English conversations. It was also known through reflection that learners had difficulty expressing themselves verbally and constructing sentences. This study examined keywords by dividing them into four categories: interest, usefulness, challenge, and motivation. Compared to previous research on learners' attitudes and experiences in speaking classes involving a metacognitive approach, these results suggest that metacognitive strategies are effective. However their effectiveness may vary depending on the learner's starting competency level and ability to use them. (Anderson, 2002).

This study emphasizes the significance of providing customized assistance to students with lower levels of competence to improve their usage of metacognitive methods, ensuring that all students derive benefits from these instructional techniques. Although most of the replies were favorable, it is important not to disregard the negative input. Reconstructing the language used in movies for the purpose of role-playing and acting offered intellectually stimulating opportunities for student engagement. It also fostered a sense of camaraderie among team members. Moreover, it convincingly demonstrated improved English language proficiency, highlighting the remarkable link between improved metacognition and speaking aptitude. These strategies provide useful information for educators seeking to improve language teaching methods by improving language skills and promoting positive attitudes toward language learning. It is important to note that the results of this study have important practical implications for the field of English education, since the results demonstrate the usefulness of metacognitive methods in classroom settings.

The results emphasize the need for consistently employing these strategies in conjunction with interactive and contextualized learning activities to proficiently enhance learners' speaking skills. By utilizing metacognitive methods, individuals may effectively regulate and oversee their own learning process. It is important for these strategies to be able to identify and comprehend students' current knowledge, memories, perceptions, and learning patterns related to English. The implementation of these strategies in college general English speaking programs has led to a beneficial effect on learners' English speaking proficiency. Hence, it is imperative for general English courses to integrate a variety of learning approaches that empower learners to apply the knowledge acquired in the classroom to real-world social scenarios through the use of metacognitive processes.

This study has limitations, so additional analysis is needed. Because this study investigated a group of 90 college students from a specific university, it is insufficient to generalize the research results. It highlights the need for more comprehensive research involving more study subjects, diverse geographical locations, and different proficiency levels of learners.

Applicable levels: Early childhood, elementary, secondary, tertiary

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