



A Detailed Analysis of Interpreting Students' Metacognitive Profiles

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Abstract

This study was conducted with 82 students, majoring at the Translation and Interpretation Department, in order to deeply portray their self-perceived metacognitive ability in this domain. Depending on the data obtained quantitatively, descriptive statistics and percentages were calculated and the results displayed that participants had a high level of the metacognition competency with an average score of 3.67. Also, the findings showed that each of the four different components of the metacognition construct had the mean ratio, corresponding to the high interval. In the individual-item analysis, 17 items of the whole scale obtained relatively high average scores, indicating students' strong metacognitive orientation in the respective field. However, it was found that three items in the scale, based on the affective dimension of the metacognitive profile, obtained slightly lower mean values than the rest of the items in the inventory. This result indicates that some students need guidance on how to relieve negative feelings including stress, anxiety or inability to cope with difficulties they perceive regarding interpreting practices. In conclusion, the findings revealed in this study can help teachers specify learners' strengths and limitations in the metacognitive competence within interpretation in order to better design learning environments.

Keywords

Cognition

Interpretation

Metacognition

Self-assessment

Sözlü Çeviri Öğrencilerinin Üst-bilişsel Profillerinin Ayrıntılı Bir Analizi

Özet

Bu çalışma Mütercim ve Tercümanlık Bölümü'nde öğrenim gören toplam 82 öğrenciyle bu alanda algılanan üst-biliş yeteneğini derinlemesine betimlemek amacıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Nicel olarak elde edilen verilere dayanarak, betimleyici istatistikler ve yüzde değerleri hesaplanmıştır ve sonuçlar katılımcıların 3.67 ortalama oran ile yüksek düzeyde üst-biliş yeterliğine sahip olduklarını ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca bulgular, üst-biliş yapısının dört farklı bileşeninden her birinin yüksek aralığa denk gelen bir ortalama oranına sahip olduğunu göstermiştir. Tekli madde analizinde, tüm ölçekten 17 madde, oldukça yüksek ortalama değerler elde etmiştir; bu da ilgili alanda öğrencilerin güçlü bir üst-bilişsel yöneliminin olduğunu göstermektedir. Bununla birlikte, üst-bilişsel profilin duygusal boyutuna dayanan üç maddenin ölçekteki diğer maddelere göre nispeten daha düşük ortalama değerler elde ettiği bulunmuştur. Bu sonuç ise, bazı öğrencilerin sözlü çeviri uygulamalarına yönelik algıladıkları stres, kaygı veya zorluklarla baş edememe gibi olumsuz duyguları nasıl giderecekleri konusunda rehberliğe ihtiyaç duyduklarını işaret etmektedir. Sonuç olarak, bu çalışma ile ortaya çıkan bulgular, öğrenme ortamlarını daha iyi tasarlamak amacıyla, sözlü çeviri kapsamında öğrencilerin üst-bilişsel yeterliklerindeki güçlü yönlerini ve sınırlılıklarını belirleme konusunda öğretmenlere yardım edebilir.

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Introduction

Closely associated with the key functionality of conference interpretation for ensuring the cross-lingual interaction in the international platforms, training student-interpreters has stood out as a critical discipline in the global framework. In line with this, the number of tertiary-level translation and interpretation departments has been growing substantially worldwide in the last decades (Wang, Xu, Wang, & Mu, 2020). In such departments in the world, students thoroughly engage in training activities where they rigorously practice both written and spoken translation of target texts. In this intensive process, especially in spoken-language interpretation, mediated by a number of dynamics including contextual, textual and behavioral elements (Aguirre Fernández Bravo, 2019), students are required to navigate an array of sub-skills such as affective, cognitive, and psychomotor operations concurrently (Doğan, Arumí-Ribas, & Mora-Rubio, 2009, p. 71), as well as maintaining concentration and performing sustained practices in order to yield a short rendition within a time constraint (Heo, 2021). As such, it seems a must for interpreting students to regulate their own learning by controlling attention and cognition dynamics in such a way that they take more responsibility by exerting deliberate efforts for learning and take advantage of certain strategies in order to succeed in this complex process (Aguirre Fernández Bravo, 2019). In this sense, the metacognition phenomenon, with strong associations with the self-regulation mechanism, is noted as a vital part of the learning-to-interpret process (Heo, 2021).

The term of metacognition, simply defined as “cognition of cognition” (Flavell, 1985, p. 104), was originally coined by Flavell (1976), who pioneered the subsequent studies targeting the systematic conceptualization of this notion. Due to its functionality in helping learners expand their capacity for learning with a heightened awareness of instructive practices and the adaptation competence to the difficulties experienced during the process through the implementation of effective strategies (Choi, 2006, p. 277), today, there is an increasing interest into the in-depth exploration of the metacognition construct, regarded as the pillar of learning pedagogies (Zhang & Zhang, 2019). In this vein, a bulk of earlier research is dedicated to the investigation of different aspects of metacognition in various contexts, including language instruction (e.g., Amini, Anhari, & Ghasemzadeh, 2020; Dabarera, Renandya & Zhang 2014; Teng, 2016). However, there exists a dearth of research that has addressed its role within the interpretation specificity. To this end, this study aims to scrutinize the metacognition construct with its primary dimensions in the interpreting domain.

Theoretical Framework

The Concept of Metacognition

The metacognition concept is defined as “any knowledge or cognitive activity that takes as its object, or regulates, any aspect of any cognitive enterprise” (Flavell, 1985, p. 104). Flavell’s conception identifies two main functions of the construct, one of which encompasses the knowledge of the person regarding the self-cognitive process, while the other of which is based on supervising, regulating, and organizing this process (1976, p. 232). According to Efklides, metacognition is mainly driven by two main elements, namely the monitoring and control operations (2008), represented by three distinct manifestations, i.e., “metacognitive knowledge (MK)”, “metacognitive experiences (ME)”, and “metacognitive skills (MS)” (Efklides, 2009, p. 77). The monitoring function is exercised by MK and ME, whereas the controlling mechanism is regulated by MS (Efklides, 2006).

MK refers to a knowledge basis formulated through regulating, monitoring, and assessing cognitive processes (Thamraksa, 2005). This kind of knowledge is composed of “beliefs, theories (implicit or explicit), and declarative knowledge about cognition and about the person’s ME and

strategies when processing various kinds of tasks in order to serve a variety of goals" (Efklides, 2009, p. 78). MK is categorized as "declarative knowledge", alongside "procedural knowledge", and "conditional knowledge" forms (Schraw & Dennison, 1994, p. 460). Declarative knowledge, including the factual information as to the person himself/herself and the strategies (Pintrich, 2002), is simply related to "knowing what", while the procedural knowledge is about "knowing how" (Winograd & Hare, 1988, p. 134). This subprocess deals with how to conduct the relevant strategies. The last type of knowledge, i.e., conditional knowledge, is based on "knowing why" (Carrell, Gajdusek, & Wise, 1998, p. 101), covering the issues of reasons for implementing available strategies (Schraw & Dennison, 1994).

The second facet of the metacognitive ability is ME, relied on "any conscious cognitive or affective experiences that accompany and pertain to any intellectual enterprise" (Flavell, 1979, p. 906). Such experiences represent the affective perspective of the cognition, encompassing "feelings, estimates, or judgments related to the features of the learning task, of the cognitive processing as it takes place, or of its outcome" (Efklides, 2009, p. 76). As for MS, this component refers to the intentional utilization of strategies with a purpose of controlling cognition via "the cognitive regulatory loop" (Efklides, 2008, p. 280). O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Mazanares, Russo, and Kupper (1985) suggest that such strategies cover higher-order skills that activate "thinking about the learning process, planning for learning, monitoring of comprehension or production while it is taking place, and self-evaluation of learning" (p. 560).

Mediated by these components, Efklides (2008, pp. 282-283) proposes a multilevel and multifaceted model of metacognition, with a reference to Nelson and Naren (1994), structured in three distinct but interrelated levels, where the monitoring and control processes of cognition operate concurrently. Within this composite model, metacognition is positioned in the object level, modulated by the cognition and affective regulatory loops through nonconscious monitoring and control mechanisms. This level informs the metalevel, where all facets of metacognition, as well as emotions, perceptions, and feelings, interact with each other in the personal-awareness level, facilitated by two primary operations of metacognition, namely monitoring and control exercises. The ultimate level of this model is the meta-metalevel, described as the social level of the concept, in which monitoring and control systems as well as the reflection capacity are consciously activated through the metacognitive judgments regarding the person's own or others' ME, MK, and MS (Efklides, 2008, pp. 282-283). In sum, Efklides posits that metacognition is relied on the evaluation of the learning output and self-reflective functioning during the learning process, alongside observing and managing one's own cognitive properties (2009, p. 76). Within the tenets of constructivist learning, students' consciousness for and management of their own learning are key to the metacognitive framework (Glaser, 1994). In line with this, it can be noted that with its three components, namely MK, ME, and MS, the metacognition construct operates within the self-regulation mechanism with different functions (Efklides, 2009). While ME and MK exercise in the self-regulation scheme with the monitoring serve, MS controls the cognition through the employment of certain strategies (Efklides, 2008). In sum, it can be noted that metacognition with these three constituents is contributory to self-regulated learning, alongside cognition and motivation, i.e., the other drives of this framework (Efklides, 2009; Schraw, Crippen, & Hartley, 2006; Zimmerman, 1998).

Metacognition in Interpretation

Acknowledging the prominence of self-regulation in pursuing the interpreting process which is repeatedly described as a complex cognitive skill, challenged by a number of sudden and unpredictable situations that the interpreter has to deal with (Chiang, 2006; Heo, 2021; Korpala, 2016),

the concept of metacognition is deemed a critical component of the interpretation education that can help one to supervise own learning. As the interpretation tasks require the mastery of higher-order mental skills for input and output processing (Aguirre Fernández Bravo, 2019), metacognition serves best in this sense by enabling interpreters to self-regulate their mental operations through “life-long strategies of self-monitoring, self-assessment and planning and even managing emotions” (Doğan et al., 2009, p. 71).

It also enables interpreters to develop a sense of autonomy, another strand of self-regulation with its control mechanism over the cognitive processes, by adding another dimension to the skill acquisition, via the heightened self-awareness and conscious thinking (Arumí & Esteve, 2006). As it is noted, interpreting is a performance-oriented skill, functionalized by both novice and professional interpreters with deliberate practice applied in lifetime for the acquisition of the expertise in this field (Fan, 2012). As such, it seems necessary for developing an optimum level of autonomy to personalize this life-long learning skill by orchestrating various metacognitive tactics and strategies. Interpreters’ metacognitive ability can help them plan, monitor, and evaluate their performance by regulating cognition (Heo, 2021). In this sense, Sawyer states that by bringing the conscious and subconscious monitors and all of their parts into focus, teachers can help students become more cognizant of the processes they are executing as they interpret. As such, students can more precisely rate their progress and concentrate on the areas where they are the most vulnerable, with the evaluation of how they utilize the monitor (1994, p. 436).

In short, the construct of metacognition proves a salient role in the regulation of learning in the interpreting field. However, despite a plethora of research on the metacognitive competence and self-regulation conducted in the various contexts, including language instruction (e.g., Mbato, 2013; Zhang & Zhang, 2019), less is known about how metacognition manifests in the interpretation domain. Considering the context-specific nature of the metacognition (Schraw, 1998), it may not be reasonable to generalize the findings drawn in other settings, for example in language learning surroundings, to the interpretation field. In this sense, Doğan et al. (2009) conducted a pilot study by addressing this construct from the interpretation standpoint. The researchers developed and implemented three different tools for the measurement of the metacognition construct, particular to the interpretation field. These tools are as follows: “a self-assessment checklist”, “a portfolio”, and “a journal” (p. 69). In their study, the researchers concluded that these tools are vital instruments for perceiving how the underlying mechanisms of the metacognition function in the interpreting students (Doğan et al., 2009). Similarly, Aguirre Fernández Bravo (2019) presented another metacognitive assessment tool, with a purpose of measuring interpreting students’ self-perceived metacognitive ability in this discipline. By drawing data from her PhD dissertation (See, Aguirre Fernández Bravo, 2015), four dimensions of metacognition were identified: interpreters’ perceived self-knowledge with respect to motivation and interest into the domain, their formulation of the self-assessment criteria, their flow status in tasks and navigating context-specific macro-strategies (Aguirre Fernández Bravo, 2019, p. 155). Overall, these two studies (Aguirre Fernández Bravo, 2019; Doğan et al., 2009) are important for indicating different strands of the metacognition construct in interpretation training by introducing robust measurement tools. The use of these vehicles can give teachers insights into training interpreting-students to operate proper metacognitive strategies for directing their own learning efficiently. But more research is needed in this sense, which empirically tests how such inventories can be implemented in other milieus in order to thoroughly picture the metacognitive characteristics of the interpreting students. To this end, this current study is intended for portraying the metacognitive profile of the student-interpreters in the undergraduate level context. This current research is guided by the research question (RQ), as follows:

RQ: What is the interpreting-students' perceived level of metacognition and its components?

Methodology

This section consists of information regarding the participants, the data-gathering instrument and methods, and data-analysis processes.

Participants

This research was carried out with a group of 82 undergraduate (third-year=40; fourth-year=42) students from the Department of Translation and Interpretation at a university in the fall term of the 2023-2024 academic year. This department offers a 4-year program where students are trained in both theoretical background and practical implementations in translation and interpretation courses. While students are enrolled in two consecutive interpreting courses in the third year, they are taught in two simultaneous interpreting courses in the fourth year. One of these interpreting courses in each level is given in English and the other one is in French, from and into the direction of Turkish language. The average age of the participants is 23.11 ($SD = 2.67$).

The Instrument

The data of this study were gathered from a self-report 20-item questionnaire, designed and validated by Aguirre Fernández Bravo (2015) in her dissertation for assessing the self-perceived metacognitive ability in interpretation. The published component of her PhD dissertation presented this instrument in detail (See, Aguirre Fernández Bravo, 2019). For the development of this inventory, Aguirre Fernández Bravo consulted the relevant literature for the item generation (Doğan et al., 2009; Moser-Mercer, 2000; Pintrich, 2004; Torre Puente, 2007). For this current study, this scale by Aguirre Fernández Bravo (2015, 2019) was administered with some changes and adaptations in the wording such as the addition of an expression that indicates the directionality of the interpretation performed. Along with this tool, three questions, based on the participants' demographic information regarding their gender, age, and class, were also posed. The instrument encompasses 20 five-point items, ranging from 1 (*completely untrue of me*) to 5 (*completely true of me*) in a Likert scale format. Originally, this tool is composed of four sub-sections, formulated according to a four-factor solution reached via the statistical analyses run by Aguirre Fernández Bravo (2015, 2019). These four sub-scales were used in this current research as the sub-components of the metacognition construct, by making minor changes in the wordings of their names, formulated by Aguirre Fernández Bravo (2015, pp. 317-321; 2019, pp. 156-160) (Table 1):

Table 1. *Components of metacognition (Aguirre Fernández Bravo, 2015, pp. 317-321; 2019, pp. 156-160)*

Name of the component	Descriptor	Items
Perceived self-knowledge	The motivational and affective properties in relation to the regulation of the task.	Items 1, 2, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17
Consolidation of own criteria	Self-evaluation of the performance in light of the goals, objectives, and strategies established by the interpreters themselves	Items 5, 6, 11, 12, 18, 20
Macro-strategy development	Strategic planning and navigation of context-specific factors to accomplish the target task	Items 3, 4, 13
Task-focused flow	The cognitive functioning of the task by choosing and adjusting relevant cognitive strategies in a state of mind where interpreters are fully invested in the process	Items 7, 8, 9, 19

The items in the tool (Aguirre Fernández Bravo, 2015, 2019) were translated into Turkish by the researcher of this current research for ensuring a better comprehension. Then, the translated items were checked in detail by a foreign language lecturer with a Master's degree in language education. In light of feedback, necessary clarifications were made in the relevant items. The reliability coefficient of the scale was .89 alpha score.

Data Collection and Analysis

Before delivering the questionnaire to the participants, the ethical approval was officially taken from the Ethics Evaluation Committee of Social Sciences Scientific Research at the university where the study was conducted. Following this phase, the tool was administered to the participants using the Google Forms application (n.d.). On the first page, a consent form was added, which assures the anonymous, confidential, and voluntary nature of the participation. A total of 82 respondents from the two levels voluntarily participated into the study.

The data were analyzed quantitatively, by running the descriptive statistical tests and frequency score computations. Firstly, the average score of the instrument was calculated for revealing the overall perceived level of the metacognitive competence in interpretation. Then, the mean value of each sub-scale was measured in order to indicate the participants' metacognition in each dimension. Lastly, the percentages of all items in the tool were assessed with a purpose of showing the highest and the lowest positively-responded items in the scale.

Results

In order to interpret the descriptive statistical data, firstly the cut-points were specified on the basis of a framework assuming that each range is equal and spans at 0.79 except for one interval (Pimentel, 2019, p. 188; Tallungan, 2017, p. 37). Depending on this formulation, cut-off points of the scale and the relevant descriptors were presented, as follows:

Table 2. Cut-off points and their meanings (Pimentel, 2019, p. 188; Tallungan, 2017, p. 37)

Interval	Meaning
1.00 – 1.79	Very Low Interval
1.80 – 2.59	Low Interval
2.60 – 3.39	Middle Interval
3.40 – 4.19	High Interval
4.20 – 5.00	Very High Interval

In descriptive calculations, the mean score of the 20-item scale was found as 3.67, SD= .53, displaying that the participants had a *high* level of metacognition in interpretation, according to the cut-points in Table 2. The average rate of each subscale was also measured and shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3. The Mean score of each metacognition dimension

Subscale	Mean	Standard Deviation
Task-focused flow	3.92	.63
Consolidation of own criteria	3.71	.59
Macro-strategy development	3.71	.63
Perceived self-knowledge	3.47	.63

Table 3 indicates that the mean score of each metacognition dimension corresponded to the *high* range (See Table 2, for cut-off points). However, the *task-focused flow* sub-scale obtained a larger mean

score than the rest of the subscales, suggesting that the flow status is the most evident indicator of the metacognitive framework in the interpretation in this setting. Although the mean scores above give an overall impression about the interpreters' perceptions of their metacognitive ability, the frequencies and mean scores of each item were also assessed in order to portray a detailed profile of the self-perceived metacognitive ability in interpretation. Table 4 indicates the respective results:

Table 4. Descriptive statistics and percentages of the items obtained in this current study (See, Aguirre Fernández Bravo, 2015, pp. 317-321; 2019, pp. 152-153, for the original wordings of these 20 items).

Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Completely true of me %	True of me %	True of me half the time %	Untrue of me %	Completely untrue of me %
1- I trust my strategies for learning how to interpret from English to Turkish.	3.52	.89	13.4	36.6	41.5	6.1	2.4
2- When interpreting in class from English to Turkish, I know exactly what my goal is.	3.87	.85	20.7	53.7	20.7	2.4	2.4
3- When interpreting from English to Turkish, I can perceive the structure of an original speech in the source language and transfer it to the target language.	3.73	.80	15.9	47.6	30.5	6.1	-
4- When interpreting from English to Turkish, I follow the speaker at the right distance, which allows me to understand the message and predict information.	3.84	.77	17.1	54.9	24.4	2.4	1.2
5- Before interpreting from English to Turkish in the classroom, I choose one or more goals and determine the strategies I will use to achieve these goals.	3.40	.92	9.8	39.0	35.4	13.4	2.4
6- When interpreting from English to Turkish, I always talk to myself to guide myself on what I am supposed to do at each time.	3.59	.96	17.1	40.2	30.5	9.8	2.4
7- While interpreting from English to Turkish, when I encounter difficulties, I try harder, change my strategy, or do both at the same time.	3.75	.92	19.5	46.3	28.0	2.4	3.7
8- When interpreting from English to Turkish, I take great care and focus on creating sentences that are grammatically correct and understandable for the listener.	4.08	.80	30.5	52.4	13.4	2.4	1.2
9- When interpreting from English to Turkish, if I cannot find the exact equivalence of a term, I consciously look for another word or expression to replace or paraphrase it.	4.31	.73	46.3	40.2	12.2	1.2	-
10- When interpreting from English to Turkish, I can properly pay attention to both active listening in the source language and verbal expression in the target language.	3.51	.87	13.4	35.4	41.5	8.5	1.2

Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Completely true of me %	True of me %	True of me half the time %	Untrue of me %	Completely untrue of me %
11- When I practice interpreting from English to Turkish, I am aware of whether I am achieving or not the goals I set at the beginning.	3.75	.79	13.4	56.1	24.4	4.9	1.2
12- While interpreting from English to Turkish, I listen to my inner voice to encourage myself in order to maintain my motivation.	3.79	.99	26.8	36.6	28.0	6.1	2.4
13- When interpreting from English to Turkish and learning how to interpret, I don't always use the same methods: I know how to change and adapt my strategy.	3.57	.93	15.9	39.0	32.9	11.0	1.2
14- I can manage my stress in a way that it becomes a positive factor to help me interpret better from English to Turkish. So, I can neutralize its negative effects.	3.08	1.05	8.5	25.6	40.2	17.1	8.5
15- When interpreting from English to Turkish, I can hide my anxiety very well when I am unsure about something so that my listener will not mistrust me.	3.17	1.00	12.2	18.3	48.8	15.9	4.9
16- When interpreting from English to Turkish, based on my personal experience, I feel that my motivation and interest in learning keep up despite the difficulties.	3.95	.81	25.6	48.8	20.7	4.9	-
17- I think the hurdles in the interpreting process from English to Turkish are more encouraging rather than discouraging.	3.19	1.12	15.9	20.7	36.6	20.7	6.1
18- I have developed my own criteria for how I should interpret from English to Turkish, and I use them as a guide when interpreting.	3.75	.89	22.0	40.2	29.3	8.5	-
19- When I think I'm near the end of my strength in interpreting from English to Turkish, I tell myself I can do it if I take a deep breath, focus and keep on going.	3.56	1.14	24.4	30.5	26.8	13.4	4.9
20- When I finish interpretation from English to Turkish, I can identify the problems I have encountered and find solutions to perform better next time.	4.00	.80	30.5	40.2	28.0	1.2	-

The most outstanding result in Table 4 is that 17 items of the questionnaire received 3.40 and above average scores, which fell into the *high* interval, according to the cut-points in Table 2. Additionally, more than half of the participants responded to 14 items in the scale (the combined 'true of me' and 'completely true of me' response rates) in the positive way. This implies that the participants

are metacognitively strategic learners by reflecting on different dimensions of the construct in their rendering practices.

Specifically, out of 20 items in Table 4, six of them received the greatest 'completely true of me' and 'true of me' response rates, with 70% and above. More specifically, Item 9 received the greatest positive response rate, with the highest mean score ($M= 4.31$) and the total figure of 'true of me' and 'completely true of me' response percentages (86.5%). It is the only item in the whole scale with an average score that collapsed into the 'very high' interval (See Table 2, for cut-points). It seems that Item 9 is the most important indicator of metacognition in this sample. This item is based on the deliberate look for a related paraphrase or replacement if no equivalent word is found during the interpretation. Similarly, from the same sub-component of the tool, i.e., the *task-focused flow* category, Item 8 which is related to paying special attention to formulating grammatical sentences when interpreting became the second highest positively-responded item (a total of 'true of me' and 'completely true of me' response frequencies, 82.9%, $M= 4.08$). This demonstrates that a substantial majority of the students reported using certain cognitive strategies, namely forming a paraphrased vocabulary expression or making up proper grammatical sentences for ensuring accuracy while interpreting. Additionally, the other highly endorsed items are Item 2, which is based on having awareness of the target to be attained during the interpretation, and Item 16 about the persistence in motivation for and interests into learning despite the challenges, on the basis of the prior experiences. Both items are from the same sub-category, i.e., *perceived self-knowledge* in interpretation, and obtained the same rate of combined 'true of me' and 'completely true of me' responses with 74.4%. This suggests that students know their aim for pursuing the interpreting tasks (Item 2, $M= 3.87$) and indicating perseverance albeit difficulties (Item 16, $M= 3.95$). Moreover, a great majority of the participants positively answered to Item 4, referring to the use of a macro strategy in terms of following the speaker at the possibly best distance to grasp the message given by him/her ($M= 3.84$; combined 'true of me' and 'completely true of me' response rate= 72%). Item 20, based on determining the problems and thinking of the respective solutions for the next performance, also received a high frequency score in the combined 'true of me' and 'completely true of me' range (70.7%, $M= 4.00$).

Most notably, there exist three items that obtained relatively low figures in the positive responsivity throughout the whole scale. Item 17 is about the encouraging force of challenges rather than discouragement ($M= 3.19$, combined 'true of me' and 'completely true of me' frequency rates= 36.6%). Item 14 is based on alleviating the negative effects of stress ($M= 3.08$, 'true of me' and 'completely true of me' rate= 34.1%). Item 15 is about concealing worries if not sure about the subject ($M= 3.17$, 'true of me' and 'completely true of me' rate= 30.5%). The mean scores of these three items corresponded to the *middle* interval, according to the cut-off points in Table 2. Actually, these three items are from the same sub-category, i.e., *perceived self-knowledge* in interpretation, by revolving around the same idea of the affective properties in interpretation and coping with those dimensions. In this sense, it should be noted that a lower number of the participants reported having a thorough competence for dealing with the negative affectivity that might be perceived in interpretation tasks (Item 14 and Item 15) and evaluating challenges as more encouraging, rather than discouraging (Item 17), although they displayed a strong metacognitive orientation in different aspects of the construct, as assessed in the average scores of 17 items in the questionnaire (See, Aguirre Fernández Bravo, 2015, pp. 317-321; 2019, pp. 152-153, for the original wordings of the items in the tool).

Discussion

This current study aimed at presenting a detailed analysis of the interpreting-trainees' self-perceived metacognitive ability from their perspectives. The results of this research indicated that the students reported having a high level of metacognition. Additionally, nearly 14 items in the scale were positively responded by more than 50% of the participants, suggesting the employment of different metacognitive skills in interpreting practices. This finding corresponds to the previous research, also showing that the participants run various metacognitive strategies in various language learning settings (e.g., Al-Khresheh & Alruwaili, 2024; Zhao & Liao, 2021).

In fact, a high level of metacognition in interpretation reported in this research is not surprising when thought that the development of core competencies in this domain is an arduous skill which requires the simultaneous operation of multidimensional tasks in which different elements concurrently interact with. The interpreting tasks create a high cognitive burden necessitating a large span of attention capacity to quickly loop back and forth between a number of cognitive activities within the process (Doğan et al., 2009). As such, a proper self-concept developed within the metacognitive framework might ultimately lead to gaining more responsibility and attainment. That is, the heightened metacognition competence helps interpreters in various ways including monitoring, input and output processing, repairing strategies, efficacy building, coping with negative states and formulating a sense of flow (Aguirre Fernández Bravo, 2019). In this sense, the metacognitive competence, driven by various dimensions, including consciousness of how information is learned and stored, strategy-planning, self-assessment, monitoring, and controlling the cognitive functioning, enables one to perform certain tactics, strategies, and operations in order to cope with an array of different unexpected and sudden variables at stake (Aguirre Fernández Bravo, 2019; Doğan et al., 2009). As such, one's self-perceived awareness of the competence in regulating attention and cognition might possibly predict success in interpretation with its potential to personalize the learning by spotting weak and strong aspects regarding the renditions and providing respective solutions (Sawyer, 1994, 436). Therefore, this construct is seen one of the key stones of the interpreting path (Heo, 2021). All in all, it seems that the learners in this context were aware of the potential challenges in interpreting practices and in turn might have canalized themselves to take responsibility for directing their learning through certain skills and functioning.

Among the four facets of metacognition, the *task-focused flow* aspect was the first-ranked metacognitive strategy type. This finding is also consistent with the individual-item analysis in that Item 8 and Item 9 from this sub-scale were the most positively-answered ones, out of 20 items in the tool. These two items concern the regulation of cognition to ensure accuracy in vocabulary (Item 9) and grammar (Item 8). Indeed, such a result is plausible, given that accuracy is invariably acknowledged as the most important feature of the interpreting end-product quality (Pöschhacker, 2001). In this vein, it seems that the participants were aware of the functionality of correctness in ensuring the quality standards in their performances. Accordingly, the students may have inevitably guided themselves to pay special attention to meeting this criterion, which might be the reason for the high perception score in this component.

In particular, the average score of the *perceived self-knowledge* component was lower than those of the other sub-scales in the inventory. This is more evident in the analysis of individual item scores in that items 14, 15, and 17 from this sub-scale received the lowest combined '*true of me*' and '*completely true of me*' rates, as compared to the rest of the items. While Item 17 refers to the evaluation of difficulties in the interpretation practice as more encouraging, than discouragement, Item 14 and Item 15 center

around the idea of the efficacy for handling negative feelings, such as stress and anxiety, during the performance. Considering that stress or worries are inevitably relevant in this discipline (Kao & Craigie, 2013) due to a number of unexpected situations and exogenous factors impacting the interpreting performance (Heo, 2021), it seems a necessity to train learners how to cope with such emotional constraints (Korpál, 2016). Otherwise, they may lose their motivation and feel less confident in this field, possibly resulting in the failure in the acquisition of this competence (Chiang, 2006).

Implications and Conclusion

Given that interpreting is a higher-order mental act that necessitates the employment of self-regulation, the metacognition construct with its awareness and control mechanisms becomes the hallmark of the interpretation path, as a major constituent of self-directed learning (Fan, 2012). The metacognitive ability enables interpreters to improve life-long strategies, which will be useful in the long-run in terms of monitoring, assessing, and planning their own learning progress (Doğan et al., 2009). Therefore, in interpretation settings, this construct should be prioritized with special attention in training (Aguirre Fernández Bravo, 2019). In this sense, more guidance can be given to students on specifying task-oriented strategies, developing personally established goals, enhancing self-reflection, using self-talk, monitoring the progress, and providing solutions to the possible problems that might arise, within the tenets of self-regulated learning (Zimmerman, 2002). Taking this as a premise, this current study sought to analyze the students' self-received metacognitive ability and to determine the points where they are metacognitively-oriented or not in the interpretation specificity. By underlying the criticality of metacognition and how it manifests within the interpretation field, the resulting information can give teachers insights into guiding students to become metacognitively strategic learners. However, this current research has also some limitations. First, the data derived from the small group of participants may not be reliably generalized to other settings. For this reason, a new study can be conducted in a larger sample size. Additionally, this study obtained the data only from a questionnaire. In this vein, other data-collection instruments such as interview protocols can thoroughly elaborate on the underlying mechanism of the metacognition construct. Lastly, whether the sense of metacognition could predict the quality of the interpretation outputs is beyond the purpose of this research. In this sense, a new study that aims to explore the possible links between the metacognitive competence and interpretation performance achievement might add a lot to the existing literature (e.g., Aguirre Fernández Bravo, 2015, 2019; Choi, 2006; Fan, 2012).

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