

Social Skills: Its Contribution to Child's Metacognition

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Abstract

This study attempted to find out the possible contribution of social skills towards child's metacognition. Specifically, the study investigated both of the indicators of social skills and metacognition, the significant relationship between social skills and metacognition, and the possible teaching strategies that can be applied based on the findings of the study.

The respondents of the study were the first three sections of grade five pupils of Balo-i Central Elementary School who are all Maranao. Weighted mean and pearson r were used to analyze and interpret the data.

The researchers found out that social skills of the respondents are moderate while low in metacognition. There is also a significant relationship between the respondents' social skills and metacognition of the pupils. Possible teaching strategies are therefore suggested to help classroom teachers enhance their teaching strategies to improve learners' social skills and metcognition.

Keywords: Social Skills, Metacognition

Introduction/Problem

Nowadays, children are exposed to technology. They spend more time in playing online games and surfing the internet without even realizing that their social life is deteriorating. With that, their social skills may not have been fully developed. Social skill is the ability to communicate, persuade, and interact with other people without undue struggle or disharmony. It is the ability where one is able to express oneself and one's feelings, whether it is positive or negative, without any hesitation. Most of the teachers and parents understand that children who have learning disabilities struggle with academics but what they do not know is that having a learning problem can also damage child's social skills and might prevent him from having successful relationships with the peers, family members, and other adults. The extent and impact on social skills differ with the child depending on his character and the nature of his learning problem (Stanberry, 2014).

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The mentioned problem can be solved by the help of metacognition. Metacognition refers to the processes that allow people to reflect on their own cognitive abilities. In other words, metacognition allows people to know what they know, or to think about their thinking (Thill, 2014).

This study aimed to describe the importance of social skills as a component of the learners, as well as metacognition as a process of improving and capability to learn; to determine the possible relationship of social skills and metacognition. It also sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the indicators of social skills among the respondents in terms of:
 - a. Observational learning
 - b. Communication with others
 - c. Team work
 - d. Feedback
2. What are the indicators of metacognition of the respondents in terms of:
 - a. Knowledge of Cognition
 - Declarative Knowledge
 - Procedural Knowledge
 - Conditional Knowledge
 - b. Regulation
 - Planning
 - Monitoring
 - Evaluation
3. Is there a significant relationship between social skills and metacognition
4. What possible teaching strategy can be applied based on the findings of the study

Social skills are not the same thing as behavior. Rather, they are components of behavior that help an individual understand and adapt across a variety of social settings. According to Walker's study in 1983, social skills are defined as "a set of competencies that allow an individual to initiate and maintain positive social relationships, contribute to peer acceptance and to a satisfactory school adjustment, and allow an individual to cope effectively with the larger social environment". Social skills can also be defined within the context of social and emotional learning — recognizing and managing our emotions, developing, caring and concern for others, establishing positive relationships, making responsible decisions, and handling challenging situations constructively and ethically (Zins et al., 2004). With this understanding, researchers and educators seek to evaluate and build students' social skills within a variety of social contexts (Steadly et al., 2011).

According to Joseph A. Durlack, students who took part in social and emotional learning improved in their grades compared with non participating students. Compared with peers, participating students also significantly improved on the five key non-academic measures. They demonstrated greater social skills, less emotional distress and better attitudes, fewer conduct problems such as bullying and suspensions, and more-frequent positive behaviors, such as cooperation and help for other students.

Children's social skills are important for early school success and later adjustment. Research has documented that having inadequate social skills, children are at risk for difficulties such as peer rejection, behavior problems, and poor academic achievement. Moreover, recent research shows disturbing rates of expulsion in preschool and kindergarten, which has fueled efforts to promote these skills (Gilliam and Shahar, 2006). In addition, social skills describe how children navigate social and learning contexts and can be conceptualized as including interpersonal skills and learning-related skills.

Interpersonal skills refer to the ability to perform competently in social situations, including interacting positively with others, cooperating, sharing, and respecting peers. Research has found that interpersonal skills are important for peer acceptance and social adjustment throughout childhood and adolescence (Masten et al., 2005). Children who have worked strong interpersonal skill tend to be more successful in life. This contributes a lot in developing social skills.

According to Ladd in 1999, a child is more likely to have better mental health, stronger relationships, and more success in school and work if he has many chances to strengthen his social competence by playing, talking, working out disagreements, and collaborating with peers and adults. It is not necessary that a child be a "social butterfly." Quality matters more than quantity when it comes to a child's friendship. Children who have at least one close friend usually tend to increase their positive feelings about school over time (Illinois Early Learning Project, 2005).

As stated by Armstrong (2009), Gardner's theory on multiple intelligences in 1983 advanced the concept that there are types of intelligences which individuals are born with, which cannot be changed, and which psychologists can measure. It is a concept that sought to expand the understanding of human ability or potential beyond the commonly accepted idea of intelligence quotient (IQ). The claim is that there are at least eight different human intelligences. Most intelligence tests look at language or logic or both - those are just two of the intelligences. The other six are musical, spatial, bodily/ kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist. The interpersonal intelligence refers to the individual's ability to identify and understand other people's moods, intentions and feelings (Armstrong, 2009). As

such, it facilitates healthy relationship with them. By enhancing interpersonal intelligence, the individuals can also improve their social skills and their ability to learn from other people.

The study of Dandoy and Omongos on “Social Competence and Its Relationship to the Teaching Interest of First Year Pre-service Teachers” (2013), deals with social competence and its correlates to the teaching interest of the First Year pre-service teachers. It states that parenting style has significant relationship to the degree of social competence of the respondents. It shows that most of the parents are over protective to their children. Thus the more authoritative the parents the higher the confidence level of the respondents and the lower their anxiety level.

Stewart (2005) studied on “Metacognitive Development in Professional Educators”; it found out that the metacognitive skills of adults develop naturally with age. It was suggested in the study that metacognition, as measured by the Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI) tends to increase with age and with teaching experience. Metacognitive regulation and total MAI, Metacognitive Awareness Inventory, increase as a function of age and teaching experience. It is mentioned that metacognitive knowledge did not increase with age in either group (undergraduates and graduates), but did show significant correlation with age in the pooled group.

This study applied a descriptive and correlation design. This method aimed to describe the variables being investigated to determine the contribution of social skills to the respondent’s metacognition. It used survey data collection design and self-constructed questionnaire to be validated with the help of the concerned teachers handling Grade Five (5) levels to collect the needed data from the respondents.

This study used self-constructed questionnaire with the help of the concerned teachers in gathering the data. Statements in the questionnaire were formulated according to the concepts and objectives of the study.

To facilitate the gathering of data, the researchers sought approval from the Superintendent of Lanao Del Norte Schools Division, Supervisor of Balo-i West District, Principal of Balo-i Central Elementary School together with the teachers in charge of Grade 5 levels as well as the respondents. The researchers personally distributed the copies of questionnaires and conducted the study to all the respondents after being given the approval and permission to conduct the study.

Collection of questionnaires was accomplished. The researchers personally retrieved the accomplished questionnaires along with the answers of the respondents. These were

submitted to the statistician for analysis and treatment. The results of the interpretation were the basis of the presentation and analysis of the data treated.

The data were tabulated and interpreted to acquire the actual information needed. The following statistical tools were used in this study:

1. Weighted Mean. This was used to determine the average of students' social skills and metacognition
2. Pearson r . This statistical tool was used to determine the correlation coefficient between social skills and metacognition.

The respondents of the study were the first three sections of Grade 5 pupils of Balo-i West Central Elementary School. The majority of them were Maranao pupils. This study used purposive sampling technique in order to choose the specific group of population having the characteristics that are necessary since the researchers intended to find out the social skills and metacognition of Maranao pupils.

The respondents were asked to answer a self-constructed questionnaire. The self-constructed questionnaire was formulated based on the theoretical explanations on social skills by Vygotsky (cited in Neff, 2014) and Mead (cited in Crossman, 2014) and metacognition by Bruner (cited in McLeod, 2012) to be validated with the help of the concerned teachers handling Grade 5 levels. Such Theoretical foundation has added validity to the instrument besides the process of revision before its finalization.

In the process of having the respondents' answer, the researchers personally handed the questionnaire to them. They explained the procedure of the test and assured the confidentiality of their answers so they would feel comfortable and be honest in answering the questionnaire.

The gathered data were then compiled and analysed. The researchers then found out the following:

The indicators of the social skills among the Grade Five (5) Maranao pupils in terms of observational learning and team work are low with 1.84 and 2.15 mean respectively. While the description of both communication with others and feedback is moderate with a mean of 2.45 and 2.32. Hence, the social skills of the respondents are moderate with an average of 2.19. This indicates that most of the respondents are neutral in these skills.

In terms of metacognition, the respondents have low rate in all categories of metacognition such as declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge, conditional knowledge, planning, monitoring, and evaluation with different means of 1.93, 2.3, 2.16, 1.92, 2.00, and 1.91 respectively. This denotes that the metacognition levels of the respondents are low with

a grand mean of 2.03. Thus, most of respondents need more classroom experiences where they can develop the different skill categories of metacognition.

There is also a significant relationship between social skills and metacognition because they both have correlation index of .401 which is highly significant at .000. This only means that a proposed teaching strategy is needed to help classroom teachers in improving learners' social skills and metacognition.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are offered to enhance the students' social skills and metacognition:

Teachers, should enhance their teaching strategies and organize interactive activities to help students develop both social skills and metacognition.

School Administrators should conduct seminars for the teachers that concerns about teaching strategies that will help students develop their social skills and orientations for the parents regarding their children's performances.

Future researchers should conduct further studies about the contribution of social skills to child's metacognition.

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