

VOCABULARY LEARNING THROUGH TRAINING ON METACOGNITIVE
STRATEGIES USING LEARNING JOURNALS

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Abstract

Many students at the language center at Universidad de Córdoba failed at using the correct vocabulary in communicative situations. They often used the words incorrectly, even if they had just seen the vocabulary in recent lessons. Then, to overcome this situation, this group of fourteen students aged 14 to 16 years old, underwent some training lessons in the use of metacognitive strategies for enhancing their vocabulary learning process.

First, the students' training process focused on some key features of metacognition. This group of students learnt about the three stages of the critical thinking process in learning, which are; planning, monitoring, and evaluating. In each of these stages, they had a particular task. In the planning stage, they thought of an objective to accomplish. In the monitoring stage, they set and adjusted their strategies to accomplish the objective, and in the final stage, evaluating, they reflected on how the process was done.

Students used a learning journal for reflection on their performance in the activities. They also reflected on aspects such as their vocabulary learning process and their personal attitude and effort in the lesson. The reflection process increased their awareness of their decision-making ability in language learning situations. All the data collected from their reflections and performance in class showed students made improvements in several aspects. They demonstrated improved vocabulary acquisition and usage, as well as a better understanding of the metacognitive process and the great importance of reflection.

Key words: vocabulary learning, metacognitive strategies, planning, monitoring, evaluating, learning journal, and awareness.

Resumen

Algunos estudiantes del centro de idiomas de la universidad de Córdoba fallan al usar el vocabulario correcto en situaciones de comunicación. A menudo usan las palabras incorrectas, incluso después de haberlas estudiado en clases recientes. Así que, para mejorar esta situación, este grupo de catorce estudiantes de edades entre 14 y 16 años fueron entrenados en el uso de estrategias metacognitivas para mejorar su aprendizaje de vocabulario.

Primero, el proceso de entrenamiento de los estudiantes se enfocó en unas características esenciales de la metacognición, conocidos como planeación, monitoreo, y evaluación. En cada una de estas etapas, los estudiantes tuvieron una tarea en particular. En la planeación, ellos debían pensar en un objetivo que alcanzar. En la etapa de monitoreo, ellos establecían y ajustaban estrategias para alcanzar dicho objetivo, y en la etapa final - evaluación - reflexionaron en cómo fue su desempeño en este proceso.

Para esta evaluación, los estudiantes usaron un diario. Además de reflexionar sobre su desempeño en las actividades, también lo hacían sobre su proceso de aprendizaje de vocabulario y su actitud personal en la clase. Este proceso de reflexión mejoró su conciencia en su habilidad de tomar decisiones en situaciones de aprendizaje del idioma. Toda la información recolectada de estas reflexiones y su desempeño en clase mostraron que los estudiantes mejoraron en muchos aspectos. Demostraron mejora en su adquisición de vocabulario, y de igual forma, un mejor entendimiento del proceso metacognitivo y la gran importancia de la reflexión.

Palabras clave: *Aprendizaje de Vocabulario, Estrategias Metacognitivas, Planeación, Monitoreo, Evaluación, Diario y Conciencia.*

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

EFL = English As a Foreign Language

1. Introduction

In recent decades, the education field has undergone many changes to make learning more student-driven, and these new trends have influenced the field of language teaching and learning as well. Some language teaching approaches see language as a set of rules, and the purpose for learners is to learn these rules, in an attempt to reach the language level of the native speaker. However, in recent years, the conceptualization of language changed and Linguists started analyzing language as a “system for the expression of meanings rather than of abstract syntactic rules” (Nunan, 1999; p. 9). That is to say, as much as language structures and rules of syntax are important to learn the language, students learn the language by using it to express their own opinions and ideas, which is the main objective in language learning.

This new perspective of language also changed the methodologies used to teach language, as learners needed to develop the skills for expressing meanings, rather than internalizing rules. Nevertheless, each group of learners encounters difficulties at all levels, regardless of the methodology used for teaching and learning. This is the case of a group of 14 language learners at the Language Center at Universidad de Córdoba in Montería – Córdoba, Colombia. These learners had difficulties choosing the right words to express ideas in English, making hard for them to build well-structured and fluent speech. The teacher witnessed this situation in his classes as learners on occasions failed to use vocabulary taught in class for communicative activities. To support this statement, the learners took a needs analysis (Appendix A) so that they could state how they felt about different aspects of vocabulary learning and their actual level of vocabulary knowledge.

Surprisingly, many learners said their level of vocabulary was good. They felt confident about their knowledge. This situation raised a concern: learners could

remember the words taught when the teacher provided clues (mimics, sounding the first letter, etc.), but they could not recall words in a speech or a real-time conversation. From this observation, the proposal for improving their vocabulary learning process emerged, intending to facilitate learners with vocabulary and metacognitive strategies for language acquisition. When preparing the proposal, the teacher considered several factors, such as learning styles, learners' needs, tasks, and so on for inclusion in class planning. Including metacognitive strategies in lesson planning helped empower learners with decision-making opportunities so that they achieved a certain degree of independence and autonomy in their learning process.

This process of turning learners into autonomous beings demanded a special learner-centered approach. This approach involved enabling "the learner to make critical pedagogical decisions by systematically training them in the skills they need to make such decisions" (Nunan, p. 12), that is to say, learners can choose from a range of vocabulary learning strategies the one(s) that best fit the learners' skills, needs, and the activity to work on. Along with metacognition training, fostering learners' autonomy awakens a sense of awareness of metacognitive and vocabulary learning strategies and their use, as well as a level of critical thinking about the learners' performance.

Training learners in metacognition was a process that led them to reflect on their work and the use of the tools they needed to facilitate learning. Therefore, in this proposal, learners were presented with tasks and activities to rehearse three metacognitive strategies. First, they set a personal goal to achieve through the lessons received in class. Then, they monitored the effectiveness of the strategies they used to complete the activities, and finally, they reflected on their performance in the activities. These strategies, besides leading learners to autonomy, also helped them learn new vocabulary, which was the learners' main constraint in expressing their ideas using the language. Schmitt (2000) suggests that vocabulary is necessary to master other language skills such

as reading, listening, speaking and writing (p. 155), which makes vocabulary acquisition an important step in language learning.

To sum up, this proposal focused on the extent to which training in the metacognitive strategies of planning, monitoring and evaluating helped learners with vocabulary acquisition through the use of learning journals. To measure the impact of metacognitive strategies, vocabulary learning strategies and learning journals on students' vocabulary learning process, the study included the use of different data collection instruments. First, with the guidance of the teacher, the students kept a journal recording their reflections on the use of the metacognitive strategies in class as well as on the vocabulary learning process. Additionally, a needs analysis and the teacher's field notes recorded data about the project and the process undertaken by the students. The information gathered helped in the discussion of results and findings, and it is presented later in this paper.

1.1 Research Question

A research question emerged after analyzing learners' language level, language needs and the goal of incorporating a learner-directed approach into the proposal.

- How can training learners in the use of the metacognitive strategies of planning, monitoring and evaluating, through Learning Journals, help them to improve their Lexical Competence?

Along with this question, there are some objectives, which frame this study, as follows.

1.2 Objectives

General objective:

- To determine the influence of metacognitive strategies through learning journals on the acquisition of lexical competence in young learners.

Specific objectives:

- To examine the effect of planning, monitoring and evaluating as metacognitive strategies on students' lexical competence.
- To identify the reasons for students' lack of lexical competence.
- To use students' journals to encourage student analysis and awareness of their own learning process.

2. Theoretical Framework

Some important constructs were taken into consideration, analyzed and defined to clarify their role in this study. The comprehension of these constructs supports the findings and results that emerged to answer the research question. Subsequently, there is a discussion about the following study components, metacognition, metacognitive strategies, language learning strategy training, vocabulary, and journals.

The main objective of this study was to improve students' vocabulary learning process due to students' failure in using the correct words in communication. Once students were able to retain and recall better the necessary vocabulary, they could succeed in communication. Virginia Allen (1983, p. 1) gives support to this assertion claiming that: "teachers know students must learn thousands of words that speakers and writers use. Fortunately, the need for vocabulary is one point teachers and students agree". Then, for having a better understanding of written language, as well as speakers' language, vocabulary building becomes the first step to master other language skills.

Students included in the study did not learn only isolated words, but also expressions, as Cameron (2001, p. 72) suggests, vocabulary acquisition is understood as learning words, learning phrases and chunks, and the recognition and use of these in oral and written form. The English language uses phrasal verbs along with expressions constituted by two-word chunks, and students needed to learn some of these expressions in the lessons planned in the study. To help students succeed in vocabulary acquisition, the lessons included strategies to learn the vocabulary taught in classes. In this context, strategies mean "the special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information" (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990, p. 1). Strategizing, then, becomes the first step learners should consider when confronted with a learning activity. Wenden (1998) suggests that "learning strategies are mental steps or

operations that learners use to learn a new language and to regulate their efforts to do so” (p. 18), then the selection of the right strategy resulted in a more accurate acquisition of vocabulary. Therefore, when learners were able to predict what the wrong strategy was, they could avoid it and direct their time and efforts to find a more effective path to succeeding at the activity at hand.

The strategies the students learnt and included in their process to solve the activities in the lessons involve metacognition, defined as “thinking about thinking” (Flavell, 1979, p. 906). Hennessey (1999) adds that metacognition is the “awareness of one’s own thinking” (p. 3) in combination with active monitoring of the cognitive processes in relation to further learning. That is, the ability to use strategies for learning is a lifelong characteristic of the trained person and these strategies help him/her succeed in learning situations and problems in general. Flavell (1979) also suggests that metacognition consists of two aspects; knowing oneself as a learner, and how personal performance can be influenced by situational factors and the strategies used in learning situations, and monitoring the task performance and the evaluation of the effectiveness of the learner’s methods.

Strategies that involve monitoring cognitive processes are known as metacognitive strategies. Cook (1993) claims “they are strategies about learning rather than learning strategies themselves” (p. 114) which relate to the thinking process of learners involving their mental preparation and the action plan to take before a learning activity. Besides, metacognitive strategies provide learners with the skills and tools to plan how to accomplish a learning outcome as well as to auto-regulate their performance by modifying the strategies used to achieve their goals. As O’Malley and Chamot (1990) claim, strategies are “higher-order executive skills that may entail planning for, monitoring or evaluating the success of a learning activity” (p. 44). Furthermore, learners

who manifest skills in planning, monitoring, and evaluating strategies seem to have a better performance when completing learning activities.

The training process of the subjects of this study was following the main three strategies suggested by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) planning, Monitoring and Evaluating. These are also three of the five strategies proposed by Anderson (2002) 1) preparing and planning for learning, 2) selecting and using learning strategies, 3) monitoring strategy use, 4) orchestrating various strategies, and 5) evaluating strategy use and learning. In the planning stage, students established a learning objective to pursue, and the actions needed to achieve their objective. Then, when working on the class activities, they monitored themselves examining, regulating and checking their comprehension of the task as well as the achievement of the objective. Here, they could modify their established plan so that they reached their goal. Finally, learners carried out an evaluation after finishing the task, in which they reflected on their performance on the activities and considered changes in their plans if necessary. These three stages frame the actions taken by learners when working on an activity so that they met their own goal, and they acquire the vocabulary.

2.1 Training Process

To take advantage of the metacognitive strategies, learners needed training. This training aimed to master the use of the planning, monitoring and evaluating strategies through practice during the lessons carried out. Rasekh and Ranjbar (2003, p. 4) claim that through practice and instruction, learners' use of strategies can be automatized. The students achieved an enhancement on accuracy and time-use as they learned to deal with metacognitive strategies and the activities in the lessons.

This training process demanded some responsibility from the teacher, as his/her particular instruction could be the determining factor in the student's failure or success.

As Rasekh and Ranjbar (2003, p. 1) reported in their study about the use of metacognitive strategy training for vocabulary learning, explicit training in these strategies has a significant positive effect on students' vocabulary learning. Also, Nunan (1997) points out that "in addition to making these strategies explicit to students, they [teachers] need to create opportunities for students to apply them in class" (p. 72). For this reason, the teacher had a training lesson with the students to guide them through the stages of objective setting, the use of different strategies and later, a reflection.

This reflection was undergone using journals. For Thorpe (2004), reflective learning journals refer to "written documents that students create as they think about various concepts, events, or interactions over a period of time for the purposes of gaining insights into self-awareness and learning" (p. 328). As one of the metacognitive strategies to master was evaluation, the journal worked as a guide to evaluate the students' performance. The journal also gave students awareness and control over the process of mastering other metacognitive strategies.

Besides, writing a journal enabled the learner to go back over material that he/she has learned and expanded the ideas or the linkages between ideas concerning the original learning, how the meaning of an event or an object is related to that meaning for the writer, and so on (Moon; 2006, p. 24). Moreover, the journals also served for data collection purposes due to their usefulness in terms of compiling great quantities of information both qualitative and quantitative at the same time. According to Bailey and Curtis (2009, p. 70) journal-like instruments can offer insights into processes that are not otherwise easily accessible or open to investigation and can thus provide useful information to language teachers, learners, and researchers.

Moon (2006) suggests that writing the journal can at the end of the reflection process (p. 1). In fact, the participants of this study were asked to complete their journals

at the end of lessons so that the activities and the class were not interrupted, also, they were given a format for students to focus exactly on the items to reflect on, and the information there could be later analyzed. Finally, the journals became the main tool for the training process and an important instrument to gather valuable information.

3. Research Design

In this section, the paper describes some issues regarding the structure of the study. First, the type of study is portrayed as well as some ethical considerations. Later, the context and the participants are pointed out to provide an understanding of the situation in which the study took place. Finally, the data collection procedures used are mentioned and there is a description of how the data collected were analyzed so that it is considered valid for the study.

3.1 Type of the Study

This study followed an action research approach as the researcher first identified the problem to investigate, then planned the appropriate action, acted, observed the outcomes, and finally reflected on the outcomes (Nunan & Bailey. 2009, p. 227). These systematic steps match this study, The failure in students' use of the correct vocabulary when communicating was the problem identified, Later, these students received training in using metacognitive strategies as the action to solve the problem, and finally the outcomes were analyzed to determine whether the training helped learners to improve their vocabulary. For this analysis, most of the data collected were qualitative as the one taken from the students' journals and the teacher's field notes; then an interpretative-qualitative approach was adopted as stated by Elliott and Timulak (2005) "qualitative inquiry looks for verbal accounts or descriptions in words, or it puts observations into words" (p.149).

The reflection and analysis helped to measure the improvement in the learning process. Kemmis & MacTaggart, (1982) claim that inaction research, "the result is improvement in what happens in the classroom and school" (p. 5), so the activities, methodology and what the teacher brings into the class are there to improve the learning process, and how they were used in the study played a relevant role in the analysis. Also,

the theory constructed from the analysis of the data followed the Grounded Theory stages by Cohen and Manion (2007) in which the qualitative data gathered was organized in codes, then categories and finally the theory to answer the research question.

The stages in the Grounded Theory helped the transition from the information in the instruments to the theory that addressed the objectives of the study as well as the research question. And this organization contributed greatly to give support and body to the study.

3.2 Ethical Considerations

As for the number of people taking part in this study as subjects or any other role (teacher, head of the language center, students), there was the need to let everyone know the details of the study and what it consisted of. Thus, some measurements were taken before the implementation stage to clarify any issue regarding the students' participation in this study.

First, students were explained that their participation in the study, proficient or not, did not affect their grades in their normal course program. Also, they were told that their participation was voluntary, in other words, the study included the data obtained by the students' performance in class only with their permission. Moreover, although the implementation of the proposal was expected to have a positive effect on students' vocabulary learning process, they signed a form giving their permission to be included in the study and use the information gathered through the different instruments. This document was in their first language (Spanish) and explained to them in detail.

Finally, the head of the language center received notification and information of the study as the course program suffered some minor modifications due to time issues.

Nevertheless, their course program was fully developed as well as the lessons in the study.

3.3 Context and Participants

The participants in this study were fourteen students (eleven girls and three boys) who voluntarily participated in the project. The selection of the students to be included in the project was simple. First, they all were included, they were twenty-three students, but as some of them missed some classes, the information they could give at the end of the process was not reliable. Thus, the ones mentioned at the beginning were the students who attended classes the entire time the study lasted.

The students' ages ranged from 14 to 16 years old. Most of them were from Montería (located in the Córdoba department in Colombia). The other ones were from municipalities nearby. They took English classes in their schools and went to the Language Center at Universidad de Córdoba, located in Montería – Córdoba to improve their language skills. The English classes consisted of 4 hours per week and were held on Saturdays. Moreover, students followed a coursebook, which along with resources such as video beam projectors, tape recorders, flashcards, and some posters, facilitated language learning opportunities for the students.

The students were motivated in class, and they liked being active users of the language. Therefore, communicative tasks and exercises called their attention and kept them motivated as well. Also, during classes, it was observed that students preferred asking a classmate for help over using a dictionary. Such group work turned out to be a valuable learning strategy because students could take advantage of each other's knowledge. During the lessons, which consisted of a two-hour class held once a week, students used this technique as well as other vocabulary learning strategies while working on different activities.

Then, students were provided with more vocabulary learning strategies in their training, as well as metacognitive strategies. Both kinds of strategies aimed at improving students' performance in activities as well as betterment in their vocabulary learning process.

3.4 Researcher's Role

The main role of the researcher in this study was that of a teacher-researcher in charge of assuming the responsibility for the development of the participants' learning process. Also, the teacher was the observer identifying and documenting the situation presented in the classroom. During the planning stage, the teacher's role was of a designer as he planned the activities and designed most of the materials to be used. Besides, in the intervention stage, the teacher became a trainer when accompanying the learners in their metacognitive strategies training. Finally, the teacher-researcher reported the observations and conclusions reached using the data collected through the instruments in the implementation process. These results were used to answer the research question after the analysis of the collected data.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

The instruments used in this study were observational and included field notes, students' Journals, questionnaires, and documents collection. Using multiple instruments allowed for triangulation in the analysis of the data collected. This process of cross verification of the data from more than two sources enhanced the credibility and validity of the results.

3.5.1 Students' Journals

Moon (2010) claims that journals are used to record written information over some time, and they come in different forms depending on their purpose. Likewise, Thorpe (2004) suggests using journals for keeping information about events, interactions, and other purposes. Considering these ideas, the journal used in this study was a closed journal, as in close-ended questions which short and precise answers are wanted, the journal was designed with a set of questions and guidelines so that the information students wrote in it was precise and clear. This way, the information gathered was easy to organize and analyze.

The journal consisted of 5 small sections that included almost 30 questions/points (Appendix C). The first section includes information such as the name, date and lesson number to be filled in. The next sections were planning, monitoring, evaluating and vocabulary learning in which the questions ranged from open-ended questions to close-ended questions, in which students just checked one of the options given or chose *yes*, *no*, or *maybe* as possible answers. These questions aimed to elicit the information required for the research.

The data collected in the journal included information about the learners' vocabulary learning process, and it helped students' training in objective setting and accomplishment, monitoring, and evaluating process during the lessons. The written records on these areas helped the researcher focus on the students' appreciations on their progress. Bailey and Ochsner (1983) claim that in the journal the student "can report on affective factors, language learning strategies, and his perceptions— facets of the language learning experience which are normally hidden or largely inaccessible to an external observer" (p. 189). The learning journal is also intended to promote reflection, and it represents some guidance and encouragement for the writing process (Moon, 2006; p. 1).

3.5.2 Field Notes

The teacher took field notes from observations on how students performed in class. The notes were taken during and at the end of each lesson and included three main sections (Appendix B). First, a description of the activity, which students had to solve, second, the observations on students' performance, their vocabulary learning strategies, the use of metacognitive strategies, the student behavior, the use of their journals and any other aspect that may have a positive or negative effect on the outcome of the study, and third, an analysis, which encompasses the teacher's perception of how the above-mentioned factors interrelate.

The accounts were initially handwritten in a notebook and later transcribed into a digital format. The notes were reviewed to analyze and summarize the patterns that emerged as part of the triangulation process. This process elicited the information that contributed to answering the research question.

3.5.3 Questionnaire (Needs Analysis)

The students answered the questionnaire before the training began and it was the first instrument used. It had 22 questions divided into four sections; the first section was vocabulary learning, followed by planning, monitoring, and evaluation. There were close-ended questions designed to delimit students' answers so they were easily analyzed. In addition, there were a few open-ended questions to gather students' impressions and opinions in matters such as how they learn new vocabulary and the difficulties they face when doing it.

Students' answers in this instrument provided views and relevant information about their needs and knowledge about Metacognitive Strategies for the research project. Babbie (2001) defines a questionnaire as "An instrument specifically designed to elicit

information that is useful for analysis” (p. 239). The needs identified through this questionnaire contributed to the design of the study and the lessons used in the intervention. It is worth mentioning that the first questionnaire designed was piloted as a way to improve the questions and obtain accurate information. The piloting process undertaken with the questionnaire is described in the validation process section.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

Although the questionnaire was used only once at the beginning, students’ journals and teacher’s field notes were applied at different times throughout the intervention process. They served a particular purpose each time. First, the needs analysis was applied before the intervention as a way to gather information about learners’ vocabulary level, their understanding of metacognition, and vocabulary learning strategies. Later, the lessons were designed to improve the vocabulary weaknesses students demonstrated, and is also intended to promote the use and mastery of vocabulary learning strategies (Appendix D). The five lessons designed took 3 class periods in the scheduled program, given that each period lasted 4 hours and students could complete two lessons in one class. After each lesson, students wrote their insights in their journals.

Additionally, triangulation was carried out from the different data collected with the instruments to formulate the hypotheses to answer the research questions. First, the data collected was analyzed, coded and grouped into categories. The codes were labeled with different colors to make the analysis more organized and systematic, and the categories were given names related to the data included in them. After the data was coded and categorized, the information could be summarized by the researcher making relationships between segments of the data and testing hypotheses as Cohen and Manion (2007; p. 482) suggest. Also, Strauss and Corbin (1994, p. 273) claim that theory can be

developed from data systematically gathered and analyzed. The table in which the coding process is depicted is in the section *Data Analysis*; Table 2 Codes to Categories.

3.7 Validation Process

During the implementation, each stage included different measurements to make the study reliable. First, the questions to gather the information required for the study pointed to answering the research question, and these questions formed the questionnaire. Then, it was translated into students' first language (Spanish) so that they could answer confidently. Their comments and observations helped a better design of the questionnaire in aspects such as the language, wording, length and the options of answers in the questions. The questionnaire was also shared and discussed with fellow teachers and researchers to get feedback and comments about its accuracy. Finally, the needs analysis was pre-piloted with two students to observe students' impressions on the length, organization, and language used in it as Nunan and Bailey (2009) claim, "by administering the questionnaire before the actual data collection, you can locate any unclear items, mis numbered items, confusing instructions, and so on" (p. 145).

After some adaptations to the questionnaire for needs analysis were done, it was administered to students. The data gathered was compared to that obtained through the learner journals in each lesson. The journals also contained a set of questions focused on students' use of metacognitive strategies and vocabulary learning. As done with the needs analysis, the questions in the journal were piloted and revised, as Nunan and Bailey suggest "one of the potential problems with any type of elicitation device is that the responses we get may well be artifacts of the elicitation devices themselves" (p. 142). In other words, wording issues or misleading questions may generate unnecessary information. Once the data was gathered, triangulation was carried out.

The triangulation method was used to find common patterns in the information derived from the instruments. Besides, it gave support to the theory-driven from the relation among the common patterns found. Jick (1979) states that "It is largely a vehicle for cross-validation when two or more distinct methods are found to be congruent and yield comparable data" (p.602). That is, the data obtained have more validity when supported by different instruments. Nunan and Bailey (2009) also share that "If more than one source of data leads to the same conclusion, researchers have more confidence in those conclusions" (p. 211).

The data collection procedures were revised on several occasions to ensure their use and structure aimed at the purpose of eliciting information accurately. As well as the process of comparing and analyzing the data which followed the Grounded Theory stages to comply with requirements for validity and reach credible conclusions. Moreover, the pedagogical intervention was prepared carefully to minimize situations, which could jeopardize the study.

4. Pedagogical Intervention and Implementation

This section includes a timeline table (Table 1), designed to organize and show the different stages of the intervention. This table helped a better organization of the actions, lessons, and instruments used in each stage, which are described in this section as well.

4.1 Pedagogical Intervention

The intervention was divided into three major stages: the pre-implementation stage, the implementation stage, and the post-implementation stage. Besides, the proposed instructional method of Chamot & O'Malley (1994) was used. Chamot and O'Malley worked on a project called the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA), which provided a useful framework for direct language learning strategies instruction. The sequence of instruction in the CALLA approach is a five-phase recursive cycle for introducing, teaching, practicing, evaluating, and applying learning strategies. Also, the activities carried out, the classes and other aspects of the intervention were organized in a chart and timeline for the purposes of having deadlines to meet and to avoid falling behind (Table 1).

Table 1. Action plan and timeline

| STAGE | TASK. | Aug. | Sept. | Oct. | Nov. | Dec. | Jan. | Feb. |
|---------------------|--|------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|
| PRE-IMPLEMENTATION | Design and application of Need Analysis Questionnaire. | ■ | | | | | | |
| | Design of Field notes and learning journal | | ■ | | | | | |
| IMPLEMENTATION | Design of the activities and lessons | | ■ | | | | | |
| | Training students on Metacognitive Strategies. | | | ■ | | | | |
| POST-IMPLEMENTATION | 5 Activities about Everyday vocabulary | | | | ■ | | | |
| | Analysis of the collected data | | | | | ■ | | |

4.1.1 Pre-implementation stage.

In this stage, a questionnaire was administered to students (Appendix A) to obtain information about their preferences when learning vocabulary, the vocabulary learning strategies they used, and their knowledge about metacognitive strategies. After the information was gathered, the lessons, activities, field notes (Appendix B) and learning journals (Appendix C) were designed.

4.1.2 Implementation stage

The first part of this stage included modeling and training on the use of metacognitive strategies. Students received an explanation and demonstration of how metacognitive strategies work and their usefulness in the learning process. The demonstration consisted of a sample activity in which students had to; first, have a goal, it could go from practice language to learn new vocabulary. Then, as they took a look at the activity, they could notice what they needed to do and then plan how to solve the activity and what resources to use for that. Finally, when checking the correct answers, they evaluated their performance in the activity. These were the metacognitive strategies to put in practice and how students were expected to do the same process during the following lessons. This training time took 3 hours.

Having finished the metacognitive strategies training with students, the implementation of the lessons and activities took place. Twelve metacognitive activities (appendix D) were designed to facilitate the process of implementing metacognitive strategies. This stage was executed over four weekly four-hour class sessions. The first session was used for the modeling, and the next three were used to train students on the use of metacognitive strategies using the activities designed by the researcher. During these lessons, students also used a range of vocabulary learning strategies, as expected,

the students did not use them all in the same activity, but they managed to use them according to each situation and they used the ones they felt more confident with. This stage suggested eleven vocabulary learning strategies for students to use, they are: reading the words several times, write the words several times, translation exercises, association with surrounding items, use images to learn them, make a list of unknown words, relate words in groups with the same characteristics, use gestures or mimics to remember the words, asking the teacher for clarification, asking a classmate, and guess from context.

The training stage included modeling for the use of the aforementioned vocabulary learning strategies so that students knew how they work and how to make the most of them. This way, they could identify them, and at the moment of answering questions about their use in the journal, students could give accurate information. Also, learners recorded their impressions of the activities and their performance in the learning journals. Finally, as a way to supplement the information, the teacher also took field notes on his impressions of students' performance.

4.1.3 Post-implementation Stage

Finally, the data collected was analyzed. It was categorized by the different aspects related to the research question following the grounded theory described in Cohen and Manion (2007). The data showed students' performance and understanding of the use of metacognitive strategies as well as the improvement of their lexical competence.

5. Data Analysis

The data was useless on its own, which is why analysis and interpretation was carried out. Blumer (1969, p. 26) claims that analysis involves making interpretations as the researcher has to relate his findings to a body of theory, that is, the information went through an analysis and addressed to support the answer to the research question. The analysis considered different approaches as the data compiled in this study was both qualitative and quantitative.

The instruments -teacher’s field notes and learning journals- yielded a significant amount of qualitative data, which meant the analysis needed to manage words, language, and the meanings these implied (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The analysis process for this data followed the stages suggested by the Grounded Theory in Cohen and Manion (2007) in which codes became categories to form a theory. First, the information provided by the students and the teacher showed common patterns. These patterns are called codes and were put together in groups (subcategories or concepts) and assigned a color for a better organization (see Table 2). As suggested by Weber, (1990, p. 15) “many words of texts are classified into much fewer categories”. These categories emerged to answer the research question.

Table 2. Codes to categories

| | | |
|---|------------------------------|--|
| CORE CATEGORY | | |
| Improvement of lexical knowledge of everyday vocabulary by enhancing metacognitive strategies awareness through the use of learning journals. | | |
| CATEGORIES | | |
| Awareness in metacognition. | Expanding lexical knowledge. | Engaging on reflection on the work done. |
| SUBCATEGORIES | | |
| | | |

| | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Objective identification. | Activation of prior knowledge. | Perspective on reaching the objective. |
| Solving difficulties. | Demonstration of vocabulary learning. | |

CODES

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Learn new vocabulary. | Bringing prior knowledge into the classroom. | Students reached the objective. |
| Do the activities correctly. | Reinforcing prior knowledge. | |
| Difficulties found: spelling and pronunciation problems, and unknown words. | Use of prior knowledge for a better performance. | |
| No difficulties found. | Students' products and performance in activities. | Students partially reached the objective. |
| Actions taken to pursue the objective: ask the teacher, ask classmates, read, pay attention, follow instructions and use the vocabulary learning strategies. | Students' word lists in the journal. | |

The relationship among the three categories emerged in answer to the research question and formed a conclusive core category, entitled "Improvement on lexical competence by enhancing metacognitive strategies awareness through the use of learning journals". This category was the result of the data analysis process, and it derived from the three main categories.

These categories appeared after the data was reduced and coded. As Cohen and Manion (2007) claim, "Data reduction is a key element of analysis" (p. 475). This practice made handling the information easier. The categories were: *Awareness in Metacognition*, *Expanding Lexical Knowledge* and *Engagement on Reflection of the Work Done*. Subsequently,

the relationship among these categories was examined. As McMillan and Schumacher (1993, p. 479) suggest, as part of the interpretative–qualitative design, the relationship between the categories needs to be identified as part of the process of organizing data.

The first category is the learners' **Awareness in Metacognition**. Part of the data collected from learners pointed at their use and engagement in the metacognitive strategies. In the journal, students stated what their objective in the lesson was, and the difficulties they found when trying to reach such objectives. These pieces of information were codes of the same subcategories; *Objective Identification*, in which they stated what their objectives were, and *Solving Difficulties* in which they identified the problems they faced and the strategies they used to solve them. Then, the core category came up as the relation between these two subcategories, and it enclosed the details in the training process.

Learners' training on metacognition consisted of three stages: planning, monitoring and evaluating. The planning stage included goal setting and a plan for the activities which they did when working on the activities during the implementation stage. Students' goal setting and planning were carried out successfully once it was modeled with two sample activities. When students' turn came to set their goals, they included learning, performance and, in a few instances, behavior patterns. Some samples of students' goals can be seen in the excerpts below taken from the students' learning journals and the teacher's field notes. Letters and numbers represent students, for instance, S1 means "student 1" and so on.

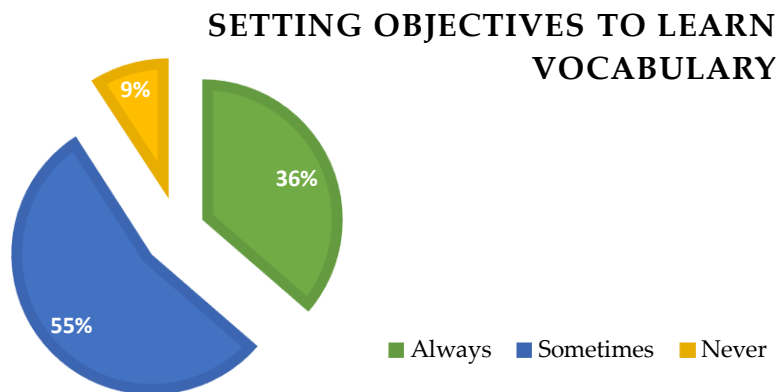
S1: repasar vocabulario; S3: Aprender más palabras; S7: Resolver todas las actividades.
(Learning Journals excerpts - Activity 1)

S6: No desconcentrarme. (Learning Journal excerpt – Activity 3)

The teacher “noticed students set goals which included language learning as well as behavior and performance patterns”. (Teacher Journal excerpt - lesson 3)

In the needs analysis, some students claimed they set objectives for activities before they were part of this study (see Figure 1), nevertheless, during the study it was possible to involve all students and correctly train them to do it. As Rasekh and Ranjbary (2003) suggest, motivation for learning would increase if students set clear goals within a set time and accomplishing them, then the correct way to set goals is to make them accomplishable in the context (time, students’ skills, resources, etc). The students were also taught the advantages of having an objective set and a plan to accomplish it, as learners expressed that having a plan to follow was not part of their regular process when working on activities (Figure 2, below).

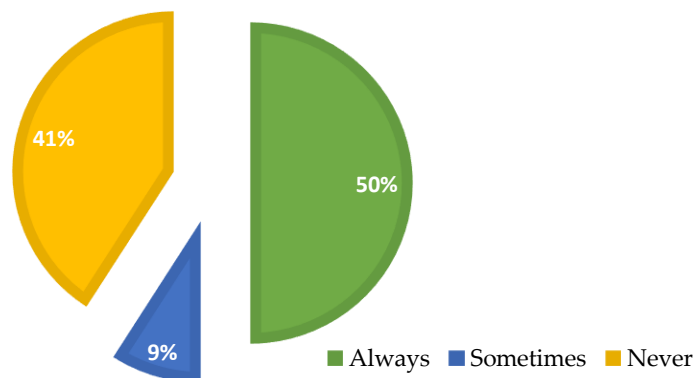
Figure 1. Needs Analysis – Setting objectives to learn vocabulary



Students’ objectives were enclosed in the codes; *Do the activities correctly* and *Learn new vocabulary* included in the subcategory *Objective Identification*. Students had different objectives depending on the lesson and activity to solve, but they all were addressed for improvement of their performance.

Figure 2. Needs Analysis – having a plan to follow

HAVING A PLAN TO FOLLOW



Once students were familiarized with goal setting and monitoring, they became more aware of their capabilities. Similarly, they could identify what they were not able to do and how to overcome the difficulties in the activities. This is what the metacognitive stage of monitoring involved. When students faced difficulties, they had to identify them and come up with a solution. Most of the difficulties they found had to do with unknown words, as the following excerpts from the learning journals show:

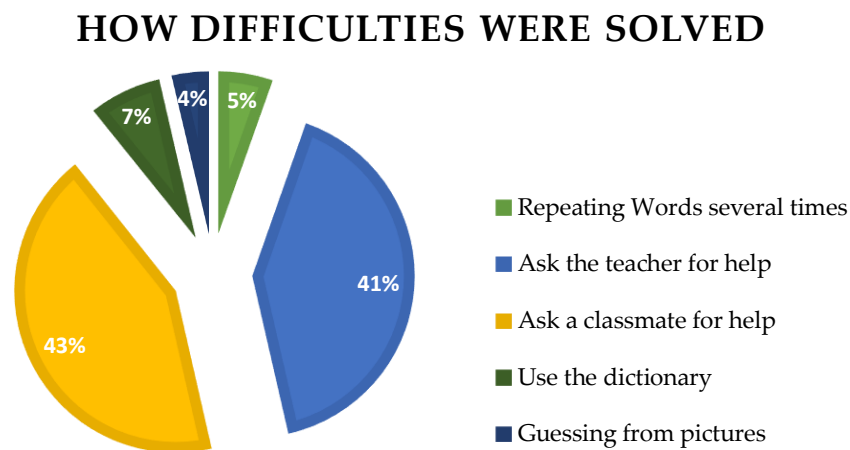
S1: tuve dudas en unas palabras; S4: algunas palabras que no conocía; S7: no entendí muy bien la explicación del profesor; S13: la pronunciación de una palabra. (Learning Journals – Activity 3)

As shown above, students not only encountered unfamiliar vocabulary but also had pronunciation problems (S13) and failed to understand instructions (S7) which is supported and recorded in the teacher's field notes:

"A few students (20%) had minor problems with the activities; unknown words, and instruction misunderstandings." (Teacher field notes – lesson 3)

Students managed to work these situations out and referred to their dictionaries, the teacher or a classmate for help, as evidenced in Figure 3. Part of the monitoring stage included modification of their plans as needed so that the objective set was accomplished. Data showed students familiarized sufficiently with the monitoring process of metacognitive strategies.

Figure 3. How difficulties were solved



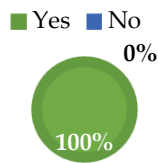
The two main mechanisms students used were asking for help from a classmate or to the teacher. It means they tried to take the easiest path to solve their difficulties, which was a verbal explanation from somebody who knew what they needed to do. Besides these mechanisms, one student in each activity expressed that they “focused on listening activities”, “guessed from context” and “paid attention to the teacher’s indications”, during the implementation process. All these strategies, the ones provided in class and modeled with the students, and the ones they knew, built the subcategory *Solving Difficulties*, which encloses the students’ mechanisms to succeed in the activities.

The main reason for implementing metacognitive strategies was to improve learners’ vocabulary knowledge. Students claimed that learning vocabulary is an important part of learning the language (see Figure 4) and the teacher-researcher agreed

that learners needed to improve their vocabulary language learning process, as he witnessed in the classes that students were not successfully acquiring the vocabulary taught. This situation was enclosed in the second category named *Expanding Lexical Knowledge*

Figure 4. Needs Analysis – the importance of vocabulary knowledge

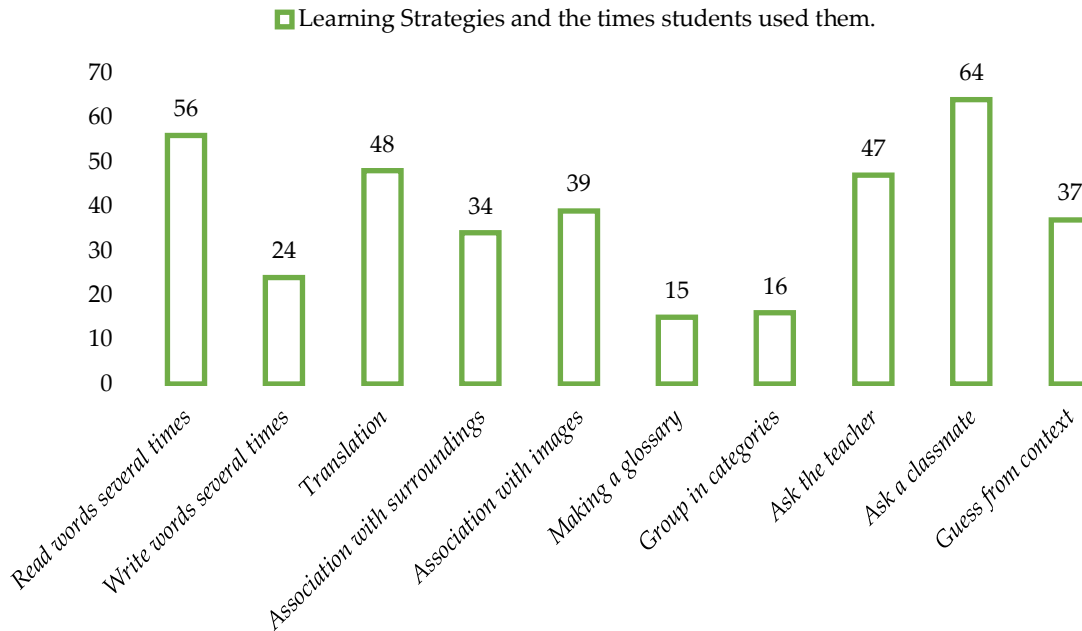
**DO YOU THINK YOUR
VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE IS
IMPORTANT TO IMPROVE...**



This category emerged from information related to the use and reinforcement of prior knowledge to help students solve the activities. Students had some knowledge about the topics and the teacher used the warm-up to make students recall such vocabulary and language knowledge. These items were included in a subcategory named *Activation of Prior Knowledge*. Moreover, students demonstrated knowledge during the activities, the results of these and the list they wrote in the journal are the bases for the subcategory *Demonstration of Lexical Knowledge*. These two subcategories show the process and acquisition of vocabulary knowledge.

To learn the words in the activities, learners used some learning strategies they were already familiar with and they were also provided with thirteen more during the implementation stage. O'Malley & Chamot (1990) suggest that learning strategies are behaviors individuals use to comprehend, learn or retain new information. Figure 5 shows that students made use of the learning strategies as suggested by O'Malley & Chamot. These strategies can be seen in Appendix C – Student's Journal.

Figure 5. Learning strategies



When learners were working on the strategies, they did not take long to choose the strategies to use. They seemed to use them almost unconsciously. However, when they were asked to recall the strategies they used, they needed to take a minute to mark them in the list provided in the journal. The time they took to mark the options was expected as was stated in the teacher's field notes.

"Learners find [the journal] easier to complete as the implementation progresses. Nevertheless, the teacher suggests to the students to take their time and fill in the journal carefully with no rush." (Field notes - lesson 3)

Students' recall of words and their good performance in activities demonstrate the positive effect of learning strategies and metacognitive strategies. Figure 6 shows students' opinions on their vocabulary learning process, in which most of the students claim to have learnt the words, and were able to use them in some ways.

Table 3. Students' opinions about their vocabulary learning

| | YES | NO | SOMETIMES |
|----------------------------|-----|----|-----------|
| Remember most of the words | 62 | | 8 |
| Identify words in a text | 56 | 1 | 13 |
| Use the words in writing | 52 | | 18 |
| Use the words orally | 46 | | 24 |

As it can be seen in Figure 6, most students claimed they learnt the vocabulary in the activities and were able to use them in different ways. This information is supported by some impressions the teacher recorded in the field notes. One of the comments shows that learners got good results in the activities, which can be interpreted as students acquired the vocabulary studied to succeed in the activities, as stated in the following excerpt:

“they [students] succeeded in answering most of the questions correctly” (Teacher field notes - Lesson 3).

The students' perspective on their feeling of accomplishment of their objectives gave birth to a subcategory named *Perspective on Reaching the Objective*. Students commented how they felt about their performance and to which extent they felt they reached their goals as it can be seen in a couple of excerpts referred to later in this paper. This self-evaluation process that students made about their work on the activities and the goals they set was enclosed in the category *Engagement on Reflection on the Work Done*, which is closely related to the third stage of the metacognitive strategies Self-Evaluation.

In this category self-evaluation is related to reflection: how learners felt about the results they got in the activities, as well as their performance and the use of vocabulary learning strategies. Reflection was carried out through the learning journals once students finished their activities. Their responses to the questions on reflection were short and concise. In fact, all students expressed that they accomplished their goals. However, in the teacher's field notes, there is a note that says this was not completely true.

“...although students do not recall the vocabulary in the activities one hundred percent accurately, their learning process is more than satisfactory” (Teacher journal – lesson 3).

Despite students not acquiring the vocabulary perfectly, the overall accomplishment of students’ personal goals was positive as they expressed having learnt and practiced the new vocabulary as well as having completed the activities. These assertions are part of the analysis from the student’s journal in which students were asked if they accomplished their objective, and one hundred percent of them answered *yes*. Students also included comments such as “yes, because I learnt new words and reviewed some I already knew” (S9) or “yes, because I asked the teacher about the words I did not know and solved the activity” (S12) (Student’s journal from the first lesson).

Finally, all the data collected, analyzed and categorized supported positively the answer to the research question. The analysis of the three main categories feeding the core category showed students’ improvement during the implementation process. The data showed good results in vocabulary learning, as well as in students’ use of metacognitive strategies, which included planning, monitoring and evaluation through filling in a journal.

5.1 Analysis of Students’ Performance

The outcomes of the activities students carried out in each lesson showed that most students learnt and used the vocabulary taught in them correctly. During the first lesson, an average of seven (7) students got perfect scores in the activities, then five (5) of them did well, having some spelling mistakes, and finally, two (2) presented wording issues or spelling mistakes in half of the vocabulary used in the activities.

Similar results were found in the second lesson in which an average of eight (8) students got perfect scores. This number represents mainly naming and cloze activities

where they only needed to use specific words learnt. Four (4) students did well. They had some minor spelling mistakes and only two (2) students made mistakes in half of the vocabulary used. It is worth mentioning that there was a writing activity that they did on their own following a sample. Then, some mistakes could have been the result of the extra demand of vocabulary not related to the topic in the activity.

In lesson 3, more students got perfect scores. An average of eleven (11) students had no mistakes in the activities. Only two (2) had spelling mistakes and a wrong answer in a questionnaire activity, and one (1) student had trouble fulfilling at least half of the words and answers correctly.

Lesson 4 showed that students kept the same pace as in lesson 3. Eleven (11) students used the vocabulary in the activities perfectly. Two (2) students confused a couple of words and one (1) student made mistakes in three words.

Finally, in lesson 5 the number of students with perfect participation and scores slightly decreased. Eight (8) students had no mistakes during their interventions and pronunciation of words. Six (6) more students had some mistakes. These were minor pronunciation mistakes that did not compromise the outcome of the activity and their speech while speaking. It is important to mention that although the perfect scores decreased, there were not students with poor or average performance, they all did well.

To sum up, as the lessons progressed and through practice in the activities, students' performance was improving. the results show that once students got used to recognizing and analyzing the activities to work on, they worked more efficiently and used the vocabulary taught in a better way to accomplish their objectives and get the best result possible.

Above, how the data became categories was explained. Besides, the analysis done was described focusing on how the information went towards the answer to the research

question and to what extent the objectives were met. In the next section, the research question is answered and the objectives are detailed including how they were reached.

6. Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

6.1 Conclusions

This study is framed in some objectives and the research question. The findings answer the research question; “how can training learners in the use of the metacognitive strategies of planning, monitoring and evaluating, through Learning Journals, help them to improve their lexical competence?” and the objectives derived from the question. First, students were trained in the use of metacognitive strategies, which had a positive impact on students’ learning process, especially vocabulary in this case. This outcome was pursued by the study as one of the objectives stated: “To examine the effect of planning, monitoring and evaluating as metacognitive strategies on students’ lexical competence”.

Also, students were provided with vocabulary learning strategies, which also had a positive impact on their learning process. Moreover, there was a significant effect on students’ understanding of the importance of having a plan when working on learning activities. There was also a significant effect on students’ knowledge of strategies, as well as how to use them correctly.

In regards to the vocabulary learning strategies, students learned to choose them consciously as they started to think about them and marked them down in the journal, too. This means that in the training they were able to consider which strategy fitted better in each case. Students reported having “asked the teacher for help”, “asked a classmate for help” and “used a dictionary” as ways to solve their difficulties. This data was supported in the teacher’s field notes in which it was stated that they “asked for clarification and help to the teacher and classmates”. The students took these actions to achieve their objectives, which in several cases were vocabulary learning. This shows that when learners know a wider range of strategies to choose from according to their needs, they will fulfill their goals and perform better in any language learning situation. So,

taking the time to train them in vocabulary learning strategies is a big plus at the moment of teaching the lesson.

Students demonstrated they reached their objectives with their performance in each lesson. From the performance, students' vocabulary learning process can be qualified as satisfactory. They were able to use the vocabulary taught to prepare speeches, fill in blanks, identify words from recordings, matching words, and checking. Some minor mistakes appeared such as mispronunciation or spelling issues. However, this was expected to occur, and it is not a big concern that there may be grammar or other mistakes if the vocabulary used is accurate and utterances are understandable. That is to say, vocabulary is more important for communication. Furthermore, students made a list of the vocabulary they could recall, demonstrating their acquisition of the vocabulary used in the activities.

After students finished the activities, they had the opportunity to reflect on the work done by completing a journal. The use of the journal and its importance in the study is one of the main variables and it is stated in one of the objectives; "To use students' journals to encourage student analysis and awareness of their learning process". The journal included questions that made them consider the entire process they undertook to finish the activities such as the goal they set, their plan, the strategies they used and their performance during activities.

Additionally, their perception of meeting the objectives proposed was also an aspect of reflection. Most students considered they had reached their objectives completely, however, some of them claimed to have had difficulties such as not learning all the words proposed, not understanding the instructions or having spelling problems. These comments were stated in the journals. From this, students reached a higher degree of awareness in terms of self-evaluating their actions during the activities. They became

more honest with themselves when trying to look back at their work and assessing their performance.

When students get used to self-evaluation and reflection, they can identify their weaknesses and prepare themselves better for an exam, lesson, or activity. Then, if the teacher may not be fulfilling their needs in terms of language learning, the same students can act and use their strategies to learn what they must or want.

6.2 Pedagogical Implications

Incorporating the use of metacognitive strategies in the curriculum of schools helps English teachers accomplish the challenging task of teaching English in EFL contexts where learners have less exposure to the language. Teachers can help learners use different metacognitive strategies to facilitate their vocabulary acquisition. Teachers take the role of models to show the students how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning process and how to improve their vocabulary on their effort.

Students in this project began making changes that brought improvements to their learning process. Here is a list of the aspects improved:

- Students valued the importance of vocabulary.
- Students more easily recalled the vocabulary they learned.
- Students had a wider repertory of vocabulary learning strategies and used them wisely.
- Students reflected on the effort and outcome of the activities.
- Students took action in order to meet their objectives when plans did not go as they expected.

In conclusion, training on metacognitive strategies helped students primarily by familiarizing them with learning strategies, allowing them to identify which strategies worked better for certain objectives, and when modifications should be made. Students cultivated a sense of autonomy in the learning process, in which they could set their own goals, monitor themselves while making decisions in the accomplishment of the goal, and finally reflect on the decisions made.

Learning journals were the means students used for reflection. The reflection consisted of filling the journal answering the questions related to their objective, plan, and self-evaluation on their performance. Through them, students could easily focus on the points they needed to reflect on the work done, such as the learning strategies they used, the vocabulary learnt and whether they reached their personal objective or not. Journals worked as a guide to show them the path in the self-evaluation stage. Moreover, once students learn this process, they can do it on their own without the need for the journal.

Students also learned to consider their prior knowledge in their plan to solve activities and reach goals. Actually, students can extrapolate these skills and apply them to any other learning area. Taking advantage of strategies such as asking classmates and the teacher for help, paying close attention to instructions and consulting any literary resource will be of great help when facing activities in any area. If a teacher is going through a similar process of training in metacognition with his/her students, it is advisable to organize the process by stages, that is, students need to learn to set their objectives, then to monitor their plan and finally a reflection on their accomplishment of the objective. Also, students can be explicitly guided through the process and then as they familiarize themselves with the process, it can be done implicitly in the lessons.

Besides learning English, similar learning processes can apply metacognitive strategies. Nevertheless, some tips are important to consider. First, students need to go

through a training period. This period can be as long as it is necessary so it is more effective and students make it part of their usual learning habits. Moreover, students' attitude and motivation need to be fostered, so the activities need to be carefully planned in terms of difficulty and learning outcome. The teachers responsible for the process need to be patient, the process of familiarizing with the metacognitive strategies is not easy nor fast, but it will be an important skill for students to be independent in their learning. As the facility conditions are not under the teacher's control, they can become limitations to the process. However, with good planning, the work with the students can still have good results.

6.3 Limitations

There is always a perfect scenario in which every researcher wants his studies to take place. Nevertheless, the unexpected occurs and jeopardizes some aspects of the study that fortunately, in this study, did not have a massive effect. First, due to schedule issues, the implementation was programmed in five sessions. This tight schedule limited some aspects of the study. First, students' training in metacognition and the use of the journal was rather mechanical at first, for instance, students used some goals suggested by the teacher such as learn and/or practice new words as their own. It would have been better if they had had the time and practice to familiarize themselves more and think of a goal even beyond the suggested ones. Then, more or extra sessions could have been used for training students in using the journal, and what metacognition involves.

It also affected the data collection procedure; the learning Journal. Although a journal can be adapted depending on what it is required from it, in terms of avoiding a waste of time or confusion, the journal included closed questions and segments for short comments. Students could have shared important observations without the limitations of the questions. Either way, the design of the journal fulfilled its purpose.

Additionally, many students dropped out of the study. The study started with 23 students but due to various reasons, only 14 students attended every class during the implementation stage. Then, the data analyzed only considered the students who were in the process the entire time. The number of students who were taken out of the study risked its validity due to the small amount left. Nevertheless, the process continued without complications. Also, there is the possibility that more students would have meant more positive results for the project.

Finally, more data collection instruments could have been useful. Although the data collected by the instruments used were enough to compile the information and the triangulation for supporting the answer to the research question, more instruments would have added important insights to the study. Interviews tests to measure learners' level of English before and after the implementation and a focus group was at a time considered for the study. However, due to the end of the school year approaching, there was not enough time to implement the aforementioned instruments.

6.4 Further Research

This study covered three metacognitive stages; planning, monitoring and evaluating. Studying the effect of one stage and the strategies it involves would have a greater effect on students' learning habits because they can practice and master the strategies. Thus, the effect of students setting their own learning goals for learning activities can be engaged as a research topic. In the same way, students' monitoring strategies and their impact on their learning, and self-evaluation as an attitude changing aspect towards language learning. All these can be broken down and become is an interesting area to research on.

Also, vocabulary learning was focused mainly on their written use, as the results were measured in the activities done. Students also worked in oral and listening activities,

nevertheless, the effect on the metacognitive strategies could be studied focusing on one skill. So, there is a list of items in which more research can be done.

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Appendices

Appendix A

CUESTIONARIO

Antecedentes.

Fecha: _____

Género: Femenino____ Masculino____ **Edad:** _____

Lea detenidamente los diferentes enunciados y responde de acuerdo a tu experiencia.

Marque con una X la opción adecuada (Bueno-Malo-Regular / Siempre- Algunas veces-Nunca) para indicar la frecuencia con la que usted usa dicha acción.

En algunas de las preguntas usted necesita dar su punto de vista y es necesario que responda detalladamente en el espacio indicado.

| | Bueno | Malo | Regular | |
|--|------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Cree que el nivel de vocabulario que usted tiene es.... | | | | |
| 2. ¿Considera que el vocabulario es importante para mejorar su aprendizaje del inglés? | Si____ | No____ | ¿Por qué? | |
| 3. ¿Qué tipo de situaciones hacen que usted estudie vocabulario nuevo? | | | | |
| 4. ¿Cuánto tiempo dedica en horas extra clase para aprender vocabulario nuevo? | Ninguna _____ | Menos de una hora _____ | De dos a tres horas _____ | De tres horas a más _____ |

Marque con una (X) las actividades que realiza cuando quiere aprender nuevas palabras en inglés.

| PLANEAR | Siempre | Algunas veces | Nunca |
|---|---------|---------------|-------|
| 1 ¿Establece objetivos claros sobre el vocabulario que quiere o necesita aprender en inglés? | | | |
| 2 ¿Piensa cómo aprender nuevas palabras en inglés (lo que necesita saber, pasos a seguir, tipo de vocabulario, recursos)? | | | |

| | |
|---|--|
| 3 | ¿Utiliza sus conocimientos previos en inglés para recordar y aprender nuevas palabras? |
| 4 | ¿Cree que hacer un plan para aprender nuevas palabras es importante? Sí___ No___ ¿por qué? |

MONITOREO:

Marque con una (X) las actividades que realiza cuando quiere aprender nuevas palabras en inglés

| | Actividad | Siempre | Algunas veces | Nunca |
|----|--|---------|---------------|-------|
| 1 | Lee la palabra varias veces | | | |
| 2 | Escribe la palabra varias veces | | | |
| 3 | Hace ejercicios de traducción | | | |
| 4 | Aprende palabras asociándolas con cosas que le rodean | | | |
| 5 | Hace oraciones con las palabras | | | |
| 6 | Usa imágenes para aprender las palabras | | | |
| 7 | Elabora un listado de palabras en su cuaderno | | | |
| 8 | Hace relaciones formando grupos de palabras con las mismas características Ej.: animales: gato, perro, pez, etc. | | | |
| 9 | Usa gestos y mímica para recordar la palabra | | | |
| 10 | Describa lo que usted hace para aprender un vocabulario nuevo: | | | |

| EVALUACION: | | Siempre | Algunas Veces | Nunca |
|-------------|--|---------|---------------|----------|
| 1 | ¿Usted analiza si las actividades que hace para aprender nuevo vocabulario le sirven o no? | | | |
| 2 | ¿Centra su atención en hacer las actividades hasta el final? | | | |
| 3 | ¿Evalúa que tan bien funcionaron sus técnicas de aprendizaje? | | | |
| 4 | ¿Tiene dificultades para aprender palabras nuevas? | | | ¿Cuáles? |

MUCHAS GRACIAS POR SU COLABORACIÓN.

Appendix B

TEACHER'S FIELD NOTES

UNIVERSIDAD DE CORDOBA – CENTRO DE IDIOMAS

TEACHER JOURNAL N. _____

TOPIC: _____

Date: _____

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

2. OBSERVATIONS

3. FIRST ANALYSIS

Appendix C

STUDENTS' JOURNAL (DIARIO DEL ESTUDIANTE)

Querido estudiante,

Toma algunos minutos de tu tiempo para contestar las siguientes preguntas acerca de tu desempeño y lo que piensas sobre la actividad que acabas de realizar. La información que reportes aquí es confidencial (sólo el profesor tendrá acceso a ella), será usada solo para propósitos de este estudio, y no tendrá ninguna influencia en tus calificaciones.

Por favor, sé tan honesto como puedas y da tantos detalles como sea posible.

UNIVERSIDAD DE CORDOBA - CENTRO DE IDIOMAS

NOMBRE DEL ESTUDIANTE:

FECHA DE LA SESION:

TEMA DE LA CLASE:

PLANEAR **Escribe el objetivo que te propusiste al inicio de la clase:**

Describe las acciones que llevarías para llevar a cabo tu objetivo.

MONITOREAR ¿Qué dudas o dificultades tuviste durante el desarrollo de las actividades?

¿Cómo solucionaste estas dificultades? Describe brevemente.

¿Cuántas palabras de las que aprendiste en la clase recuerdas? escríbelas:

Marca con una x las estrategias que utilizaste para aprender vocabulario durante las actividades.

APRENDIZAJE DE VOCABULARIO

Leer la palabra varias veces

Escribir la palabra varias veces

Hacer ejercicios de traducción

Aprender palabras asociándolas con cosas que te rodean

Usar imágenes para aprender las palabras

| |
|---|
| Elaborar un listado de palabras en tu cuaderno |
| Hacer relaciones formando grupos de palabras con las mismas características Ej.: animales: gato, perro, pez, etc. |
| Usar gestos y mímica para recordar la palabra |
| Preguntar al profesor |
| Preguntar a un compañero |
| Adivinar por contexto |

OTRA

| | | | | |
|---------|---|-----------|-----------|----------------------|
| EVALUAR | Escribe brevemente como te fue en las actividades con respecto a: | | | |
| | Aprendizaje de vocabulario. | Si | No | Algunas veces |

Recuerdo la mayoría de palabras trabajadas en la clase.

Las identifico en un texto.

Las puedo usar de forma escrita.

Las puedo usar de forma oral exitosamente .

Cumplimiento de tu objetivo:

¿Fueron correctas tus predicciones con respecto al vocabulario que necesitabas para la tarea? ¿Por qué?

¿Cumpliste con el objetivo que te propusiste?

| | | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|----------------------|
| Desempeño personal durante la actividad. | Si | No | Algunas veces |
|---|-----------|-----------|----------------------|

Me esforcé en dar lo mejor de mí durante las clases.

Fui responsable en el desarrollo de las actividades.

Fui consciente de mis dificultades en el desarrollo

de las actividades y trate de
solucionarlas.

Considero que aprendí y
alcancé el objetivo
propuesto.

Appendix D

DEFINING AND IMPLEMENTING TEACHING STRATEGIES TO FOSTER SELF-DIRECTED LANGUAGE LEARNING IN COLOMBIA RESEARCH PROJECT PART 2 2012

LESSON PLAN TEMPLATE FOR INTERVENTION

Adapted from Dr. Joan Rubin's Lesson Planner, ICELT lesson plan template and Weekly Planner 2012-02 Department of Languages and Cultures, Universidad de La Sabana

Name of co-researcher:

University Code Number:

Institution:

Date of Class DAY: Time of Class: Saturday

MONTH: YEAR: 2012

Length of class: 4 hours

Week No. 1

Time Frame: 3 class periods

Class/grade:

Room: 1

Number of students:

Average age of Students: 14-16 years old

Number of years of English study: 2 years

Level of students

A1 A2 B1 B2 C1 C2

Lesson Number

1 2 3 4

Research Circle Leader: xxxx

5 6 7 8

Set Lesson Goals

At the end of the lesson the students will produce a short paragraph in which they will apply the vocabulary about the activities they carry out on a particular day.

| | |
|---|---|
| Language Goal | Assessment Criteria |
| At the end of the class students will write a short paragraph in which they will use vocabulary about their daily routines. | Students will use language regarding daily routines vocabulary in a short writing checking the correct use of simple present tense. |

| | |
|--|--|
| Learning to Learn Goal | Assessment Criteria |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will set a personal goal to write a short paragraph about their daily routines. • Students will plan how to accomplish the task. | Students will be asked to write a short paragraph about their daily routines, during the task the teacher will observe students' performance and final product (paragraph) to check students' understanding of the task. |

Topic for the lesson

My Routines

The topic for the lesson was selected after discussing the similarities of the researchers' contexts and the similar problems students were having in their classes –lack of vocabulary to talk about their everyday life. The topic that arose was everyday activities, and then we divided these activities into some sub-categories such as, daily routines, school day, chores, free time and vacation activities. Finally, this lesson includes the topic “daily routines” as a way to help learners overcome their lack of vocabulary.

Materials and Resources

The main purpose of the materials and resources used in this lesson is to encourage children to think in detail about the activities of one particular day. They also begin to be aware of the activities in different lifestyle, routine and relationships with others.

The materials described below were taken from: Teenagers 6 Special Edition: Teacher's Guide: Greenwich ELT. Pp. 72-75

Reading: “Thomas’ daily routines, and my daily routines”

Rationale:

This reading will reinforce the vocabulary and expressions learnt in class and at the same time, it will help students to contextualize and compare their daily routine with others' routines. Other values of this kind of material are listed as: sensitivity to various forms of syntax, diction, and rhetoric; recognizing patterns in language and human experience; stimulating creativity and giving practice in problem solving, decision making and evaluation (Baker and Greene, 1987 p.3)

Worksheet about Thomas routine

worksheet Rationale:

The idea of implementing a worksheet in this lesson is to demonstrate how skills and knowledge can be developed through practice, since they can introduce wider concepts and practical activities related to daily routines. It is also intended for students to tap their existing knowledge, expand on it, and actively learn more about themselves in relation to many different daily routines.

Assumed knowledge

Students can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic verbs aimed at the satisfaction of primary needs.

They can introduce him/ herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has.

Students can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Anticipated problems and planned solutions

Some unexpected events can become obstacles for the normal development of the activities and the project. Some of the possible situations that may arise are: Students' shyness impede that they participate actively in the class.

A solution can be a warming up activity that involves students in class and raise self-esteem. For instance; placing a Warm Fuzzy board somewhere in the room. Ask everyone to write an uplifting note to everyone else in the group. Place them on the board. No one signs his/ her name. Also, giving students continuous feedback about how well they are doing and encouraging them to not get left behind.

Description of language item / skill(s)

| | |
|------|---|
| Form | Simple present, Wh- questions, action verbs in the present simple, frequency adverbs. |
|------|---|

| | |
|--|--|
| Meaning | Enhance basic writing about their habits and routines as well as describing others' routines. |
| Use | Express habits and routines, as short descriptions of what normally happens in a typical day. |
| Skill(s) and sub skill(s) | Reading: reading for specific information, scanning, skimming Writing: accuracy Students use basic language to describe activities about daily routines, reporting own cases and talking about other situation. |
| (For CLIL) Content Communication Cognition Culture | NA |