

**VOCABULARY LEARNING THROUGH METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES AMONG
3rd GRADERS**

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Abstract

The present research project aimed at using metacognitive strategies in the classroom as a way to learn vocabulary and foster autonomous learning. It was carried out on a population of 3rd graders boys and girls from a public school in Bogotá Colombia. The research study followed a qualitative research paradigm, the action research approach, and the task-based learning as the pedagogical approach. It was found that through the use of metacognitive strategies the students learnt vocabulary about different topics, became more creative when doing homework, improved their attention and their participation in class, and also developed motivation for autonomous learning.

Key Words: Metacognition, Vocabulary, Foreign Language, Metacognitive Strategies, Learning strategies, Autonomous learning

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2.Descripción	
<p>El siguiente trabajo es un proyecto de aula llevado a cabo en la Institución Aníbal Fernández de Soto, sede B. El tipo de estudio es investigación acción, la cual se enmarca dentro del paradigma cualitativo. En éste se identifica un problema de investigación relacionado con la falta de estrategias para aprender vocabulario. Se propone una metodología de enseñanza basada en estrategias metacognitivas aplicadas en el aula , utilizando un enfoque basado en tareas, con el fin de fomentar la adquisición del vocabulario en Inglés y la autonomía de los estudiantes.</p>	
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4. Contenidos

El estudio comprende seis capítulos. El primero contiene el contexto, tanto de la población como de la escuela, el problema de investigación, la justificación, la pregunta de investigación y los objetivos propuestos para responderla. En el segundo contiene el marco teórico, en el cual se mencionan algunos estudios relacionados con la presente investigación y los constructos teóricos que la soportan. El tercer capítulo contiene el diseño de la investigación, en el cual se especifica el tipo de investigación y el paradigma investigativo, así como los instrumentos de recolección de información. En el cuarto capítulo se hace una breve reseña de cómo son entendidos los

conceptos de currículo, aprendizaje, y salón de clases, así como una detallada descripción de los ciclos en los que se llevó a cabo la investigación. El capítulo cinco muestra cuales fueron los hallazgos que emergieron de acuerdo al análisis de datos. Finalmente, en el capítulo seis se recogen las conclusiones a las que se llegó con respecto a la investigación.

5. Metodología

El proyecto se llevó a cabo en tres ciclos. En el primer ciclo se hicieron observaciones y se aplicaron encuestas y cuestionarios con el fin de hacer un diagnóstico de la población en cuanto a sus necesidades de aprendizaje. Luego se determinó el problema y con base en ello se diseñó la propuesta de investigación. En el segundo ciclo se aplicó la propuesta pedagógica encaminada a responder la pregunta problema, la cual consistió en aplicar estrategias metacognitivas en clase para aprender vocabulario en Inglés. En el tercer ciclo se evaluó a los estudiantes con respecto al diagnóstico inicial y se analizaron los datos.

6. Conclusiones

Con base en el análisis de datos, se concluyó que por medio de las estrategias metacognitivas, los estudiantes mejoraron su atención, incrementaron su participación en clases, se volvieron más creativos a la hora de hacer tareas relacionadas con el aprendizaje de vocabulario, desarrollaron autonomía con respecto a su aprendizaje, y lograron aprender variedad de vocabulario y utilizarlo en los contextos vistos en clase.

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CHAPTER I

This Chapter presents general facts about the school in which the research was carried out, the kind of population and its main characteristics concerning cognitive, social-emotional, economic, cultural and linguistic matters. The reader will also find the statement of problem, the proposed objectives to respond to the research question and the rationale.

Context

Colegio Aníbal Fernández de Soto sede B is located on Carrera 50 No. 143-33 in the locality of Suba, in the neighborhood Prado Pinzón, Bogotá city. Suba is the 11th locality of Bogotá. It is located in the north-western part of the city, surrounded by green zones and hills to the west, swamps such as Torca, Guaymaral, Córdoba, Tibabuyes and La conejera, as well as rivers such as Bogotá and Juan Jaramillo to the west and south. There are more than fifty public schools in this zone. Prado Pinzón neighborhood has a lot of shops, small restaurants, bakeries, supermarkets and businesses such as car washes and car parks.

Colegio Aníbal Fernández de Soto is a public coeducational school legally approved by the National Ministry of Education since 1974. This branch is only for primary, grades 1^o to 5^o. The mission of the school is to educate autonomous, analytic, critical, righteous and honest people through the teaching of values and work ethics. As a vision, the school expects in the next twelve years to educate people who are able to construct their own life projects as entrepreneurs who look for social transformation in order to attain a righteous society.

Concerning the infrastructure of the school, it is only a one-floor building with nine small classrooms, a small yard—in which the students form queues before entering class or when there

are important meetings such as the pledge of allegiance to the flag, assemblies and the voting for school government — the Coordinator's office, and the toilets. There is a park in front of the school and a Catholic church next to it. The school has neither a restaurant nor cafeteria nor a store in which children can buy snacks. However, because it is public a school, they are given a snack every day when it is break time.

Regarding the educational resources of the school that could hinder or foster language learning, there is neither a library nor a multimedia room, nor does the school have tools such as projectors or TV sets. Thus, the students cannot count on books or technology to do research, homework, or to have interactive classes in which the teacher is not the only source of learning. Furthermore, the room is too small and it is impossible to make round tables or gather them in groups in order to do workshops or play games. There is only a tape recorder in the room but the teacher does not use it.

According to the rulebook the population of the school including the two branches is 1.627 students and 62 teachers. The school day in these two branches is divided into two: the morning and the afternoon shifts. In branch B there are ten teachers in the morning shift, one in charge of each grade. All of them are between forty and sixty two years old except for one, who is about 33. Each teacher is in charge of one grade, giving them almost all the subjects. All of them have degrees as teachers except for one, who is *Normalista* (Elementary school teacher). There is only one teacher who is studying a Master degree. However, none of them have a degree in teaching English.

There are teenage students who come from the main branch in order to do social service. They are in 10th or 11th grades and come to help with the distribution of the snacks during the

break, and also help teachers to look out for the children while they are absent or help the little ones to go to the bathroom and keep order. There is also a group of teachers who are developing ludic activities and cross curricular projects focused on communication, free time, science and technology, democracy and living together.

The group of students participating in this this research comes from the third grade morning shift. There are 33 children in the group, between eight and ten years old. Most of them belong to social strata three and four, with only one boy in stratum one and a few of them in stratum 2. Some of them come from private schools and all of them live in the same neighborhood close to the school. Most of them live with their two parents or relatives such as uncles and aunts or grandparents. Their parents' professions are varied: Military men, administrators, secretaries, shop owners, waitress, mechanics, pilots, construction workers and welders. There are only two children whose mothers do not work.

As was described before, the neighborhood in which the school is located is a commercial sector with a lot of shops, factories and malls. It is remarkable that most of the children belong to social strata three and four, with only one boy in stratum one. Thus, these children do not have economic problems that affect their learning process. For example, almost all of them have computers and internet connection at home, except for four students.

Concerning cognitive characteristics, the children have difficulties concentrating during the class (see Field diary 2, lines 3-5). They are able to repeat the vocabulary of the lesson while the teacher pronounces it, but when they are asked to pronounce the word by themselves they do not remember. Besides, almost all of them have difficulties in reading comprehension and writing in Spanish, in math and of course in English. In general they find it hard to follow instructions,

especially when the teacher is addressing them. They concentrate during the class only if they have to color or to draw. When the teacher makes a review of the English topics studied in a previous class, generally they do not remember anything.

On the other hand, some children do not complete the activities of the subjects they have to study. When it is break time, some of them have to stay in the classroom to copy the lesson from the board. Sometimes they do not even have time to eat their snack. This could explain the lack of concentration and the underachievement, if they do not have time to play or rest during the break, it will be difficult to focus on the class. In some cases the teacher has to omit some topics or skip one subject in order to wait for them to finish. Thus, when this situation happens, the students get delayed concerning the topics they have to study in each subject.

There is only one child with special needs. The boy has a visual impairment, because of that he takes a lot of time to carry out written activities in the classroom. The rest of the children are regular boys and girls. In other words, they do not have any particular condition in regards cognitive or physical state.

As to socio-emotional characteristics, none of them come from very poor families in vulnerable situation or families in which there is violence or mistreatment. Although they speak too much during the class, none of them show aggressive behaviors during the class or use bad words. There is one boy who was abandoned by his mother and lives with his father in a nursing home in which his father works as a nurse. There is another boy who is adopted. According to the teacher this is causing trouble with his adoptive mother due to the fact that he knows that he is adopted. The teacher says that these two children mentioned before, are going to be taken to a child psychologist to assist with their circumstances.

With respect to linguistic characteristics, all of them speak Spanish from the altiplano cundiboyancense (a set of highlands located on the Eastern Cordillera of the Colombian Andes between the departments of Cundinamarca and Boyacá), except for the boy from the coast. They use the jargon typical of their ages and their educational level; that is to say that they make the common mistakes that people make when they do not have formal instruction in language. With respect to English, they have just started to have contact with the language; so it is not possible to talk about their linguistic characteristics.

Statement of the problem

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and Colombian Basic Standards of competences in English as a foreign language, state that 3rd graders are supposed to be in level A 1, which means that they are able to understand and use everyday expressions and basic phrases to express needs. They should also be able to introduce themselves saying where they live, people they know and things they have. However, they are yet to comply with what is expected in level A1, and the reason seems to be that they do not know enough vocabulary to achieve the aforementioned. There are two main causes that might explain the low knowledge of English vocabulary among students. One of the causes might be the lack of practice. In one of the surveys the participants answered (see appendix B), most of them admit that at home they never revise the vocabulary they learn at school or try to learn vocabulary by themselves, they also admit not doing all the English activities in class and that they neither participate in speaking activities during the class. The observations show that when the teacher makes a review of the previous topics, they do not remember anything.

On the other hand, the teacher in charge does not give quizzes or exams to the students; she just assigns a grade according to the notes and writing activities that they have in their notebooks. Thus, the students are not accustomed to doing activities in which they practice vocabulary. Then, a second cause for their low level is that they do not have habits which relates to the acquisition of vocabulary.

Based on the above-mentioned, it is possible to affirm that the problem has to do with the lack of pedagogical actions oriented to vocabulary learning, including the encouragement of creating habits related to the acquisition of vocabulary. Moreover, due to the fact that they are just starting to have contact with the language, it is better to focus on learning basic vocabulary using metacognitive strategies aimed at helping them to remember the words and to reflect about their learning process, realizing the need of studying at home as a way to become autonomous. Besides, as has been explained before, the classes are given in Spanish and focused on presenting the vocabulary in English and showing them the translation of the words into Spanish. Thus, there is no appropriate process of learning in which students apply strategies to learn vocabulary.

Hence, through the observations, questionnaires and surveys it is evident that the objectives related to English learning are not being achieved. In this regard, it is important to think about the implementation of strategies that will help them to learn vocabulary as well as encourage them to generate their own learning strategies.

Rationale

Vocabulary learning is one of the most complicated tasks when learning a language, especially in this time in which memorization has become an old-fashioned way of learning. Besides, learning a new language does not have to do only with memorizing words and

information about it. On the other hand, the role of the teacher has changed as well, he is no more the one who transmits the knowledge and establishes how to learn. Nowadays, it is expected that students participate more actively in their learning process and be able to plan and evaluate the progress they make and the strategies used to achieve their goals in the process of learning a foreign language.

Taking into account the need for vocabulary learning, it is appropriate to work on metacognition, and how the use of metacognitive strategies focused on vocabulary learning could help students to improve the way they learn and to not forget so easily the new vocabulary that they learn in the classroom.

Thus, the importance of this project relies on the need of making students think and reflect about their own learning process and be equipped to solve problems. If they are able to monitor, plan, direct and regulate the way they learn, it would be easier for them to be autonomous learners not only of English as a foreign language, but in every learning process in different areas such as the other subjects they have to study at school.

On the other hand, it is important to implement this kind of projects in public schools because it is a way of preparing students to work with the tools and resources they have, which in most of the cases are not enough or does not comply with what is required according to the context or the student's needs. Besides, even if the students count on technological resources, the use of metacognitive strategies will enable them to use these resources appropriately or generate new kind of resources in order to perform better.

For teachers, it is very important that students use metacognitive strategies in order to be able to learn by themselves and to not rely only on what the teacher says or does. This will

enable teachers to perform their role as the ones who create a good environment for children to learn, instead of being the ones who give the knowledge and evaluate what the students know.

In order to understand how metacognitive strategies could help students acquire vocabulary, let us first make a brief introduction to the conception of Metacognition:

Metacognition has been defined as “the knowledge and regulation of one’s thought processes”. Several researchers propose that metacognitive activities can “stimulate learning and solving problems processes” (Helms-Lorenz & Annemieke, 2008, p.04). Then through the use of metacognitive strategies, it is expected that students improve vocabulary learning.

Research Question

How might the implementation of metacognitive strategies with third-graders in an EFL classroom in a public school in Colombia foster vocabulary learning?

General Objective

To determine how metacognitive strategies might foster vocabulary learning in third-graders in an EFL classroom in a public school in Colombia

Specific objectives

- To identify the main roles that metacognitive strategies might play in vocabulary learning
- To determine which metacognitive strategies might help to develop autonomous learning

The next chapter will describe the main constructs that support the implementation of this project, how they are interpreted by the researcher, the metacognitive strategies that will be applied in order to foster vocabulary learning, taking into account the students ‘context and their needs regarding the English learning.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the theoretical constructs that support the present project, such as metacognition, learning strategies, cognitive and metacognitive strategies and vocabulary. Each construct will be explained according to the perspective of its correspondent authors, including the researcher's interpretation and the way each construct was applied in the study, according to the type of population and the objectives. It also includes a brief review of some research studies that show how metacognition is related to autonomous learning, as well as a description of the pedagogical approach that the present project followed.

Metacognition as a way to foster student's autonomy

The term metacognition emerged in the 1970s with the research studies of the American psychologist John Flavell. At the beginning he did not use the term metacognition but metamemory, a term that became popular at that time when it started to appear in conferences, newspapers and new research studies. Flavell, Friedrichs and Hoyt (as cited in Dunlosky & Metacalfy, 2009) wanted to test preschoolers 'capacity of remembering items from a list after studying them. Although the children expressed to be ready for the test, they were not able to remember all the items of the test. Likewise, Ellen Markman (as cited in Dunlosky & Metacalfy, 2009) asked elementary school children to listen to some instructions that were incomplete and report whether they understood or not. Even though many of them indicated that they understood, they could not find the mistakes in the instructions. These situations led Flavell to write the article "Metacognition and Cognitive Monitoring: A New Area of Cognitive Inquiry". This article was highly influential because it promoted the importance of metacognition, especially

with respect to understanding cognitive development (pp. 31, 32). Flavell (as cited in Dunlosky & Metacalfe, 2009) defined metacognition as “knowledge and cognition about cognitive phenomena (p. 32). He also specified that metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive experiences constituted monitoring and control of cognition.

Metacognitive knowledge is a person’s declarative knowledge or beliefs about how various factors influence the processes and outcomes of any given task [...]. *Metacognitive experiences* are those cognitive or affective experiences that may occur as a person completes a cognitive task and are most closely aligned with metacognitive monitoring [...]. (Dunlosky & Metacalfe, 2009 p.32) [Italics in the original]

According to Jausovec (2008) metacognition consists of knowledge and control. Metacognitive knowledge belongs to one’s knowledge of how one’s cognition operates while metacognitive control belongs to how one controls their cognitive operations. In regards to knowledge, Wenden (as cited in Pavičić, 2008) describes three kinds of metacognitive knowledge:

Person knowledge is general knowledge that learners have about learning or themselves as learners, which includes cognitive and affective factors facilitating or inhibiting learning. Task knowledge refers to what learners need to know about procedures involved in the task in order to complete it successfully [...]. Strategic knowledge is the knowledge learners have about strategies, i.e. knowledge about which strategies work best and knowledge about general approaches to language learning that can guide learner’s selection of strategies (Pavičić, 2008 pp. 53, 54).

However, it is important to take into account that it is not easy for students to monitor or reflect about their own learning, especially in the case of third graders, who are just starting to have contact with the English language and do not really see it as an important subject for their education or even their future. Thus, as students are not conscious of their own learning needs, it is important that teachers give them metacognitive support. According to Carter (2006), “until students can recognize that learning is an internal process that maybe aided by, but that is not dependent on the teacher involvement, teachers will need to guide and facilitate autonomy by providing students with metacognitive support”[...].(p. 147). In this order of ideas, for students to use metacognitive strategies to learn vocabulary, it is necessary that these strategies are showed first by the teacher, who also will have to teach them how to plan and monitor their learning process. Thus, if students are given strategies for vocabulary learning, they could also develop their own strategies to achieve this goal.

For the present project, metacognition is understood as a process of reflection that enable students to monitor their learning by means of strategies aimed at achieving goals related to the foreign language. Thus, working on metacognitive strategies could be a tool not only to foster students’ autonomy but also to improve the learning of the foreign language and “to control their own learning process and progress” (Pavičić, 2008, p.54).

Furthermore, metacognition plays a key role in many cognitive activities related to language acquisition and language use such as communication, reading/listening comprehension, and writing. Awareness of metacognitive process is linked to planning, monitoring and evaluating cognitive processes while doing language tasks which help learners to manage, direct, regulate and guide their learning (Rahimi & Abedi 2014, p. 171).

Task-based teaching

In relation to language tasks, it is appropriate to mention that the present project followed task-based teaching as the pedagogical approach, which involves the execution of tasks during the class for students to learn the language. In the words of Shuaifeifei & Chenzhi (2013) “Task-based language teaching means that learning is motivated by concrete learning tasks” (p.231). However, in the context of teaching a language, there are many definitions of what a task is. In this regard, Breen (as cited in Willis & Willis 2007) states:

Task is therefore assumed to refer to a range of work-plans which have the overall purpose of facilitating language from the brief and simple exercise type to mere complex and lengthy activities such as group problem-solving or simulations and decision-making (p. 12).

Nevertheless, Willis & Willis (2007) remark that this definition is not useful if we want to distinguish task-based teaching from other kinds of teaching as it includes anything that might happen in a classroom. Let us look at some focused definitions:

Nunan(as cited in Willis & Willis 2007) states that a task is “a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form”(p.12). Willis (as cited in Willis & Willis 2007) defines tasks “as activities where the target language is used by the learner for a communicative purpose (goal) in order to achieve an outcome” (p.12).

Skehan (as cited in Willis & Willis 2007), establishes that a task is “an activity in which

- Meaning is primary
- Learners are not given other people’s meanings to regurgitate
- There is some sort of relationship to comparable real world activities

- Task completion has some sort of priority
- The assessment of the task is in terms of outcome” (p. 12).

On the other hand, Bachman and Palmer (cited in Willis & Willis 2007), speak about a *language use task*, which refers to “an activity that involves individuals in using language for the purpose of achieving a particular goal or outcome in a particular situation” (p.12). Thus, the aforementioned metacognitive strategies are going to be applied with the executions of tasks in which the students learn and practice vocabulary.

Learning strategies

According to O’Malley & Chamot (1990) “Learning strategies are special ways of processing information that enhance comprehension, learning, or retention of the information” (O’Malley & Chamot pp. 01). Regarding second language learning, Rubin’s study (as cited in O’Malley & Chamot, 1990) classified learning strategies into two groups. The first, consist of strategies that directly affect learning. These are: **clarification/verification**, which involves asking for examples of how to use a word or expression and repetition of words to confirm understanding; **monitoring**, which consists of correcting mistakes in one’s own or another’s pronunciation, vocabulary, spelling, grammar, etc.; **memorization**, which involves taking notes of new items, pronouncing them out loud, writing them repeatedly and finding mnemonics; **guessing/inductive inference**, which consists of guessing the meaning from key words, pictures, structures, context, etc.; **deductive reasoning**, the one that allows the student to compare native language to target language and make groups of words and looks for rules of co-occurrence; **Practice**, which has to do with experimenting with new sounds, repeating sentences until they are easy to pronounce, listening carefully and trying to imitate.

The second group consists of strategies that contribute indirectly to learning. These are: **create opportunities for practice**, which means that the student creates situations to initiate a conversation with a native speaker or his classmates. He also spends time listening to TV, practicing in a language lab, etc.; **production trick**, which involves using circumlocutions, synonyms or cognates. The student also uses formulaic interaction and contextualizes to clarify meaning.

The above-mentioned strategies are classified as second languages learning strategies, regarding how they affect learning. Nevertheless, Pavičić (2008) states that language learning strategies can be categorized into cognitive, metacognitive, social and affective; even though the latter are also classified in the group of socioaffective strategies. In this order of ideas, cognitive and metacognitive strategies are going to be described, highlighting the metacognitive ones, which are the center of attention of this project.

Cognitive strategies

According to Rubin (as cited in Pavičić 2008) cognitive strategies concern mental steps or actions that are employed in learning and problem solving, and that require direct analysis, transformation or synthesis of learning material (p.53). O'Malley & Chamot (1990) state that "cognitive strategies involve interacting with the material to be learned, manipulating the material mentally or physically, or applying a specific technique to a learning task" (p. 138). Some of these strategies are:

Repetition. It involves repeating words or phrases when performing a language class.

Note taking. It consists of writing down key words in abbreviated verbal, graphic or numerical way in order to perform a language task.

Resourcing. This strategy has to do with the use of reference sources about the target language, such as dictionaries, text books and previous work.

Elaboration. It involves relating new information to prior knowledge and making meaningful associations to the material presented.

Summarization. It involves making mental or written summaries of the information presented in a task.

Inferencing. It consists of using available information to guess the meaning of unknown words related to a language task or to fulfill missing information.

Translation. It involves the representation of ideas from one language to another in a relatively verbatim manner.

Metacognitive strategies

According to Williams & Burden (as cited in Pavičić 2008), metacognitive strategies “involve planning for learning, setting of goals, thinking about the learning process, monitoring of performance and comprehension, as well as evaluation of results”[...] (p. 53). In consonance with Wenden (as cited in Viñes 2003) Metacognitive strategies “are directly responsible for the execution of a task, while cognitive strategies are auxiliary strategies that aid in the implementation of the metacognitive strategies” (p.24).

This is the reason why metacognitive strategies were chosen to work on vocabulary learning, as they allow the students to reflect and measure their progress, whereas the cognitive strategies are mental steps involved in the use of the metacognitive. Thus, in the researcher’s viewpoint, it is more beneficial for the participants to learn vocabulary through the use of the metacognitive strategies. Having said that, it is also important to mention that for the present

project metacognitive strategies are understood as mental procedures aimed at achieving goals related to the foreign language, allowing students to monitor and control their learning.

In the words of Rebecca Oxford (2011), some metacognitive strategies used by learners of a second language are:

Paying attention to cognition. It involves general attention and focused attention. The first refers to the attention that the student pays in class in order to understand the lesson, whereas in focused attention the student selects specific things to focus his attention on.

Planning for cognition. It consists of setting cognitive goals and planning ahead for cognition. The latter means thinking of the task's ease or difficulty, its importance, the time that it is going to need and the strategies necessary to carry out the task.

Obtaining resources for cognition. It has to do with identifying and finding technological and print resources for cognition such as CDs, online dictionaries, Mp3 players, cellphones, dictionaries, books of stories, etc.

Monitoring cognition. It involves monitoring the ease of learning by predicting which parts of a lesson will be easy or difficult, monitoring by making a judgment of learning in which the student considers whether he knows enough about the vocabulary and the structures to perform a task or test. It also involves the monitoring of strategies use, in which the student determines what strategies he is using, if they are working well on him and which other strategies can be useful. It also involves checking for mistakes.

Evaluating cognition. It involves the evaluation of the cognitive process and performance. At this point, the student compares his/her performance with the goals that were

previously set. The student also checks if his/her pronunciation is good enough to perform a task and decides if he/she fully understands the topic before moving on to the next topic.

All the above-mentioned metacognitive strategies are going to be used in the classroom for the children to learn vocabulary. However, they have to be adapted to the children's level of language, self-awareness and context. By using these strategies, the students should be able to reflect and auto-evaluate their processes as well as their progress in the target language.

Vocabulary learning in the EFL classroom

Even though the word vocabulary might be understood by almost any person, it is not easy to give a definition of it. According to the Cambridge dictionary, vocabulary can be defined as: 1. All the words known and used by a particular person. 2. All the words which exist in a particular language or subject (Cambridge's dictionary, 2008). However, to understand better what vocabulary is, let us analyze it within its appropriate scope: Lexicology. According to Jackson & Zé (2001), lexicology is "The study of lexis, understood as the stock of words in a given language, i.e. its vocabulary or lexicon (from Greek *lexis*, 'word', *lexikos* 'of/ for words')" (p.01). Lexicology has to do as well with words in all their aspects and relies on information derived from fields such as morphology, the study of the forms of words and their components; semantics, the study of their meanings; and etymology, the study of the origins of the words (Jackson & Zé, 2001).

On the other hand, Carter (1998) states that a word is the "minimum meaningful unit of the language" (p.5), specifying that an orthographic definition of word would be "any sequence of letters (and a limited number of other characteristics such as hyphen and apostrophe) bounded

on either side by a space or punctuation mark (p. 04). He also distinguishes between word and lexeme:

Lexeme is the abstract unit which underlies some variants [...] in connection with words [...] lexemes are the basic, contrasting units of vocabulary in a language. When we look up words in a dictionary we are looking up lexemes rather than words. That is, 'brought' and 'bringing' will be found under an entry for BRING. The lexeme BRING is an abstraction. It does not actually occur itself in text. Instead, it realizes different word-forms. Thus, the word-form 'bring' is realized by the lexeme BRING [...]. In a dictionary each lexeme merits a separate entry or sub-entry (p.07).

In this order of ideas, several authors propose that vocabulary knowledge relies on different frameworks. Chapelle (as cited in Qing, 2009) proposes the followings: vocabulary size, knowledge of word characteristics, lexicon organizations and lexical access. In the same line of thoughts, Nation (as cited in Qing, 2009) suggests three categories related to knowing a word: **Word form:** including the spoken word, the written form and the word parts (affixes). **Word meaning:** including connecting form and meaning (of a word), concepts and referents, and associations. **Word use:** including grammatical functions, collocations and constraints on use (register, frequency, etc.) (pp.28, 29).

Even though the aforementioned is useful regarding the analysis of what vocabulary means, for this project vocabulary is understood as the familiar words related to topics known by the participants in their mother tongue. In other words, items the students can recognize and associate with concepts, actions or simply with items in Spanish as their first language. In agreement with this, the present research study does not intend for students to learn vocabulary

regarding the analysis of syntax or etymology; its purpose is that students be able to learn a basic quantity of words related to everyday and academic contexts such as family, school, daily actions, etc. that enable them to express basic needs and commands in English. If students start learning words in English whose meaning they already know in Spanish, it would be easier for them to retain their meanings and use them to express basic commands, which is the first step to speak a foreign language.

State of the art

Since 1970s researchers have adopted the metacognitive approach in many psychology fields including educational and social (Dunlosky & Metcalfe, 2009). Regarding the educational domain, a lot of research studies have been carried in order to understand how children learn and how the learning processes can be improved. Let us see some researches that have been carried with regards to metacognition and learning strategies in relation to acquisition of vocabulary when learning a foreign language.

In her study *Training in Metacognitive Strategies for Student's Vocabulary Improvement by Using Learning Journals*, Diaz (2015) examined the effects of metacognitive strategies such as planning, monitoring and evaluating when helping young learners that have difficulties with increasing and retaining vocabulary. The participants were students from the language center at Universidad de Córdoba in Colombia. The pedagogical intervention was focused on teaching students how to use several strategies to learn vocabulary. The intervention also included self-evaluation of their performance. This study showed that students were able to reflect on the difficulties they had at learning English and became aware of the strategies that they could use to

learn vocabulary. On the other hand, learning strategies to improve vocabulary had a positive influence as the students experienced different ways to understand the meaning of the words during the interventions. In relation to the present project, the above-named research can contribute since it showed that metacognition does work when it comes to learning a foreign language, especially when students are asked to evaluate themselves.

Another study titled *Learner autonomy, self-regulation and metacognition* by Feryal Cubukcu, 2009 was looked at. This study was aimed at tackling the relationship between self-regulation, autonomy and metacognition. The participants were 82 English students at a university in Turkey. The aim of the study is to tackle the relation between self-regulation, autonomy and metacognition and to discover if there was a correlation between these three concepts. The students were asked to respond honestly to semi-structured interviews regarding their point of view of teachers' roles and how consciously they used metacognitive skills. One of the conclusions this research came to, is that although students showed enthusiasm to learn, they did not feel ready for autonomous learning. They still believed that is the teacher the one who has the main role in the learning process, having the authority on the contents he teaches and the learning activities carried out in the classroom. They also found it strange to evaluate themselves, as they considered that the evaluation process should be carried out by the teacher. With regard to the present research, the above-named findings show that it is not easy for students to be autonomous. That is why for the implementation of this project, students will be shown which metacognitive strategies they can use and how to apply them, in order to facilitate vocabulary learning and foster autonomy.

Finally, the third research study that was consulted was *The development of Autonomous learning and Metacognition through the use of B-Learning tools* by L, Daniel & M, Nikolái (2009) carried out at Universidad Pedagógica Nacional in Colombia. This project focused on using multimedia tools as a way to foster metacognition and autonomous learning with 7th and 8th graders in a public school. The students had to develop different activities in class and outside the classroom using the internet as a resource to find information about different given topics and present the information to the class as a project. They were also asked to answer surveys and self-evaluation interviews. It was found that they developed autonomy and metacognition as they had to control their own process outside the classroom. They could also reflect about their learning through the implementation of a blog in which they could publish the work they were carrying out and share ideas with their classmates. Having said this, the contribution of the above-mentioned research to the present project is that, providing the students with resources and tools to learn can foster motivation for autonomous learning. Besides, teaching students to evaluate themselves can be a strategy that helps them to achieve learning goals.

These previous studies contribute to the present research project as they demonstrate that the use of metacognitive strategies can promote students self-awareness of their learning process and lead them to achieve their learning goals; they also show that vocabulary can be taught and learned using several strategies, even created by students. On the other hand, they show the importance of the teacher's role as a facilitator of metacognitive strategies. Thus, students can improve their performance by using learning strategies but only if these strategies are given to them. Moreover, the use of technological resources can be very meaningful when it comes to promoting autonomous learning, especially when these resources are new for students.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter presents the kind of research paradigm, type of study and the approaches that were followed in its implementation. It will also describe the instruments used to collect data and the data collection procedures, specifying the cycles in which the project was developed.

Research Paradigm

This research project was developed following a qualitative research paradigm. According to Marshall & Rossman (2006) qualitative research focuses on the study of social phenomena and is characterized by taking place in a natural the world, using multiple methods that are interactive and humanistic, being emergent instead of tightly prefigured, being fundamentally interpretive and focusing on context. In agreement with this, it is pertinent to follow the qualitative research paradigm, as the present project looks into a social context, which is education. Besides, it was carried out in the classroom, trying to find answers to real-world questions.

Type of study

This research is qualitative in nature and follows an action research approach. In this line of thoughts, Mills (as cited in Mertler, 2009) defines action research as a “systematic inquiry conducted by teachers [...] or others with a vested interest in the teaching and learning process or environment for the purpose of gathering information about how their particular schools operate, how they teach and how their students learn”(p.04).

In this order of ideas, action research complies with what the present project intended to do, which was to understand some aspects about the learning of a foreign language in primary

school students. Related to the purpose of action research, Burns (2003) states that its main objective is to identify a problematic situation and intervene to change it or make improvements. It also involves reflecting about practice. As was described before, the problematic situation that the present project attempted to solve is the students' lack of strategies to learn English vocabulary. Thus, by following action research, the pedagogical intervention was designed with the objective of making improvements regarding the learning of vocabulary in the foreign language.

According to McNiff, Lomax, & Whitehead (1996), Action research operates in cycles that help to guide and organize the research, as well as to adapt it to new changes. These cycles include specific moments of planning, executing and fact finding. Taking the aforementioned into account, the present project was developed doing a previous planning, involving getting to know the group of participants by means of observations and the applications of surveys and questionnaires, in order to determine their needs concerning English learning. After that, the students were given lessons that were planned according to the topic of the research, including the application of tests to determine their knowledge concerning the topics studied. Eventually, all the data collection instruments were analyzed with the objective of finding results aimed to respond the research question.

Data collection instruments

The instruments used in the present project were derived from the research question and aimed at collecting data that could help to answer it. Moreover, the triangulation of the information was done in order to compare and analyze if data from different sources leads to the same findings (See table 1 below). According to Cohen, Manion & Morrison's (2007)

triangulation is “the use of two or more methods of data collection [...]”, and is a “powerful way of demonstrating concurrent validity, particularly in qualitative research” (p. 141). Thus, triangulation will give as well reliability and validity to the present research project.

Table 1

Data collection instruments

RESEARCH QUESTION	DATA SOURCE # 1	DATA SOURCE # 2	DATA SOURCE # 4
<i>How might the implementation of metacognitive strategies with third-graders in an EFL classroom in a public school in Colombia foster vocabulary learning?</i>	<i>Field notes</i>	<i>Questionnaires and Surveys</i>	<i>Student's documents</i>

Questionnaires and Surveys. According to Burns (2003) surveys and questionnaires are non-observational techniques for collecting data, “easier and less time consuming to administer than interviews and the responses of larger number of informants can be gathered (p. 129)”. They also allow the informants to respond faster to the questions which are supplied in written form and do not need to be recorded by the researcher. However, their disadvantage is that they “involve predetermined questions presented in written form and thus they also assume adequate literacy skills on the part of those surveyed” (p.129). For this reason the questionnaires and surveys used in this project were applied in Spanish, since the students are not able yet to give answers in English. Three questionnaires and a survey were applied, specifically on March 3rd 2015, March 17th 2015, April 7th 2015 and Nov 5th 2015 (see Appendices A, B, C, J).

Students 'documents. Student's documents are considered as well non-observational techniques for collecting data. In this regard, Burns states that documents are “readily accessible source of data in action research” they [...] can include student portfolios of written work,

student's records and profiles, etc.”(p. 117). According to Burns (2003), the examination of documents can help researchers to have a richer profile of the classroom and give insights related to curricular concerns. It is important to mention that for this project, student's documents such as written activities in class, tests, and homework, were the main source for data analysis, since it intended to help them the children to improve their vocabulary learning.

Field notes. Field notes are considered observational technique to collect data. They consist of “descriptions and accounts of observed events, including non-verbal information, physical settings, group structures and interactions between participants” (p.79). Burns (2003) establishes that notes can be oriented to specific aspects of the research, since they help to answer “who/what/where/when/how/why questions and can be organized in different categories to record descriptions, reflections or analyses of events”(p.79). For this research, the field notes were a very important source of data, especially during the planning of the research. They allowed the researcher to evidence situations in the classroom that helped to guide the inquiry concerning the students 'needs, behaviors and perceptions related to English learning (See Appendix O).

Data Collection Procedures

All the data was collected over a period of 21 weeks within 3 semesters, starting on February 17th 2015 and finishing on March 6th 2016. The project was carried out in three cycles. Each cycle will be described here, as well as the instruments used in each one to collect data in order to answer the research question. It is important to clarify that the cycles described in this chapter refer to the three semesters that the research study lasted. On the other hand, the pedagogical intervention was carried out in three different moments, which were called *cycles* as well, as is explained in the following chapter.

The first cycle lasted about 8 weeks. It consisted of observations during the classes in order to determine the needs of the population regarding the learning of the foreign language and also to establish the research problem. First, a consent form was sent to the children's parents. This was done in order to have their permission to take pictures, record the students, apply surveys, etc. During the first month the students answered two questionnaires aimed at finding out their opinion about the importance of English (See appendix A). Based on the observations in the classroom, the researcher did a general diagnosis of the population, including socio-emotional, cognitive, and linguistic characteristics and their needs concerning the learning of the foreign language. Then, based on the diagnosis and the above-mentioned surveys, it was determined that the research problem had to do with the lack of strategies to learn vocabulary. Thus, the strategies to be implemented during the second cycle started to be designed.

The second cycle lasted about 8 weeks and involved the application in class of the metacognitive strategies mentioned in the theoretical framework. At the beginning of this cycle, a quiz was applied in order to measure their general knowledge of basic vocabulary (See Appendix N). Based on the results of the quiz, the lesson plans were designed thinking of the main topics that students might need to study, taking into account their ages and the characteristics mentioned in the diagnosis.

Six lesson plans were applied in total, following these strategies and the task-based approach (See appendix E). During each intervention, the researcher took into account the students' performance and their reactions concerning the activities, with the objective of determining which improvements could be done in the next intervention. A survey was applied at the end of this cycle in order to know their opinions about the process of learning English they

had been carried out so far, their degree of commitment, and the goals they wanted to achieve in order to improve their learning (See appendix J).

During the third cycle the researcher kept applying the metacognitive strategies mentioned in the theoretical framework, as well as reviewing and evaluating the vocabulary the students learnt during the previous classes in which the metacognitive strategies were applied. It lasted 5 weeks. At the end of this cycle the students presented a written test (see appendix K) that aimed at finding out how many words they could learn through the implementation of the project.

So far the research design has been described, including the research paradigm and the type of study, as well as the data collection instruments and procedures. The next chapter will explain in detail how some constructs such as curriculum, language, learning and classroom are understood in this project, according to the researcher's interpretation. It will also present the instructional design, describing the cycles in which this research was carried out.

CHAPTER IV

PEDAGOGICAL INSTRUCTION

This chapter presents the vision of curriculum, language, learning and classroom according to the researcher's interpretation of what is stated by the authors and its relation to the topic of the research. It also presents the instructional design of this research, describing what was done in every cycle, including the objectives, the contents and the time in which each cycle was developed.

Vision of Curriculum

Even though there are many definitions of what Curriculum is and several types of curriculum, Nolet & McLaughlin (2005) state that "it is through curriculum that students are provided the opportunity to learn the intended content and achieve the standards" (p.16). They also state that curriculum has been related to any educational program taught at university or school, materials used to teach in the classroom such as textbooks, and also the experiences students undertake at school. However, for the present project, curriculum has to do with the set of academic contents regarding the foreign language, focused on an emancipatory vision. According to Grundy (2013) the emancipatory curriculum is based on an emancipatory interest which causes autonomous and responsible action, as the result of prudent decisions made thanks to certain kind of knowledge. Thus, the emancipatory curriculum will allow students to be immersed in the educational encounter, they and the teacher, in a reciprocal relationship between self-reflection and action.

This emancipatory vision is in agreement with metacognition, as the way students can reflect about their own learning and monitor themselves, using strategies in class that might

foster their motivation for autonomous learning and keep them learning by themselves, taking advantage of the current resources they have to learn. This can be called an emancipatory vision since it is totally different from what they have been doing in class so far, which is waiting to receive some contents from the in the classroom just to fill their notebooks, having a passive role as learners.

The vision of language

For Saussure (as cited in Neuman, 2008), language is “a system of distinct signs corresponding to distinct ideas” (p. 107). As this research study is focused on the learning of a foreign language, language can be understood as the bridge of communication the students have to start crossing in order to have access to a different way of thinking, a different culture, and also, different academic contexts in the future. In order to understand this vision, is important to take into account that even though language has to do with signs, these signs are full of meanings. With regard to this, Doyé (as cited in Risager 2006) states:

The very nature of language forbids the separation of language from culture. If language is considered a system of signs, and signs are characterized by the facts that they are units of form and meaning, it is impossible to learn a language by simply acquiring the forms without their content. And as the content of the language is always culture-bound, any reasonable foreign language cannot but include the study of a culture from which the language systems (p.09).

The vision of learning

For the present project, learning is understood as dynamic process in which the students have an active role linked to reflection and self-awareness. This reflection is related to the efforts the students have to make in order to achieve goals in the learning of the foreign language, and

the benefits they can reap of. In this order of ideas, Driscoll & Frost (1999), state that the achievement in foreign language learning depends on factors such as age, the amount of time dedicated the aptitudes and attitudes of the learner and the effectiveness of the learner. As to the factors linked to better achievement, it would be really important that students understand that at their age, they have a great advantage concerning the learning of the language and make the most of their time.

It is also important to mention that even though the learning of a foreign language implies efforts, there are many benefits from it, especially for children. In this order of ideas, Vivet (as cited in Driscoll and Frost 1999) states:

Foreign languages can introduce children to a world of sounds, positive sensations, new discoveries and stimulating acquisitions which go far beyond the narrow boundaries of a monolingual and monocultural education. Considerable benefit is drawn from such experience long before children become adults (p.12).

Taking this into account, it is possible to affirm that learning a foreign language implies not only discipline and effort from the learner, but also from the teacher. As it has to be taught accompanied by cultural awareness, the teacher must understand the importance of ‘context for them to make relations between their mother tongue and the target language. The knowledge of cultural facts of the target language can help students understand some aspects related to grammar, the way people from the countries where the target language is spoken behave.

The vision of the classroom

The environment in which students learn could be a determining factor for their achievement. Tudor (2001) states that the classroom “is the place where a certain vision of

language and of language learning is realised by means of carefully planned pedagogical procedures [...]” (p. 106). Likewise, Nunan (as cited in Tudor 2001) refers to the classroom as the place where the objectives set out in the curriculum are pursued. Regarding this, it is possible to state that the classroom is a space to interact and reflect about learning. However, the physical infrastructure plays an important role to make interaction and reflection possible. Classroom conditions are essential for the good learning. According to Dixie (2007), conditions such as light, order, cleanness, etc., affect motivation, behavior and learning. Having said that, for the present project, the classroom is understood as the space where students can have contact with the foreign language, through a process of interaction that includes activities planned with the purpose of helping the participants to understand the language in context.

Instructional design

The pedagogical intervention started on August 20th 2015 and finished on March 6th 2016. It was carried out in three cycles. Each one lasted about for weeks. During this period six lesson plans were applied. Each lesson plan aimed at studying a different topic, using a metacognitive strategy within specific tasks in class (see appendix E). The tasks were designed to practice the vocabulary by means of speaking and writing activities mainly, though there were some listening activities. During the whole intervention, the students studied the vocabulary within two main structures: The verb to be and the present simple, using the verbs to like, to have, to drink and eat. Each verb was studied in the affirmative, interrogative and negative way within the present simple. The vocabulary that was studied with all these verbs included professions, numbers, adjectives, emotions, parts of the body, animals, food (current food, vegetables and fruits and drinks). As the pedagogical approach of the research was the task-based

learning, in every class the students were told to search for new vocabulary at home to work on the next class. The researcher suggested them to use YouTube videos as a practical source to learn vocabulary. It was also related to applying the strategy “obtaining resources for cognition”, explained in chapter 2.

In each class the students executed a different task such as drawing, writing, coloring, classifying, matching, etc. Each task was developed with the objective of applying the metacognitive strategies mentioned in the theoretical framework, such as planning, obtaining resources for cognition, focused attention, monitoring, evaluation, etc. Some activities were done on the notebook and some others were done to be given to the researcher.

The first cycle of the intervention started on August 20th and finished on September 30th. The first two weeks were focused on learning how to use the verb to be with the vocabulary about professions in the affirmative and interrogative form, applying the strategy of “focused attention”, which is explained in chapter 2. This lesson plan lasted 8 hours (45 minutes per hour).

Weeks third and fourth were focused on learning adjectives and emotions. To achieve this, the students applied the strategy “planning for cognition”, in which they wrote basic descriptions about them and their classmates, using the adjectives seen in the lesson. This lesson plan lasted 8 hours.

The second cycle started on October 1st and finished on November 15th. The first two weeks were focused on learning body parts. The metacognitive strategies applied during this period were “focused attention” and “monitoring”. To achieve this, the researcher did activities that required the children’s concentration and activities in which the students had to correct their mistakes. This lesson plan lasted 8 hours and finished with the application of a test (see appendix

I) aimed at finding out if they learnt words in English after applying the above-mentioned strategies.

The third week aimed at practicing the numbers and the verb to be in affirmative and negative form. As the participants had to apply the strategy “focused attention”, they practiced the numbers saying their ages, their classmates ‘ages, and their parents ‘ages. The strategy of planning was applied too. For this the students had to make sentences with the vocabulary learnt in previous classes and rewrite them into negative form. The lesson plan designed for this week lasted 4 hours.

The weeks fourth and fifth were focused on practicing vocabulary about animals with the verb to have, including the affirmative, interrogative and negative form. The metacognitive strategies set to practice this vocabulary were “obtaining resources for cognition and focused attention”. They did written activities like describing and classifying animals and, speaking activities like saying if they or any member of their family had a pet. This lesson plan lasted 8 hours. A final test was applied too in order to see if the students were able to make sentences using all the vocabulary studied through the classroom lessons (see appendix K).

The third cycled lasted four weeks, from February 1st 2016 to March 2th 2016. During the first two weeks the lessons were focused on vocabulary about food. The lesson plan designed for this period aimed at practicing the use the verb to like in the interrogative, affirmative and negative way, lasting 8 hours. The strategies to practice this vocabulary were “focused attention”, “planning for cognition”, “evaluation” and “setting goals”. To apply the two last strategies, at the beginning of the cycle the students were asked to write their goals concerning English learning for that year (see appendix L). At the end of the cycle, a survey was applied in order to measure

the students' capacity of evaluating themselves, which is involved in the metacognition strategy "evaluation" (see appendix J).

Weeks third and fourth were focused on reviewing all the topics studied in previous cycle, the review took 8 hours. At the end of the cycle, the students presented their final text, which was aimed at finding out their knowledge of the vocabulary studied in the three cycles (see appendix M).

Table 2
Instructional design

Cycle	Topics and vocabulary	Metacognitive Strategies	Estimated Time
1 st	Verb to be, professions Adjectives, emotions	Focused attention(weeks 1 st , 2 nd) Planning for cognition(weeks 3 rd , 4 th)	4 weeks, from August 20 th to October 30, 16 hours, 8 sessions.
2 nd	Body parts Numbers Verb to have, animals	Focused attention, Monitoring(weeks 1 st , 2 nd) Focused attention, Planning for cognition (week 3 rd) Obtaining resources for cognition, Planning for cognition(weeks 4 th , 5 th)	5 weeks, from October 1 st to November 15 th , 20 hours, 10 sessions.
3 rd	Verb to like, food Review and final test	Focused attention, Planning for cognition, Evaluation, Setting goals (weeks 1 st , 2 nd) (weeks 3 rd , 4 th)	4 weeks, from February 1 st 2016 to March 2 nd , 16 hours, 8 sessions.

So far the pedagogical instruction has been described, stating how the constructs such as curriculum, language, learning and classroom were understood in the present project. The

pedagogical intervention has been described as well, explaining what was done in each cycle.

The next chapter will explain in detail how data was compiled and classified in order to set categories and sub-categories of analysis, the relation between these categories and the research question, and the findings this research project came to through the analysis of data.

CHAPTER V

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter presents the procedures for data analysis, the methods that were used to analyze data, how categories and sub-categories of analysis were set in accordance with the research question and objectives, as well as the description of each one and the research findings that emerged through data analysis.

Procedures for Data Analysis

All data collection instruments such as questionnaires, surveys, and students' documents were gathered in different folders and classified by dates, giving them numbers to know to which students they belonged. Some documents were stored in a digital format, as they were pictures of the activities the students did on their notebooks, such as drawings or written descriptions. All the data was analyzed following the *grounded approach*, which is a way of constructing theory by means of analyzing empirical data. In this regard, Litchman (2013) affirms that "the purpose of grounded theory is to generate theory that is grounded in, or emerges, from the field" (p. 78). In addition to this, Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007) affirm that it is one of the main forms of qualitative data analysis, in which "patterns and theories are implicit in data, waiting to be discovered" (p.491).

In accordance with the grounded approach, this inquiry sets out from an emic perspective, which, according to Fetterman (as cited in Given, 2008), is the "insider's view of reality and [...] It is fundamental to understanding how people perceive the world around them" (p. 249). Thus, this perspective was useful to find out how students reflected about learning English setting out

from their own context and the connections they made between the importance of speaking a foreign language and its utility for their future.

In order to analyze the data, two main methodological tools were used. The first one is called *Typological analysis*. According to Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007), this is a process in which the researcher classifies the data making groups, categories and subsets, taking into account criteria such as acts, behaviors, meanings, relationships, activities, etc. or how a participant addresses a particular issue. Having in mind this methodological tool, surveys and questionnaires were read several times using color coding as a way to start establishing categories of analysis.

The first time, all the expressions that were repeated were highlighted with blue and green color. During the second reading, the expressions that were found interesting for being unexpected or said by few respondents were highlighted with red color. In the third reading preliminary categories were established according to the common patterns that emerged from the first reading.

For the analysis of the students' work, *constant comparison* was used. In Cohen, Manion & Morrison's (2007) words, by means of this method "the researcher compares newly acquired data with existing data and categories and theories that have been devised and which are emerging, in order to achieve perfect fit between these and the data" (p. 473). As the student's artifacts were more related to the measurement of what they learnt, the activities and test applied during the second cycle were compared to those applied during the final cycle. Then, preliminary categories related to the improvement of vocabulary learning emerged, taking into account the research objectives. Eventually, these categories were compared to those regarding the

questionnaires and surveys in order to set the final categories focused on responding the research question and objectives.

Categories of analysis

According to Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007), categories are “the main grouping of constructs or key features of the text” [...] and are “inferred by the researcher” (pp. 478,479). In this line of thoughts, after having analyzed the data collection instruments, the categories that emerged from data were grouped according to the research question and the objectives. The research question this research study attempted to answer was: How might the implementation of metacognitive strategies with third-graders in an EFL classroom in a public school in Colombia foster vocabulary learning? To answer this question, two specific objectives were set. The first one was: *To identify the main roles that metacognitive strategies might play concerning vocabulary learning*. Three categories emerged in accordance with this objective. The first category “Metacognition improves student’s attention”, presents the different ways in which students achieved having a better attention in class. To explain the aforementioned achievement, two sub-categories were set. The first one, “Focusing attention as a key to perform well in the classroom activities”, shows how focusing attention in class helps students to work well in class activities, while the second, “Focusing attention leads to increased participation in the class”, explains how students improve their participation as a result of their attention in class.

The second category, “Metacognition opens a space for student’s creativity” illustrates how the students expressed their creativity by means of drawing, and creating their own learning resources when doing homework. The third category, “Metacognition helps to plan for vocabulary learning” focuses on the steps students took to learn vocabulary in class when

applying the strategy “planning for cognition”, which included writing descriptions in class as a way to practice vocabulary.

As to the second objective: *To determine which metacognitive strategies might help to develop autonomous learning* one category emerged: “Metacognition is linked to autonomy”, which illustrates how Metacognitive strategies fostered students ‘autonomy. In order to explain the aforementioned, two subcategories were set. The first one, “Resources foster motivation for autonomous learning” describes how the students became more independent during the activities in class and more aware of the importance of learning by themselves, thanks to the use of printed resources in class. It also shows how the students felt more motivated to learn due to the use of different resources in class. The second,” Setting goals in class promote students ‘autonomy” shows how the students expressed being more conscious about improving their English level after being asked to set goals concerning their learning process. The following chart shows these categories and sub-categories:

Table 3
Categories of analysis

RESEARCH QUESTION		
How might the implementation of metacognitive strategies on third-graders in an EFL classroom in a public school in Colombia foster vocabulary learning?		
Specific objective 1 To identify the main roles that metacognitive strategies might play concerning vocabulary learning	Categories <i>Metacognition improves student’s attention</i> <i>Metacognition opens space for students’ creativity</i> <i>Metacognition helps to plan for vocabulary learning</i>	Sub-categories <i>Focusing attention as a key to perform well in the classroom activities</i> <i>Focusing attention leads to increased participation in the class</i>
Specific objective 2 To determine which metacognitive strategies might help to develop autonomous learning	<i>Metacognition is linked to autonomy</i>	<i>Resources foster motivation for autonomous learning</i> <i>Setting goals in class promote students ‘autonomy</i>

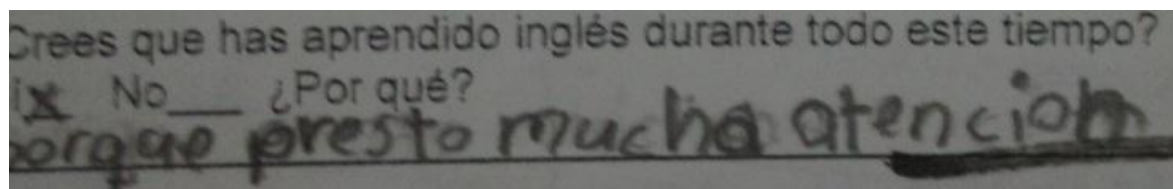
Category 1: Metacognition improves student's attention

This category refers to one of the findings related to the roles of metacognitive strategies. It was found that through the use of metacognitive strategies in class, the students were able to make progress regarding their capacity of paying attention during the class, and also to focused their attention on the vocabulary or resources that they needed to execute a specific task. This improvement enabled students to achieve several goals regarding vocabulary learning, such as having a better understanding of the instructions given in English by the researcher, as they became familiar with the meaning of the the words. Thanks to having improved their attention, the students started to have a better performance in class and increasing their participation, as it is going to be explained in the following paragraphs.

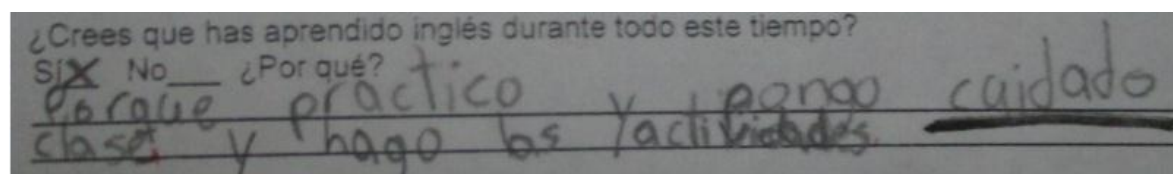
Focusing attention as a key to perform well in the classroom activities

This sub-category is related to one of the main aspects that emerged from the data analysis. As was stated in chapter 2, paying attention to cognition is one of the metacognitive strategies that help to achieve goals when learning a second language. It was found that by applying the strategy “focused attention” they students made progress at concentrating during the classes and to focus in specific aspects related to the activities in the classroom. This improvement helped the participants to perform well during the activities in class when applying metacognitive strategies. In every class the students were given assignments with the instructions of what they had to do, including an example as a model to follow. As the instructions were given in English, it was necessary to remind them of the need to pay attention. Regarding this, Karten (2008) states that learning does not take place without students' attention. In this order of ideas, the participants recognized that they did well on the activities thanks to having paid attention to the instructions given by the researcher. On the other hand, the participants who did

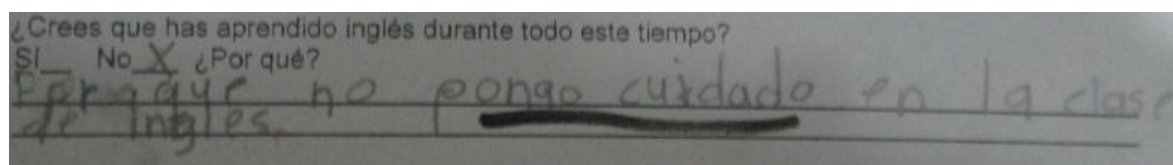
not have a good performance admitted their lack of attention. The following extracts show both situations:



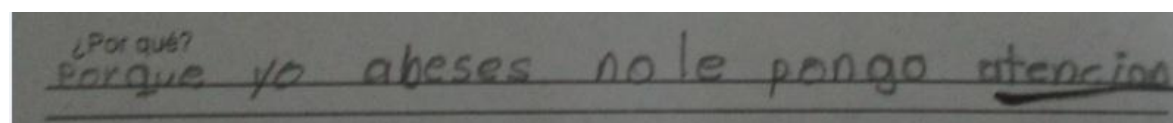
[St 21, questionnaire. Nov 5th, 2015]



[St 22, questionnaire. Nov 5th, 2015]



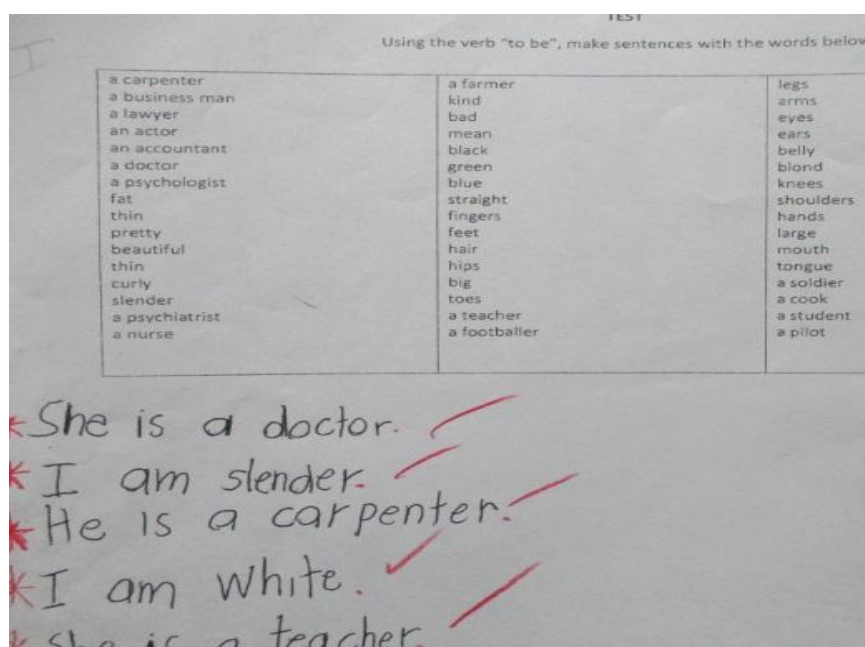
[St 23, questionnaire. Nov 5th, 2015]



[St 24, questionnaire. Nov 5th, 2015]

These extracts of the afore-mentioned questionnaires show, on the one hand, how the students recognize having learned English thanks to their attention during the class. On the other hand, those who admit not having learned enough, state that the cause was their lack of attention. Having said that, it is possible to conclude that apart from improving their performance in class, metacognition helped the participants to reflect about their own learning and how their attention plays an important role in this process.

Another way in which the strategy “Paying attention to cognition” was applied, involved focused attention, that is to say, in some activities students were shown a list of vocabulary and asked to focus only on the vocabulary needed to write a description or mention the things they like or do. Thus, it was found that when the students did not have to use the whole vocabulary shown by the researcher in a lesson but only the words they needed to execute a specific task; it was easy for them to achieve cognitive goals set in class. The following extract of a student’s test illustrates this situation:



[St 2, test September 9th, 2015]

In the above-mentioned test, the students had to make sentences using the verb to be and the words from the chart, which was divided into three sections: adjectives, parts of the body and professions. As in previous classes, they could choose the words they wanted, writing a minimum of 10 sentences. Since they could focus their attention on the words they knew, they

were able to make sentences including the topics studied in previous classes while ignoring the words whose meaning they did not know. Having said that, it is possible to conclude that focusing attention as a metacognitive strategy allowed students to learn vocabulary.

Focusing attention leads to increased participation in class

The attention of the students was related with their participation too, as they mentioned it as a factor that allowed them to learn vocabulary. With regard to participation, Adu-Febiri & Ofori (2009) stated that verbal participation “helps to effectively capture and apply concepts, methodologies, and abstractions that are at the core of the academic system. In other words, people learn better and faster through action” (p. 118). Besides, some students also stated that their good results were due to participation, as the following answer to the question ¿Cómo crees que ha sido tu desempeño en clase y por qué?, shows:

A photograph of a student's handwritten response on lined paper. The text is written in black ink and reads: "Excelente porque siempre participo en clase". The word "Excelente" is written on the top line, and "porque siempre participo en clase" is written on the line below. There is a small mark above the first word that looks like "¿Por qué?".

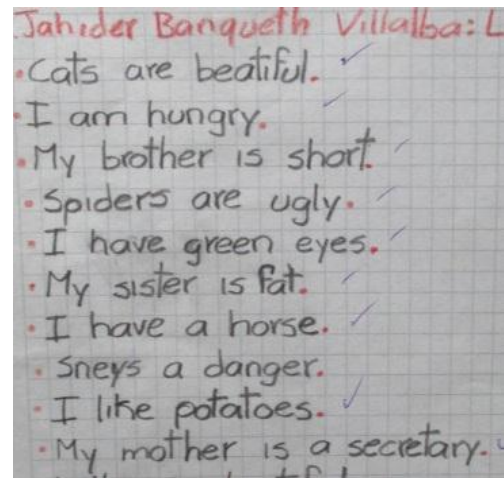
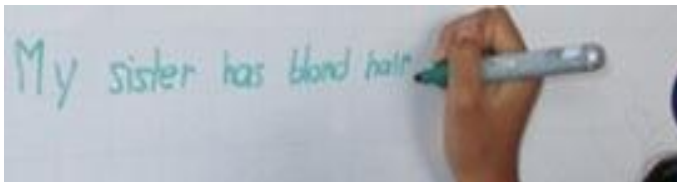
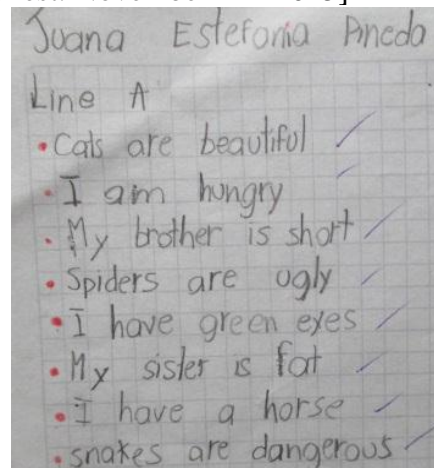
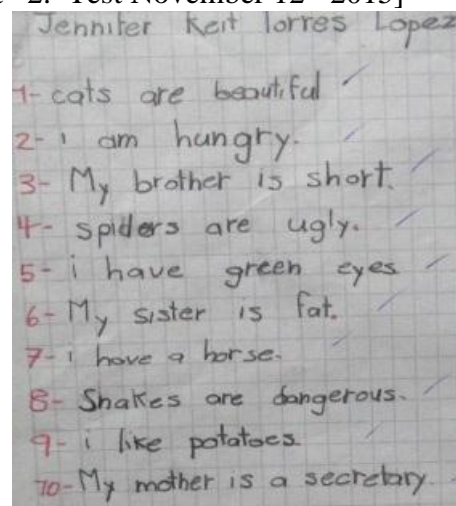
[St 04, questionnaire. Nov 5th, 2015]

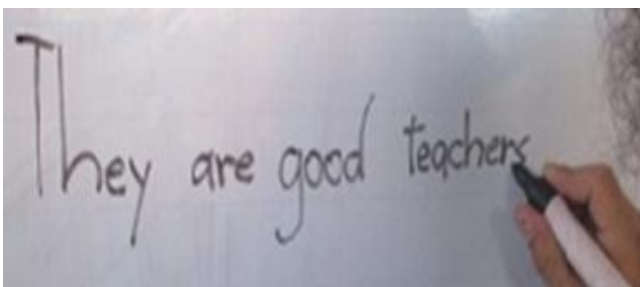
The student affirmed having a good performance because of her participation in class. It should be remembered that all the activities in class were directed towards vocabulary learning. Thus, it was found that those students who participated more actively had better outcomes in learning vocabulary.

The students ‘outcomes derived from their participation, can also be observed in the following images:

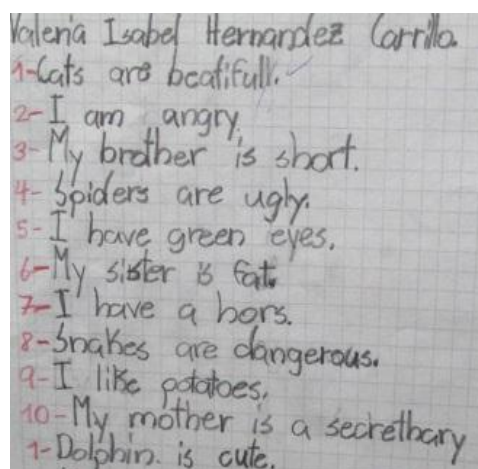


[St 1. Participating in class]

[St 1. Test. November 12th 2015][St 2. Participating in class, September 30th 2015]St 2. Test November 12th 2015][St 3. Participating in class, September 30th 2015]St 3. Test November 12th 2015]



[St 4. Participating in class]



[St 4. Test November 12th, 2015].

This set of images shows how participation led students to learning vocabulary. The pictures on the left were taken during the class, when students were asked to write the sentences the researcher dictated, as the field notes read:

In order to apply the strategy of monitoring, I did a review of the last topic and asked them to pay attention because after the explanation I was going to make an activity for them to participate. Then, I started dictating simple sentences for them to pass and write them down on the white board. The first three students wrote sentences with a lot of mistakes [...] the next students who passed to the board kept writing correct sentences, as soon as they noticed the kind of mistakes their classmates were making. [...]. I kept doing this activity since then in most classes, not only as a warming up, but as a way of encouraging them to keep participating and concentrated in class. (Field diary 09, lines 1-6, 9-13, 17-19)

The aforementioned shows that when students are encouraged to focus their attention, they feel motivated to participate, since they understand what they have to do. In addition, they are likely to have a better performance concerning vocabulary tasks if they have actively participated during the classes.

The images on the right correspond to the tests of the same students, showing that they were able to make sentences using the verb to be and the vocabulary studied in class, that is to say, adjectives, family, animals, colors, professions, etc. Having said that, it is possible to conclude that participation was essential for students to learn vocabulary.

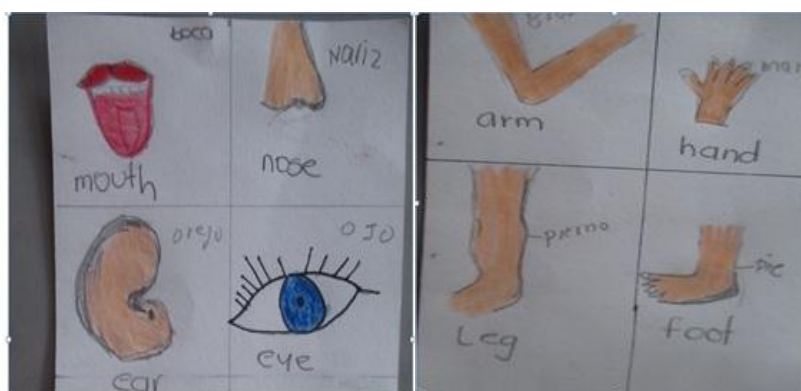
Category 2: Metacognition opens space for students' creativity

This category has to do with the ways students used their imagination when carrying out activities related to vocabulary learning. Through the data analysis it was found that some of them made drawings, cards, brochures, etc. when they were asked to search for vocabulary as homework. It is interesting that they designed their own material without having been told to do it, which shows that they started to think of different ways of learning vocabulary. Taking this into account, it is possible to say that metacognition led them to be more creative when doing homework, designing resources and making drawing as their own learning strategies. In this order of ideas, Shore & Walker (2012) affirm that metacognition is not only the knowledge that people have about their own thinking processes but also the use of this knowledge to make the best of their learning and memory. In this line of thoughts, the following extracts from students' documents illustrate this statement:



[St 10, Student's documents, Augusts 26th, 2015]

The previous pictures are sample of a student's homework. They were asked to search vocabulary about emotions and to think of a strategy to learn the words. This student designed a small round notebook in which every emotions was depicted on a face. Let's take a look of the the following students' documents:



[St 12. Student's documents, september 9th, 2015]

These two previous pictures ara as well a sample of a homework. In this case the students were asked to serch vocabulary about body parts and think of a strategy to learn the words easily. This student made this cards and brought them to class. These exampleshows how metacognition fostered student's creativity when learning vocabulary.

While some students created this types of resources, most of them showed their creativity by means of drawing. They preferred to draw instead of just writing the words on their note books, every time they were asked to search for vocabulary as homework. Through the data analysis it was also found that students felt more comfortable in the activities that implied drawing in class rather than writing. In addition to this, Mayer & Fiorella (2015) state that

artifacts, where the students had to search vocabulary about animals, so this student drew some of them. Hence, it is possible to affirm that all these students' artifacts depict the same pattern: drawing as a strategy used by students when learning vocabulary in a foreign language. It is very important to mention that the children were accustomed to draw in class before the present project was carried out. However, drawing was not used properly to learn vocabulary:

The children start drawing the pictures from the board but they spend so much time doing this task. Even though the teacher harries them to finish the drawing quickly, they keep drawing so slowly. In the end they spent the two hours of the class make the drawings (Field diary 01, lines 9-14).

As the field note reads, the students had drawn before in class but not thinking of drawing as a strategy to learn vocabulary, they just drew for spending time during the class. Then, metacognition helped them to turn drawing into a real strategy aimed at learning English vocabulary.

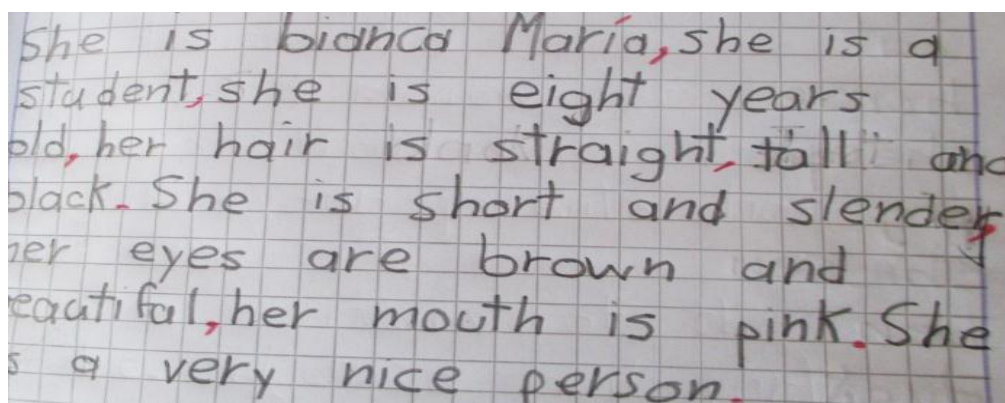
Category 3: Metacognition leads to preparation for vocabulary learning

This category refers to all the steps the students had to take in order to learn vocabulary in class. Through the data analysis, it was found that by means of the metacognitive strategies applied during the class, specifically "planning for cognition", the students learnt to plan and prepare themselves to perform activities in which they had to practice new vocabulary or review what they had studied in previous classes. To apply the strategy, "planning for cognition", the students were told to set goals related to vocabulary learning during the class, such as teach a certain number of new words every class, and use them in a specific task. To achieve this, they had to think about the words and grammar structures they needed to complete a task such a

description, making sentences related to certain topic, asking specific questions in present simple, or responding to questions using the negative or affirmative way, etc. All these activities allowed students to practice vocabulary within specific contexts. In this line of thoughts, it is appropriate to mention that writing descriptions was the main task the students carried out in order to apply the strategy “planning for cognition”. Through the data analysis it was found that the descriptions written in class were the main source of vocabulary learning, and a way in which students kept practicing the vocabulary in context. As was stated in chapter 2, for the present project vocabulary was presented as the words the students need to start building sentences in the foreign language. However, rather than telling them the meaning of the words directly, the vocabulary was taught in class by means of videos in which the vocabulary was presented by means of vivid images and situations referring to the meaning of the words. This was done to make students infer the meanings from the context, which is in agreement with Schmitt’s (2000) words, who remarked that “guessing a new word’s meaning from context is a key vocabulary learning skill” (p. 153).

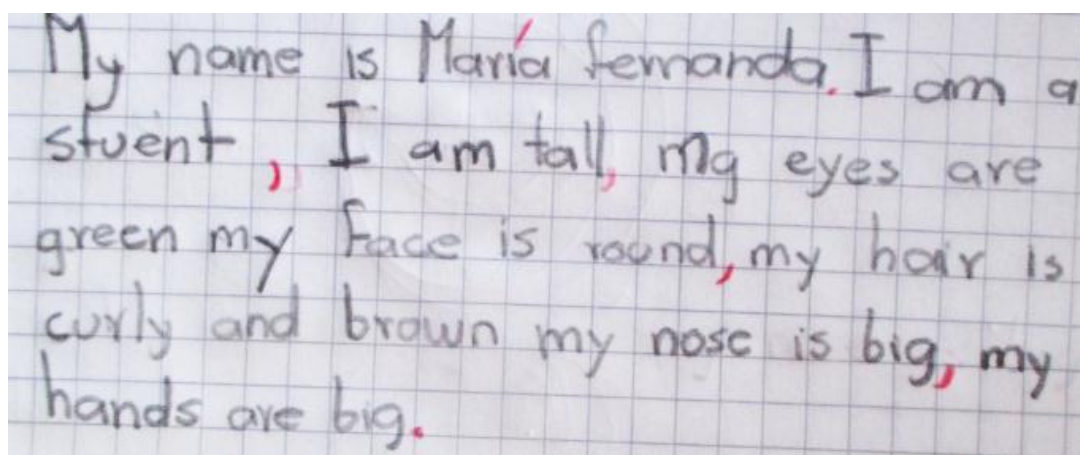
After showing the students the vocabulary belonging to the lesson, they were instructed to write descriptions using the vocabulary they had practiced until that lesson. At the beginning these descriptions were basic, but as they started to know more words in every class, they were asked to keep adding details to the description they wrote the first time, so at the end of intervention, they had a complete description containing the main topics studied in class. Some of them wrote a whole description of themselves, while others made it about their parents or a classmate. They also made descriptions of animals in some classes.

By writing descriptions, the participants applied the strategy “planning for cognition” as they had to think of the words they needed to execute a task according to what they had to write, the resources they needed to find the vocabulary such as the dictionary, the notebook, the time to complete the task, etc. The following extracts show some descriptions written by the students:



She is bianca Maria, she is a student, she is eight years old, her hair is straight, tall and black. She is short and slender, her eyes are brown and beautiful, her mouth is pink. She is a very nice person.

[St 4, student's document from a class activity. September 30th, 2015]



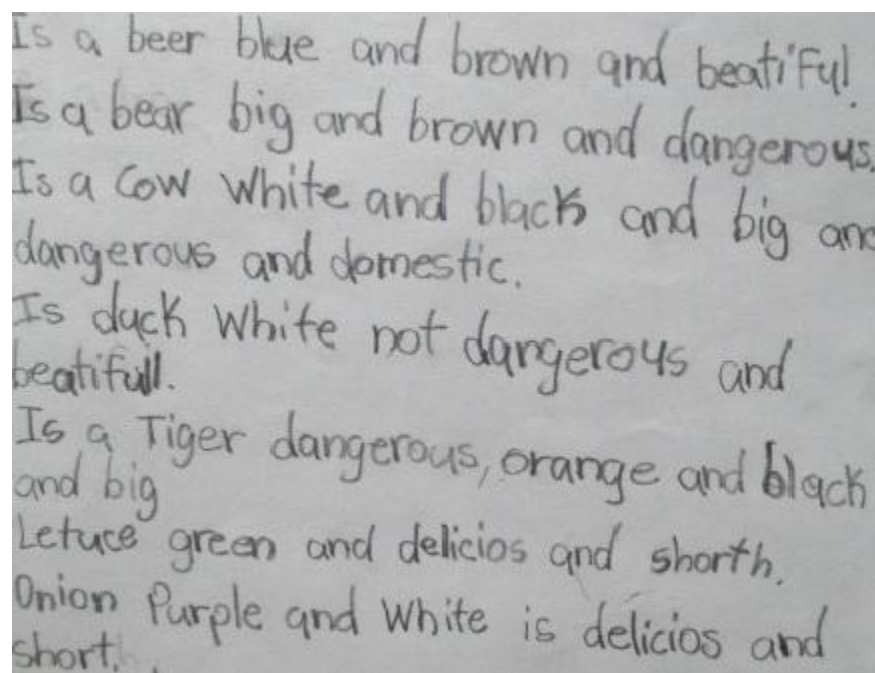
My name is Maria Fernanda. I am a student, I am tall, my eyes are green my face is round, my hair is curly and brown my nose is big, my hands are big.

[St 30, Activity in class. September 30th, 2015]

These students' documents above, correspond to an activity carried out by the students in class. After being given the model of a description by the researcher, each student had to describe the class mate next to him or her, or even himself, using all the vocabulary studied until

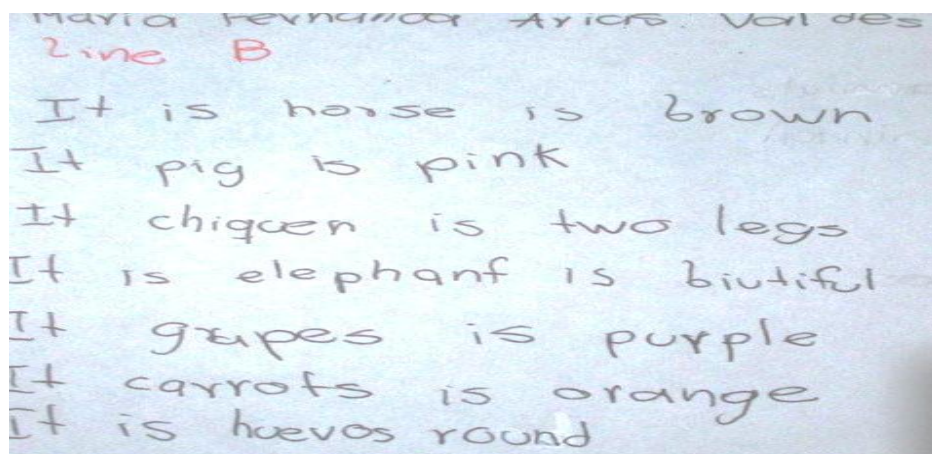
that lesson. This student used the verb to be and the adjectives properly, following the model given by the researcher.

The data analysis revealed that the descriptions written by students in class helped them make sentences in the tests. In all the tests applied to the students, they were shown images and told to make sentences applying the grammar structures and the vocabulary learned in class according to the image they were observing and without using a dictionary. As they worked on descriptions in several classes, it was easy for most of them to write sentences without using a dictionary, as the following extracts of tests show:



Is a bear blue and brown and beautifull.
Is a bear big and brown and dangerous.
Is a Cow white and black and big and dangerous and domestic.
Is duck white not dangerous and beautifull.
Is a Tiger dangerous, orange and black and big
Lettuce green and delicious and shorth.
Onion Purple and White is delicious and short.

[St3, test March 2th, 2016]



[St 30, test March 2nd, 2016]

The aforementioned documents are a sample of students' tests. They show how the students were able to write complete sentences using the verb to be, adjectives, vocabulary about animals, body parts, fruits, etc. The evidence that they really learnt vocabulary is that they wrote these sentences according to some images that were shown by the researcher in class, without using a dictionary or their notebooks. It is also important to mention that the project was focused on metacognitive strategies to learn vocabulary. However, it was found that through all the activities carried out in class the students learnt not only words in English, which could have been expected, but they also learnt to make coherent sentences using the verb to be, to like, to have, etc. using the negative and affirmative forms.

Category 5: Metacognition is linked to autonomy

As was explained in chapter II, Metacognition is highly related to autonomous learning, as it allows learners to monitor and regulate their own learning process. Thus, this category shows how some metacognitive strategies helped the students to start developing certain sense of autonomy when it came to executing specific tasks aimed to learn vocabulary. The data analysis

revealed that the main strategies that had to do with the development of autonomy were the use of resources and goal setting, as will be described in the following paragraphs.

Resources foster motivation for autonomous learning

This sub-category refers to one of the metacognitive strategies explained in chapter 2, which was *obtaining resources for cognition*. Through the data analysis it was found that the use of resources such as the dictionary, YouTube videos, printed resources given in class, and printed resources brought by the students helped them to develop autonomy, as they started bringing their own resources to learn, such as books and photocopies with the vocabulary studied in class (see appendix H). Most of them also mentioned that they reviewed at home the vocabulary learned in class, which is really interesting, considering that at the beginning of the process most of them affirmed not to review at home. These extracts from surveys evidence that they started to study at home, which is an evidence of metacognition:

St 5 Survey. April 7th, 2015,

Fecha: 7 de abril de 2015			
PREGUNTA	SI	NO	AVECES
¿Repasas en tu casa lo que aprendes en la clase de inglés?		X	X

St 5. Questionnaire, Nov 5th, 2015

2) ¿Practicas en tu casa lo aprendido en la clase de inglés? Justifica tu respuesta.

Si practico en mi casa para aprender mas

St 6. Survey. April 7th 2015

Fecha: 7 de abril de 2015			
PREGUNTA	SI	NO	AVECES
¿Repasas en tu casa lo que aprendes en la clase de inglés?		X	X

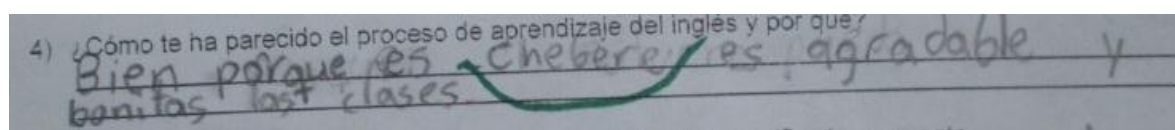
St 6. Questionnaire, Nov 5th, 2015

¿Practicas en tu casa lo aprendido en la clase de inglés? Justifica tu respuesta.

Si porque aprendo mas ingles y aprendo mas porque aprendo temas

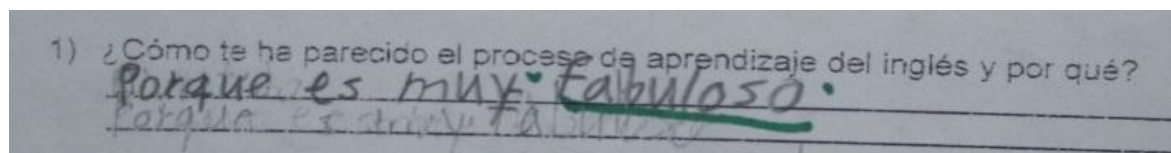
As is described in the previous extracts of surveys and questionnaires, the students were not used to studying at home at the beginning of the intervention. However, in the questionnaire they answered on November 5th, they stated that they had begun to study at home in order to learn more. In this way, it is clear that after using metacognitive strategies, the students developed a certain degree of autonomy and felt motivated to keep learning.

Data analysis showed that the use of resources in class helped students to be more motivated during the activities. Concerning motivation, Shjarma (2005) states that “it is an integral component of purposeful learning and is intimately related to efficiency” (p. 39). Thus, for the present research project, the use of different resources in class made the participants feel motivated for learning, which was a factor that allowed them to learn vocabulary. The following extracts of a survey show this motivation expressed in the students’ answers:



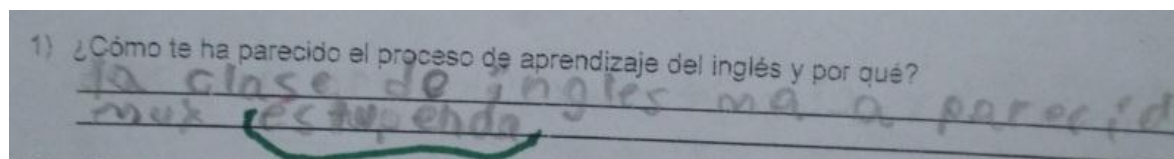
4) ¿Cómo te ha parecido el proceso de aprendizaje del inglés y por qué?
 Bien porque es chebere es agradable y bonitas las clases.

St 20, Questionnaire, Nov 5th, 2015



1) ¿Cómo te ha parecido el proceso de aprendizaje del inglés y por qué?
 Porque es muy fabuloso.

St 21, Questionnaire, Nov 5th, 2015



1) ¿Cómo te ha parecido el proceso de aprendizaje del inglés y por qué?
 La clase de inglés me a parecido muy interesante.

St 22, Questionnaire, Nov 5th, 2015

The previous extracts show that the participants recognized that the class was likeable and pleasant for them. This motivation might have been fostered by the use of resources in class, as the field notes show:

Then, I gave each one of a piece of paper containing sentences in the interrogative form with the vocabulary studied in previous classes and the verb to be. First, they had to look up in the dictionary the words they did not know [...] after that, they had to pass by couples and swap roles, asking and answering the questions. All the students were interested in the activity, showing themselves motivated during the activity. I reminded them to keep bringing dictionary every class and keep reviewing the vocabulary in order to do more activities like that. (Field diary 10, lines 5-10, 20-26)

There was another way to affirm that the participants developed motivation for autonomous learning. In order to motivate students to keep practicing, the researcher proposed them to do virtual activities at home related to the topics seen in the lessons. Almost half of them agreed with the activities, as is written in the field notes:

To finish the class, I asked them who wanted to do virtual activities at home. Fifteen children raised their hands, so I gave them my E-mail account and told them that they had to create an E-mail account. I also clarified that these activities were not mandatory and it was necessary to have computer and internet at home. (Field diary 11, lines 11-17)

It was found that even though the children did not have E-mail accounts, they were willing to create it and also mailed the researcher asking for the activities. The following E-mail messages show this situation:

Brayan Toro <brayantoro71@gmail.com>
para mí ▾

28/10/15 ☆

Hola profe buenas tardes habla con el estudiante jhonnie Andrés peralta González del curso 3a jornada mañana, profe es tan amable enviarme la tarea de ingles a este correo ya q el otro no me quiere funcionar porfavor este es el número de mi hermano

[St 31, student's document (E-mail message)]

MARIA FERNANDA ARIAS VALDES <mafecri_2804@hotmail.com>
para mí ▾

27/10/15

inglés > español Traducir mensaje Desactivar

PROFE NO ME HAN LLEGADO LAS ACTIVIDADES

[St 30, student's document (E-mail message)]

jennifer keit torres lopez <jenniferkeit12@gmail.com>
para mí ▾

28/10/15 ☆

inglés > español Traducir mensaje Desactivar para

Acá esta la tarea:

- 1) he is my uncle ,he is 32years old and he is a doctor
- 2) she is my sister ,she is 10 years old and she is a student
- 3) you are my grandfather ,you are 53 years old and you are a teacher .
- 4) i am a daugther , i am 8 years old and i am a student.
- 5) se are cousins , we are 6 and 8 years old and we are students.
- 6) they are my fathers , they are young and they are great fathers.

[St 4, student's document (E-mail message)]

The above-mentioned messages show that students developed autonomy as they asked for activities to carry out at home, even though when they had been told that these activities were not going to be graded and that it was up to them to carry them out. The last message from student 4 shows the activity already developed, using the vocabulary studied in class.

Setting cognitive goals in class promote students 'autonomy

This sub-category has to do with the application of the metacognitive strategy *planning for cognition*. As was said in chapter 2, it involves the setting of cognitive goals concerning language learning, which could be applicable during the class, as was previously explained in category 3, or as short or mid- term goals. With regard to the importance of setting cognitive goals, Cash (2016) affirms that “goals lead students to a greater sense of autonomy in their learning process” (p.28). In relation to the aforementioned, the data analysis revealed that when the students were asked to think about their mid-term goals related to English learning, they not only expressed their learning objectives but also the different ways in which they could accomplish their goals, showing a considerable degree of autonomy.

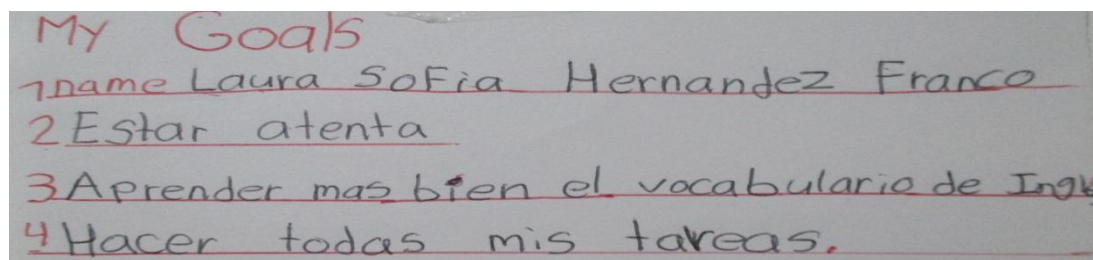
The following extracts from student’s documents illustrates how setting cognitive goals leads helps to foster autonomy:

Mi meta es aprenderme Canciones
y en la casa repasar más

[St 4, student’s document (Activity in class, February 1st, 2016)]

My Goal
Name Juan Sebastian Congo
Meta escuchar musica en ingles y
aprender ingles

[St 20, student's document (Activity in class, February 1st, 2016)]



[St 25, student's document (Activity in class, February 1st, 2016)]

These students' documents above, correspond to an activity in which they were told to write down their goals concerning English for the rest of the year. As is shown in these extracts, the participants wrote down their objectives related to English learning. Some students chose listening to music and learning songs as learning goals. In the case of Student 4, she also set reviewing at home as one of her goals, which demonstrates that she developed certain grade of autonomy, as they had never been asked to review at home the topics studied in class before the application of the present project. Likewise, student 25 expressed that her goals were to learn the vocabulary properly, as well as doing always homework. The latter is really important, as the students were not used to doing homework before the application of the present project. Then, it is possible to affirm that setting goals helped students to be more conscious about what they need to learn a foreign language and also, to develop autonomy in order to comply with the necessary to achieve their learning goals.

This chapter has presented the procedures for data analysis, the categories of analysis and the finding derived from data. The next chapter will present the conclusions this project came to according with the above-mentioned analysis, the implications of this project for the EFL community and the teaching field, as well as the limitations the research had to cope with and the questions it would be interesting to respond in further research.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter presents the main conclusions of the research study based on the findings. It also reflects upon the implications of the findings for the EFL-community in Colombia, the school where the project was developed and its participants. Last, some limitations this study had to cope with are mentioned, as well as the questions worth answering in further research.

Conclusions

This research study aimed at using metacognitive strategies in class as a way to foster vocabulary learning among 3rd graders in a public school in Colombia. The research question that guided the study was:

How might the implementation of metacognitive strategies with third-graders in an EFL classroom in a public school in Colombia foster vocabulary learning?

This question was answered involving four main aspects: attention, participation, creativity and students' autonomy. As to the first aspect, which has to do with attention, it is important to state that, as the instructions to develop the activities were given in English, the students improved their attention, which helped them to perform better during the activities aimed at improving their vocabulary. Hence, the first conclusion this project came to, is that when students are taught to focus their attention during a task related to the learning of a foreign language, it is easier for them to learn vocabulary.

Likewise, this first aspect was linked to participation. Since their attention improved, they felt more self-confident to participate by writing sentences on the white board and speaking up in class, which helped them to practice the vocabulary learned in every lesson. Through

participation they also corrected each other's mistakes and reviewed previous topics learned in class, which is part of monitoring, one of the main objectives of metacognition. The participation in class also helped students to have better results on the tests. In this order of ideas, it is possible to conclude that participation is essential for students to learn vocabulary.

As to the second aspect, it is possible to affirm that the use of metacognitive strategies fostered students' creativity for the reason that they needed to think of different ways to memorize the vocabulary they needed to perform their tasks in class. The students became more creative when doing homework regarding vocabulary learning. One of the most remarkable ways the participants showed their creativity was by means of drawings. Most students made drawings when they were told to search new vocabulary at home using a strategy to learn it. Then, it can be concluded that metacognition was a key that allowed students to be creative when doing homework.

The third aspect is related to students' autonomy. The use of several resources in class was useful to motivate students to start learning by themselves. They started to use the resources they had created at home and also, to bring printed resources to work in class. It was demonstrated that they even started to review at home the vocabulary seen during the lessons and, they were also willing to execute activities at home that were not going to be graded. Furthermore, the students admitted feeling motivated to learn, as the activities and the way the researcher taught them were different from the previous lessons, before the project was carried out.

Setting short and mid-term goals also helped the students to develop autonomy. It was shown that they were able to think about their short and mid-term objectives and also to plan how

to accomplish them. They stated to be willing to study by themselves, to listen to music and doing homework in order to keep learning. In conclusion, metacognition fostered students' motivation for autonomous learning.

The fourth aspect has to do with the learning of vocabulary within specific contexts. This was done by setting cognitive goals during the class regarding a specific task, which is involved in the strategy of *planning for cognition*. The use of this strategy enable the participants to think of the words and grammar structures that they needed to perform a specific task in class within a specific time, leading them to learn vocabulary more efficiently. One of the tasks they performed in class was writing descriptions. This allowed the students to have a model to make sentences and use vocabulary in specific situations. They apply this model when they were given images to make sentences according to their interpretation of the image. Therefore, the last conclusion this research project came to, is that metacognition allowed students to learn vocabulary from the context.

Implications

After analyzing the data and discussing the findings, several implications of this research project have been found regarding EFL-community, the participants of this study, the field of EFL-teaching, the school where it was developed and the researcher who carried it out. First, carrying out this research project implied to see the need of making children reflect on the importance of speaking as a foreign language for the lives, not only in the academic context but also in relation to cultural and social matters that affect their development as individuals. For the participants of this research, the implementation of metacognitive strategies also implied showing them that the learning of a second language does not rely on the teacher but on them, and that if

they take advantage of the technological tools and resources such as videos in internet, web pages, etc., it can be easier much more fun and interesting.

As to the field of EFL-teaching, the findings of this project pointed at changing the way English is taught in primary schools in Colombia, concerning time, resources, teaching in context and fostering autonomous learning. If teachers take into account the context of the children and their specific needs in order to make the necessary adaptations and appropriately use the resources they count on, there will be a better learning process in which students are aware of the progress they are making concerning the apprehension of the foreign language. Therefore, this project has implications as well regarding the contents that are taught in the classroom and the way they are presented to the students. The observations during the first cycle showed that the English classes were given in Spanish and limited to color photocopies in the classroom, spending all the time of the class in just one activity.

Concerning the implications the project might have on the school where the project was developed, it is possible to affirm that this public school could be interested in keep working by means of pedagogical projects focused on the learning of a foreign language and also, reflecting on the importance of the role of the teacher as a researcher. Finally, a last implication might be the need of making parents realize that they can be a great support to motivate their children's interest in learning a second language and to foster their awareness of the importance of doing this in their childhood.

Finally, for the researcher, the execution of this research project might have an impact on his role as teacher and researcher. For him, carrying out this study made him see the importance of doing research on the field of EFL teaching, in order to generate new strategies aimed at

facilitating the process of learning in public schools, especially in elementary school, as it is easier for younger children to learn faster.

Limitations

The limitations this project had to cope with were related to resources, time, and classroom conditions. The first one has to do with the lack of technological resources such as computers, T. V sets and projectors. This made it difficult to show videos or slides to the students or to do listening activities. On the other hand, at the beginning of the execution of the project, the focus was on the metacognitive strategies that the students could produce on their own based on the ones they see in class. However, the performance of the students was not good enough to expect that they could create their own metacognitive strategies to learn vocabulary. That is the reason why the research question was changed, focusing on how the implementation of metacognitive strategies might foster vocabulary learning. Another limitation has to do with time. During the third cycle the school reduced the time for the English class, so the time to apply instruments was not enough.

As to the classroom conditions, the first limitation was related to space and noise. The classroom was so small that it was not possible to make round tables or make students work in groups. Furthermore, the break time was not at the same hour for all students at school so, the noise of children running and playing always distracted the participants while they were in class. It is also important to mention that there were constants distractions for the children inside the classroom, such as the teacher's assistants entering and leaving the class room several times, to deliver papers or bring the snacks for the children. The fact that the students were given a small

meal during the class was a limitation concerning time and students' concentration, as they could not eat and execute the activities at once.

Further Research

After carrying out this research, there emerge two fields of questions worth answering in further research. First, it would be interesting to do research on how to improve children's memory skills, that is to say, to work on strategies directly focused on strengthening children's capacity to memorize words in the foreign language quickly and more efficiently. Secondly, it would be appropriate as well to do research on how the cultural background of children affects their motivation, attitudes or even their conception about English and its importance, doing more emphasis on learning the language following the cultural approach.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire, March 3rd 2015Fecha: Martes 3 de Marzo

1) ¿Crees que sea importante aprender inglés?

SI NO ¿Por qué?para poder aprender inglés y para
poder viajar por países

2) ¿Te Parece difícil aprender Inglés?

SI NO ¿Por qué?por que es interesante aprender
inglés por que es chevere

3) ¿Cómo te gustaría que fueran las clases de Inglés?

Me gustaria con peliculas,
musicá y videos y que el profe
no sea tta estricto, y aprender es
divertido con el profesor y como

APPENDIX B

Survey, April 7th 2015

ENCUESTA

Fecha: 7 de abril de 2015

PREGUNTA	SI	NO	AVECES
¿Repasas en tu casa lo que aprendes en la clase de inglés?		X	X
¿Te preguntan tus padres por las tareas de inglés?	X		
¿Aprendes por tu cuenta palabras en inglés?		X	
¿Realizas todas las actividades desarrolladas en la clase de inglés?	X		
¿Entiendes instrucciones sencillas en inglés?	X		X
¿Logras pronunciar las palabras que se aprenden en la clase de inglés?		X	
¿Participas voluntariamente en las actividades orales de la clase de inglés?		X	

¿Cuál de estas actividades se te facilita más?

- Escribir _____
- Pronunciar X _____
- Leer _____
- Escuchar _____

ENCUESTA

Fecha: 7 de abril de 2015

PREGUNTA	SI	NO	AVECES
¿Repasas en tu casa lo que aprendes en la clase de inglés?	X	X	X
¿Te preguntan tus padres por las tareas de inglés?	X	X	X
¿Aprendes por tu cuenta palabras en inglés?		X	
¿Realizas todas las actividades desarrolladas en la clase de inglés?		X	
¿Entiendes instrucciones sencillas en inglés?			X
¿Logras pronunciar las palabras que se aprenden en la clase de inglés?		X	
¿Participas voluntariamente en las actividades orales de la clase de inglés?	X		

¿Cuál de estas actividades se te facilita más?

- Escribir _____
- Pronunciar _____
- Leer _____
- Escuchar X _____

APPENDIX C

Questionnaire, March 17th 2015

CUESTIONARIO

¿Por qué consideras importante aprender inglés?

aprendo otros idiomas aprendo otras cosas de ingles tanto lo
suficiente

¿Crees que has aprendido suficiente vocabulario en inglés desde primer grado hasta la fecha?

SI NO ¿Por qué?

no pronuncio bien las palabras en english

¿Crees que tu aprendizaje del inglés depende solamente del profesor?

No porque podemos escuchar canciones de english y escuchar
canales de english

CUESTIONARIO

¿Por qué consideras importante aprender inglés?

Por que las películas en inglés.

¿Crees que has aprendido suficiente vocabulario en inglés desde primer grado hasta la fecha?

SI NO ¿Por qué?

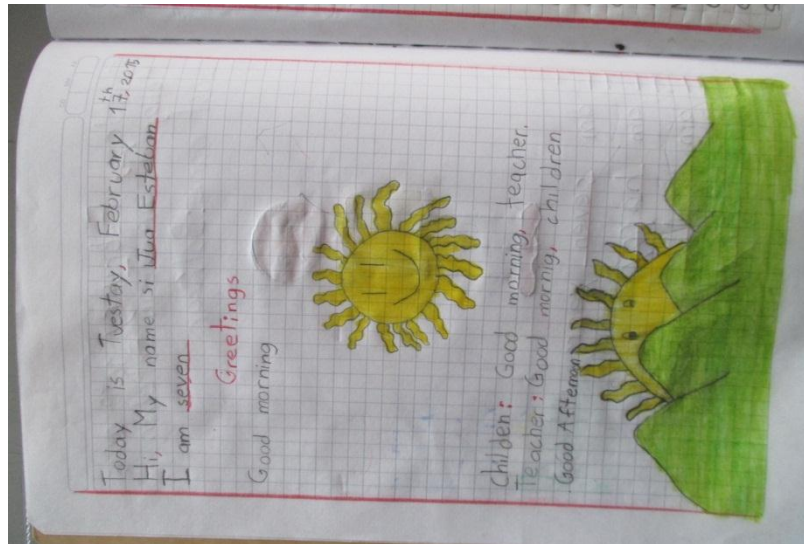
Por que no los enseñaron tanto.

¿Crees que tu aprendizaje del inglés depende solamente del profesor?

Si por que el profesor los explica bien a inglés.

APPENDIX D

Student's document, Feb 17th 2015



Student's document, March 17th 2015



APPENDIX E

Lesson Plan sample

Goal: To Practice vocabulary about animals

General learning objective: In this class students will practice vocabulary about animals, using the verb to have in the negative and the affirmative form

Topic: Animals **Time:** 275 minutes (approximately) in 4 sessions.

Resources: Posters, pictures,

PRETASK	TASK	TIME	SUB-TAKS	TIME
<p>The students will have been instructed to search on the internet vocabulary about animals and the members of the family</p> <p>The students will have been told to search the conjugation of the verb to have and vocabulary about animals</p> <p>The students will have been told to bring magazines, newspapers, or posters with pictures of animals.</p>	<p>TO PRACTICE VOCABULARY ABOUT ANIMALS</p> <p>In order to apply the strategies Obtaining resources for cognition and Focused attention, the students will be given a photocopy containing pictures of animals. They will have to choose five animals they like the most and write 5 characteristics of each animal. They will use the dictionary to look up the words they need for this activity.</p>	30 min	<p>On their note books, the students will have to classify animals into five categories such as wild, domestic, dangerous, big and small. They will have to put 10 animals into each category. They will have to use the dictionary for this activity.</p> <p>Sub Task Using the material they brought to class, the students will cut out the picture of an animal. Then, after having been given a sheet of paper by the researcher, the students will past the picture of the animal in the middle. Then they will have to make a complete physical description of the animal, saying whether it has legs, feathers, fur, horns, etc. where it lives, what it eats, if it is wild or domestic.</p>	30 min
	<p>In order to apply the strategy of Planning, the students will make sentences using vocabulary about previous topics studied in class, such as animals, numbers, and family members. The researcher will write some sentences a model for them to follow, such as: <i>my father is a pilot, he has two beautiful dogs</i>. They will write minimum fifteen sentences. They will give the paper to the researcher when they finish.</p>	35min	<p>In order to practice pronunciation, each student will read the sentences he or she has written. The students will be given 10 minutes to</p>	30min
	<p>As a way of practicing the strategy of monitoring, the</p>			

	<p>researcher will give them back their papers. They will have to find the mistakes they made and rewrite the sentences again in another paper. They can ask for help to their classmates if they don't find the mistakes easily.</p>	25min	<p>check the pronunciation of the words, before reading their sentences to the class.</p> <p>After being explained how to use the verb to have in the negative and the affirmative form, the students will rewrite the sentences they wrote before, in the negative and the affirmative way.</p> <p>The students will work by couples, they will write a short dialog in which they will ask each other questions to respond in the affirmative and the negative way. Then, they will stand in front of the class and read the dialog.</p> <p>As a final review, the students will be shown a set of images by the researcher. They will be asked to raise their hands and say the animal they see in the picture. The student who raises his hand, will say as many things related to the animal as he can remember.</p>	<p>25min</p> <p>30min</p> <p>40min</p>
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APPENDIX F

Consent form, March 10th 2015

UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA NACIONAL CARTA DE CONSENTIMIENTO DEL PADRE O ACUDIENTE

Fecha:
Colegio Aníbal Fernández de Soto
Sr. / Sra. Acudiente,

Como estudiante de la Universidad Pedagógica Nacional estoy realizando un proyecto de investigación en el aula con las estudiantes del grado tercero, relacionado con el aprendizaje y la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera. Con el motivo de realizar mi trabajo de grado con el curso mencionado durante este y los próximos dos semestres, debo utilizar algunos instrumentos de investigación tales como entrevistas, cuestionarios, fotos, grabaciones de audio, entre otros, por lo cual es necesario contar con su aprobación como padre o acudiente para que la estudiante a su cargo pueda hacer parte de esta investigación.

La información recolectada será confidencial y los nombres de los estudiantes serán guardados en el anonimato. Asimismo los resultados de esta investigación no tendrán incidentes en la evaluación del curso.

Si está de acuerdo que su hijo sea participe en esta investigación, por favor llene el siguiente formulario.

Por medio de este escrito y en carácter de padre de familia (acudiente), doy consentimiento para que el (la) estudiante Valentina Araca Quisoga del grado tercero A del Colegio Aníbal Fernández de Soto, pueda ser parte del Proyecto de Investigación en El Aula ejecutado por el investigador Neil David Ojeda Martínez de la Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, para que él pueda aplicar instrumentos de investigación y desarrollar la propuesta del proyecto.

¡GRACIAS!

Claudia Inés Guzmán 6

Firma y Cédula

Adriana Quisoga cc 53047680

Firma y Cédula

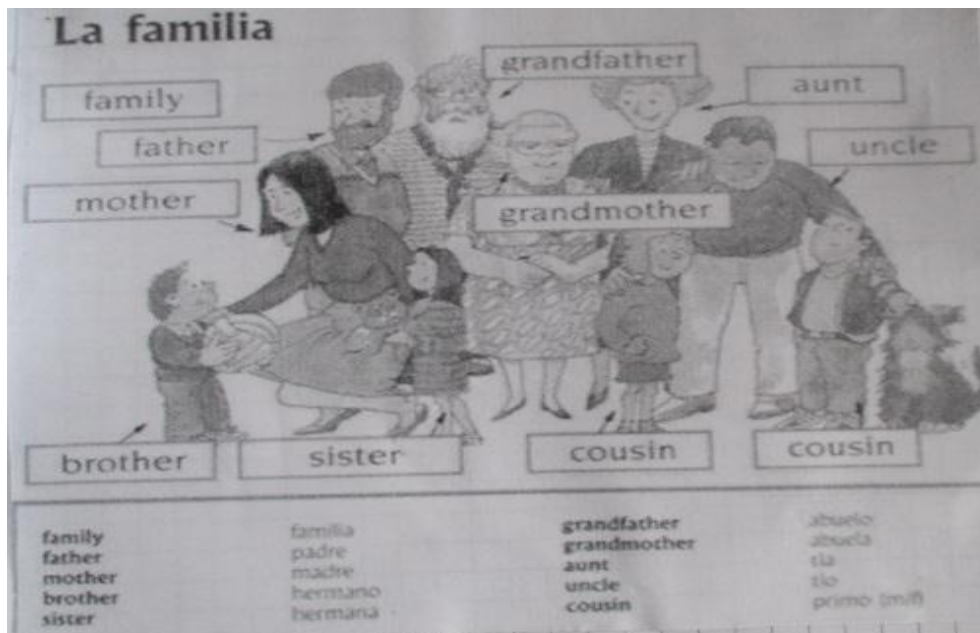
APPENDIX G

Students using dictionary and printed resources in class, October 8th 2015Students using dictionary and printed resources in class, October 8th, 2015Students using dictionary and printed resources in class, October 8th, 2015

APPENDIX H

Printed resources brought by the students, September 2nd 2015

Abeja	Bee	Cebra	Zebra
Águila	Eagle	Centollo	Spider crab
Alacrán ; Escorpión	Scorpion	Cerdo	Pig
Almeja	Clam	Chimpancé	Chimpanzee
Antilope	Antelope	Ciervo	Deer
Araña	Spider	Cigarra	Cicada
Ardilla	Squirrel	Cigüeña	Stork
Atún ; Bonito	Tuna	Cisne	Swan
Ave del paraíso	Bird of paradise	Cocodrilo	Crocodile
Avestruz	Ostrich	Codorniz	Quail
Aves	Birds	Comadreja	Weasel
Avispa	Wasp	Conejo	Rabbit
Bacalao	Cod	Cordero	Lamb
Ballena	Whale	Crustáceos	Crustaceans
Boa	Boa	Cucaracha	Cockroach
Buey	Ox	Cuervo	Crow
Búfalo	Buffalo	Delfin	Dolphin
Buitre	Vulture	El mundo de los animales	Animal's world
Burro	Donkey	Elefante	Elephant
Caballo	Horse	Erizo	Hedgehog
Cabra	Goat	Erizo de mar	Sea urchin
Calamar	Squid	Escarabajo	Beetle
Camello	Camel	Faisán	Pheasant
Canario	Canary	Foca	Seal
Carretero	Crab	Gacela	Gazelle
			Hen



APPENDIX I

Test, October 30th 2015

TEST

Using the verb "to be", make sentences with the words below

a carpenter	a farmer	legs
a business man	kind	arms
a lawyer	bad	eyes
an actor	mean	ears
an accountant	black	belly
a doctor	green	blond
a psychologist	blue	knees
fat	straight	shoulders
thin	fingers	hands
pretty	feet	large
beautiful	hair	mouth
thin	hips	tongue
curly	big	a soldier
slender	toes	a cook
a psychiatrist	a teacher	a student
a nurse	a footballer	a pilot

* She is a doctor. ✓
 * I am slender. ✓
 * He is a carpenter. ✓
 * I am white. ✓
 * She is a teacher. ✓

APPENDIX J

Questionnaire, November 5th 2015

Cómo te ha parecido el proceso de aprendizaje del inglés y por qué?
 porque el profesor enseña muchas cosas en inglés.

¿Practicas en tu casa lo aprendido en la clase de inglés? Justifica tu respuesta.
 si porque el nos enseña cosas diferentes y nosotros lo practicamos

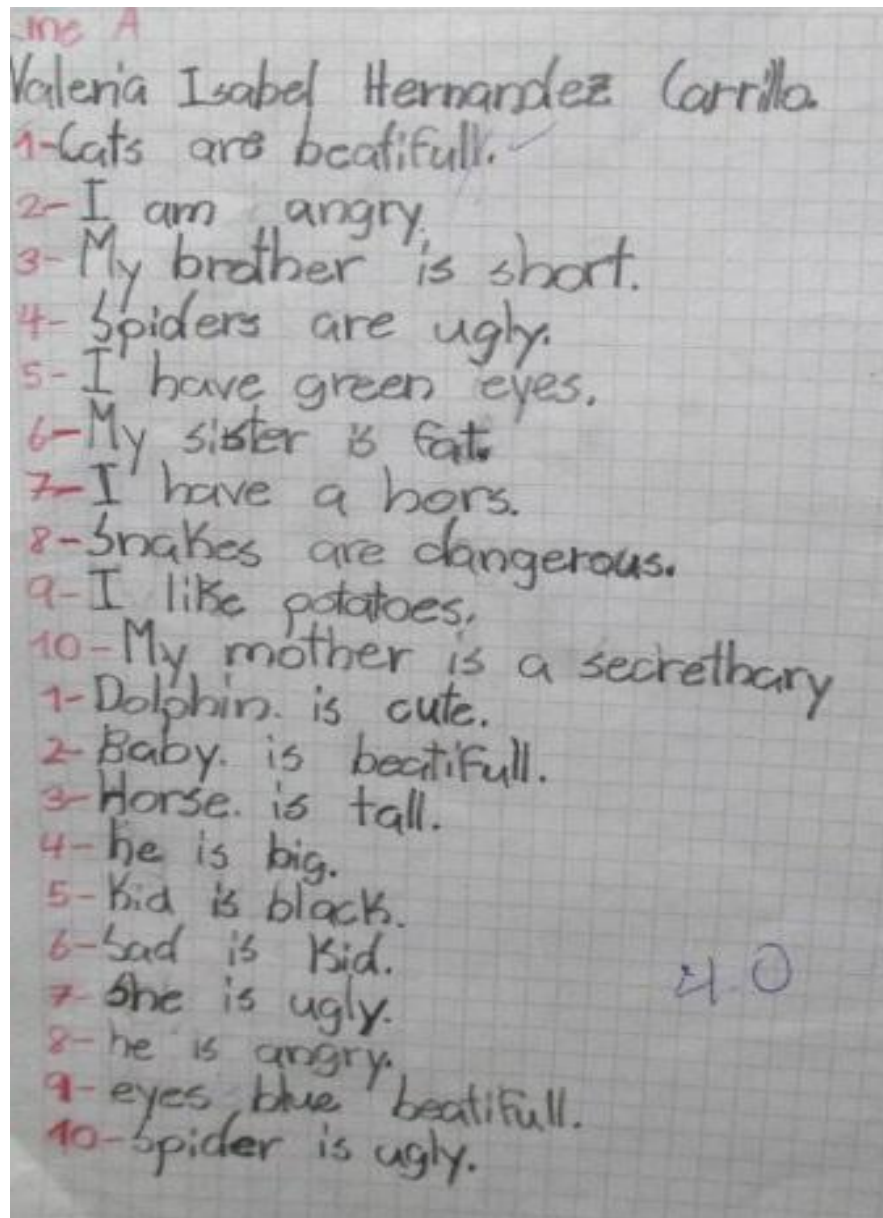
¿Crees que has aprendido inglés durante todo este tiempo?
 Si No ¿Por qué?
 porque me enseña cosas y yo lo practico en mi casa.

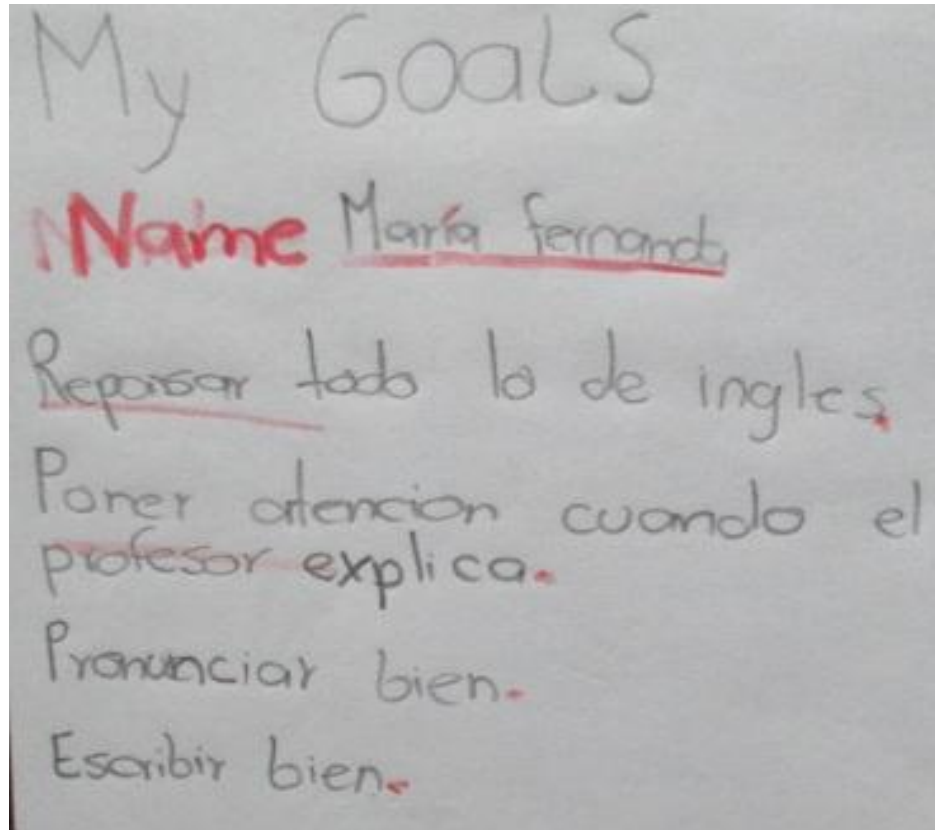
¿Cómo crees que ha sido tu desempeño durante las actividades realizadas en clase?
 Excelente
 Bueno
 Regular
 Malo

¿Por qué?
 Porque yo a veces no le pongo atención

¿Qué aspectos crees que debes mejorar?
 Debo mejorar el verbo to be y el verbo

APPENDIX K

Test, November 12th 2015

APPENDIX LStudent's document, February 1st 2016

APPENDIX M

Final test, March 2nd 2016

Name: Valeria Isabel Hernandez Carrillo
Line: Line A
Is a bear blue and brown and beautiful.
Is a bear big and brown and dangerous.
Is a cow white and black and big and dangerous and domestic.
Is duck white not dangerous and beautiful.
Is a Tiger dangerous, orange and black and big.
Lettuce green and delicious and short.
Onion Purple and White is delicious and short.
Pineapple green and orange is big and short.
blackberry is a short and purple and delicious.
Is White and short.
I Milk White and delicious.

APPENDIX N

Quiz, August 26th 2015

1). Identify the correct word:

Numbers

- a. Three
- b. Tree
- c. Trhee
- d. Try

Fruits

- a. Apol
- b. Aple
- c. Apple
- d. Eipol

Animals

- a. Dog
- b. Dug
- c. Dogg
- d. Doog

Greetings

- a. Hello
- b. Helo
- c. Heelo
- d. Hallo

2). Write the members of the family that you remember

brother sister father mother
grandfather grandmother

3). Write what you listen from the teacher

boy thoy book scool bothy theibool
thoor monthey thudey hooter yelow blue
room flou hays moon car thicher student

APPENDIX O

FIELD DIARY 10

OBSERVATOR : Neil David Ojeda

PLACE: Colegio Aníbal Fernández de Soto

October 15th 2015

	DESCRIPTION	INTERPRETATION
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	<p>I started the class making a review of adjectives and parts of the body. I picked some of the students that have different characteristics and different physical features in order to show them the meaning of words such as blond, curly, black, tall, thin, fat, etc. Then I described them using simple sentences such as she is blond, he is tall, he is black, they are boys, etc. Thus, I gave them back the last test and asked them to correct it following the structure that I used when I described some of their classmates. I observed that they find it hard to look for the mistakes in the sentences when even when the explanation was given in Spanish. Most of them got confused finding out the mistakes in the sentences, so I explained to them again how to use the infinitive article and when it is not necessary. Even after the explanation, most of them could not understand why the sentences they wrote were incorrect. Then, I explained to them again but this time I had to do it in Spanish.</p>	<p>Learning a foreign language is a process that implies to spend time practicing. Even though for children is easier to learn a foreign language, the context must be taken into account. Despite of the fact that there are ways of given a class in the target language, without using the mother tongue, it is not easy when the group of students is large. Besides, explaining third graders basic grammar topics without speaking Spanish can be a difficult task; specially if it is needed that the students executes specific tasks. Then, in my opinion it is appropriate to speak Spanish in English classes if the population is not learning the language in a real immersion process.</p>