SELF-REGULATION IN LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN STUDENTS OF UPPER BASIC IN A FISCOMISIONAL SCHOOL OF MANTA

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Self-regulation in learning English as a foreign language in students of Upper Basic in a Fiscomisional School of Manta

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ABSTRACT

Self-regulation refers to students' ability to autonomously manage their own learning process, involves setting goals, monitoring progress, and consciously regulating effort, which promotes metacognitive and self-assessment skills essential for academic success. Objective was to diagnose the level of self-regulation in learning English as a foreign language in students of Upper Basic in a Fiscomisional School of Manta. The methodology was a qualitative-quantitative research using the inductive-deductive-analytical and synthetic methods, to collect the data, interviews were conducted with 5 teachers who teach the English subject, and a structured survey was applied to 39 students of Higher Basic Education. Among the most relevant results, it was possible to establish that students plan their time studying the language, seek help and additional resources when they encounter difficulties, and are motivated by setting clear goals. However, it is worrying to observe that a considerable group of students do not dedicate time to autonomous learning, which poses a challenge for teachers, who must consider the different learning styles of each student. Concluding that self-regulation in English language learning plays a fundamental role in the development of effective language skills.

Keywords: self-regulation, english language, metacognition, self-assessment, development of language skills

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RESUMEN

La autorregulación se refiere a la capacidad de los estudiantes para gestionar de manera autónoma su propio proceso de aprendizaje, implica establecer metas, monitorear el progreso y regular el esfuerzo de manera consciente, lo que promueve habilidades metacognitivas y de autoevaluación esenciales para el éxito académico. Objetivo, diagnosticar el nivel de autorregulación del aprendizaje del idioma inglés en estudiantes de Básica Superior de un Colegio Fiscomisional en Manta. Metodología, es una investigación cuali-cuantitativa mediante los métodos inductivo-deductivo-analítico y sintético, para recopilar los datos, se realizaron entrevistas a 5 docentes que imparten la asignatura de inglés, y se aplicó una encuesta estructurada a 39 estudiantes de Básica Superior. Entre los resultados más relevantes, se logró establecer que los estudiantes planifican su tiempo de estudio del idioma, buscan ayuda y recursos adicionales cuando encuentran dificultades, y se motivan estableciendo metas claras. Sin embargo, es preocupante observar que un grupo considerable de estudiantes no dedica tiempo al aprendizaje autónomo, esto plantea un desafío para los docentes, quienes deben considerar los diferentes estilos de aprendizaje de cada estudiante. Concluyendo que, la autorregulación en el aprendizaje del idioma inglés desempeña un papel fundamental en el desarrollo de habilidades lingüísticas efectivas.

Palabras claves: autorregulación, idioma inglés, metacognición, autoevaluación, desarrollo de habilidades lingüísticas

INTRODUCTION

Over time, education has undergone transformations parallel to human development. The very concept of education has undergone significant alterations over the years, when we go back to the era of conventional education and compare it with the present, there is evidence of a substantial change in the educational paradigm, in past times, the student played a passive role, acting as a receiver of knowledge, while obediently waiting to be instructed. (Peña, 2019)(Calderon, 2018)

In contemporaneity, it is aspired that students adopt a more active role, being participatory, autonomous and reflective, contributing both to the educational environment and to their own personal development, this approach seeks to promote the cognitive, formative, volitional, and attitudinal development of students, such is the advent of the virtual world has played a fundamental role in the systematization of this educational process, Currently, the appropriate use of technology has made it possible to implement various changes and turn the learning process into a self-discipline.

Authors such as Correa (2022), affirm that technologies continue to be versatile and diverse tools in their application, especially in language teaching, highlighting their relevance in the teaching of English, it is widely recognized, this language has been consolidated as a means of communication of international scope, although for authors such as González *et,al* (2020) they argue that it is due to the wide use in scientific dissemination and its direct link with professional success. In fact, on many occasions, English is the only tool available for the introduction of new concepts in fields of knowledge and research. (Cornejo Carrasco, 2020)

Likewise, (Ordoñez Procel, Poma Tacuri, López López, & Correa Criollo, 2023), they consider that it is essential that children and young people acquire the necessary skills to be citizens and productive workers, capable of actively participating in society, however, there is a significant crisis in the educational field, where one of the main causes, in most education systems, is the lack of understanding about the learning processes of students. In this context, both the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (1997) and the International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC) (2020) propose a comprehensive vision of education, this vision implies guaranteeing the quality and relevance of education, as well as promoting lifelong learning.

Research Questions

1.   Do students plan their time to study the English language?

2.   How are students motivated to learn the English language?

3.   What methodologies do teachers use to teach self-regulation in English?

Literature Review

Self-regulation

Given that research in the educational field has revealed that self-regulation has not been considered a relevant action in the student learning process, it has been decided to continue researching and working to promote its appropriate use by both teachers and students in the classroom, self-regulation has a significant relevance in the educational context. since it implies disciplined self-learning, this is reflected in the need for the student to establish clear objectives to improve their ability to learn and thus overcome obstacles in various areas of knowledge. (Revilla, 2022)

For (Dieser, 2019) the use of different learning strategies it is essential to gradually achieve these objectives, guaranteeing an optimal learning process, this concept originates in childhood as a habit that must be cultivated from an early age to facilitate the future development of the educational process and promote personal benefits. This skill develops progressively and involves various aspects of social, emotional, and cognitive development (Noreña, 2020).

This cycle is based on three main schools of thought: research focused on learning styles, research focused on metacognition and regulation of styles, and theories of the self, which include the direction of behavioral goals, the implementation of this model was designed considering the different learning modalities of students and the quality of their self-regulation process, This approach encompasses a variety of concepts that contribute to the development of the construct of self-regulation, since its analysis favors the creation of meaningful self-regulation processes and strategies for effective learning.

Gráfico 1. The three-layered model of self-regulated learning
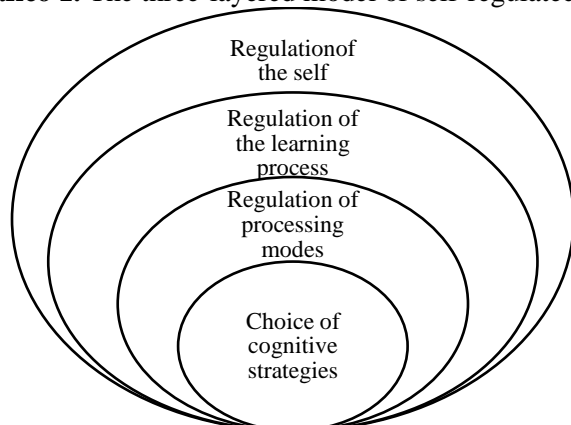
Fountain**:** Tomado y adaptado de Self-regulated learning: Where we are today. En: International Journal of Educational Research (Velasco Zárate & Meza Cano , 2020)

This model, according to Zapico (2021), promotes self-reflection and guides the learning process of students who want or have decided to change the perspective of depending exclusively on the teacher and their resources, towards a formative approach that develops gradually, considering processes and strategies of self-regulation that lead to the achievement of a final goal. Although it is It is widely recognized that students are not born with the capacity for fully developed self-regulated learning, but that this skill is acquired through perseverance and education from an early age.

- Regulation of processing modes: This refers to the ability to use and control a cognitive process directly related to the learning outcome (Zárate, 2018).

- Regulation of the learning process: This intermediate level focuses on the competencies associated with the metacognitive processes that guide self-learning (Piñeros Borges & Villareal Arteta, 2022).

- Regulation of the self: At this last level, motivation plays a fundamental role in the use of pedagogical resources that contribute to the achievement of the established learning objectives (Bernal Rozo & burgos cruz, 2018) (Tellez Tula, Castro González, Gutiérrez Gutiérrez, & Asino, 2023).

Likewise, it is crucial that teachers become aware of the need to implement and promote self-regulation in the classroom, they must begin to guide student learning continuously; Since their role is fundamental in this process, teachers collaborate in the development of students' capacities and skills, which allows them to build new knowledge effectively (Choez-Menoscal, Stagg, & Morocho-Mazón, 2020).

Self-regulated learning in English as a foreign language

When addressing self-regulated learning in the context of English as a foreign language, it is crucial to highlight the fundamental role of motivation. In this educational environment, motivation becomes a determining factor, since not all students show a significant interest in learning the language. Two types of motivation are distinguished: intrinsic, characterized by a genuine desire to acquire new knowledge, and extrinsic, where the student seeks personal gratification external to the learning process (Flores Huaman & Campana Concha, 2022).

As López et, al (2023) mentions, Previously the planning of learning objectives must be closely related to the content of the language, as well as to the individual learning styles and strategies of each student. Therefore, Gutierrez et*, al* (2022), to start the training process, it is essential that the student carries out a self-assessment to identify personal aspects that may influence success or learning difficulties, such as attitudes, aptitudes, and specific needs in relation to the foreign language being learned, as can be seen in the analysis of the transcript.

Self-regulation processes and strategies

The processes and strategies represent a set of methods and actions necessary to achieve a specific objective, in this context, autonomous learning is positioned as the ultimate goal of the student's training process, considering both the processes and the strategies of self-regulation, these will be detailed in the following table, which constitutes an adaptation that bases and contributes ideas to the model mentioned above.

Table 2. Compendium of Self-Regulated LearningBeginning of the Form

	Self-regulated learning	
	Self-regulation processes	**Self-regulatory strategies**
LEARNING PROCESSES	Inquiry	Reflect on these interests, needs and difficulties
	Planning	Setting parameters to be followed and objectives to be met
	Execution	Organize the proposed activities
	Supervision	Verify the development of progress
	Evaluation	Making decisions based on results

Source: Author's own elaboration

The student is able to regulate their educational process using personal criteria, controlling their behavior constantly to improve their cognitive development, for example, the student mentioned in the transcript strives to improve her proficiency in English as a foreign language and complies with the above (Ortiz

Ross & García Cupil, 2023). On the other hand, authors such as Rivas (2020), describe this type of student as someone who actively participates, both at a metacognitive, motivational and behavioral level, in their own learning process. For Ortíz (2023), this student individually initiates and directs his or her efforts to acquire new knowledge and skills, without relying exclusively on teachers, parents, or other instructional agents.

METHODOLOGY

The objective of this study is to diagnose the level of self-regulation in learning English as a foreign language in students of Upper Basic in a School of Manta. In terms of methodology, a qualitative-quantitative research was carried out using the inductive-deductive-analytical and synthetic methods, these methods allowed exploring the strategies of self-regulation of English language learning in students of Higher Basic Education. The study population corresponds to 145 people, including high school students and teachers, to collect data interviews were carried out with 5 teachers who teach the subject of English, and a survey was applied to 39 students of Higher Basic Education. The analysis of the qualitative data was transcribed verbatim and the answers obtained in the application of the surveys were tabulated and quantitatively analyzed using descriptive techniques, such as frequencies and percentages. Informed consent was given to the teachers in the study and informed consent to the students' legal representatives, based on the fact that all students are under legal age, besides the confidentiality and anonymity of the data were also guaranteed through the assignment of alphanumeric identifiers.

Results

Analysis of the interview

Objective: To diagnose the development level of self-regulation in the English subject in students of the Upper Basic School.

Table 3. Analysis category

1	Motivation for language teaching
2	Teaching Approach
3	Previous experience in self-regulated language teaching
4	Methodologies used for self-regulated teaching
5	Resources or support materials
6	Evaluation strategy in terms of self-regulation

In today's world, learning a foreign language has become an invaluable skill for personal and professional growth (Primicias, 2023). English stands out as one of the most widely spoken and used languages globally, behind this vast and complex process of teaching English as a foreign language, there are highly trained professionals committed to opening the doors of communication and opportunities to those who seek to master this language. The teachers were questioned about How did you come to teach English as a foreign language? To which they replied:

D1. "*I started teaching English as a foreign language after earning my undergraduate degree in Education with an emphasis on foreign languages.*"

D2. "*My passion for languages and culture led me to specialize in teaching English, my graduate studies.*"

D3. "*After working as an English tutor for several years, I decided to formalize my career as an English teacher*"

D4. "*My dad was an English teacher all his life and he told me "when you grow up you should also teach this language with love" and when I grew up, I fell in love with the language to such an extent that I am passionate about teaching it.*"

D5. "*A job opportunity in a school in the urban area led me to become an English teacher, after replacing the teacher who taught it*."

Considering that the teaching of English as a foreign language is a field in constant evolution, where pedagogical methods and approaches are constantly reviewed and adapted (Unión Europea, 2018). In this sense, the teachers were questioned about: What is your main focus in teaching English?

D1. "*My main focus in teaching English is to focus on effective and practical communication, emphasizing the application of the language in real situations.*"

D2. "*I focus on developing comprehensive language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing, to ensure holistic language learning.*"

D3. "*I prioritize creating an inclusive and motivating learning environment that encourages active student participation and promotes confidence in their ability to use English.*"

D4. "*I use communicative approaches and interactive activities that encourage collaboration among students and prepare them to communicate effectively in various contexts.*"

D5. *"I strive to incorporate authentic and relevant materials into my lessons so that students can relate the language to their everyday lives and develop a deeper cultural understanding."*

Self-regulated learning is a fundamental aspect in the educational process, as it implies that students are able to effectively manage and control their own learning process (Sanabria, 2004). In this sense, the teacher who has extensive experience in this field, working with students from different educational levels and helping them to develop skills and strategies that allow them to be autonomous and efficient learners, wondered about: Have you had previous experience in teaching self-regulation in learning?

D1. *"Yes, I have integrated self-regulation teaching into learning in my classes through reflection activities, goal setting, and monitoring student progress."*

D2. *"I have used techniques such as self-assessment and time planning to promote self-regulation in my students, preparing them for autonomous and effective learning."*

D3. *"My previous experience includes the implementation of regulated educational strategies in the classroom, in order to improve the autonomy and responsibility of the student in their own learning process."*

D4. *"I have explored different teaching approaches throughout my profession, such as individualized feedback on student progress."*

D5. *"Yes, in 9 years as a teacher, I participated only once in a professional development program, to learn how to integrate the teaching of self-regulation in learning into my daily pedagogical practices, but I consider that it was not enough, that I need to know more"*

Self-regulation in English learning implies that students are able to set clear goals, plan their study effectively, monitor their progress, regulate their effort and use appropriate learning strategies (Carrete Marín & Domingo Peñafiel, 2022). Thus, the teacher must implement different teaching-learning strategies that best suit the needs of the student. It was questioned about: Could you briefly describe the methodologies you use to teach self-regulation in English learning?

D1. *"I employ self-regulation strategies, such as self-assessment, to teach metacognitive skills to my English learners."*

D2. *"I integrate guided reflection activities, where students identify their strengths and areas for improvement in their English language learning process."*

D3. *"I use collaborative teaching techniques, where students work together to set learning goals and this in turn, allows me to monitor the student's progress."*

D4. *"I implement journaling activities, where students record their thoughts and experiences, encouraging self-awareness and self-reflection."*

D5. *"I promote formative feedback by providing students with specific feedback on their study strategies and performance in learning English."*

The use of appropriate resources and materials is essential to promote self-regulation in learning English, as they provide students with the necessary tools to take control of their own learning process (Crespo Rodas M. J., 2019). In this way we will know the most effective resources and materials to support the teaching of self-regulation in learning English, the question was. What resources or materials do you use to support the teaching of self-regulation in English learning?

D1. *"Employ daily learning where students reflect on their progress and set goals."*

D2. *"I use tools that I download from the web, and that are not done with the internet, but that allow me to work in class with my students."*

D3. *"I integrate reading materials and videos that address issues of self-regulation and metacognition in English learning."*

D4. *"I incorporate checklists and rubrics to help students evaluate their own work and set clear expectations."*

D5. *"I use interactive resources such as role-playing and simulations for students to practice self-regulation skills in authentic English communication situations."*

Assessing progress in terms of self-regulation in learning is essential to provide effective feedback to students and help them improve in this fundamental skill (Zabalza Beraza, 2022). In such a way, teachers were questioned about: How do you evaluate the progress of students in terms of self-regulation in learning English? What criteria do you use?

D1. *"I observe the students' ability to set goals and plan their study effectively."*

D2. *"I use rubrics to assess the quality of students' self-reflection and self-assessment."*

**D3.** *"I monitor compliance with deadlines and tasks established by students in their planning."*

D4. *"I assess students' ability to identify and correct mistakes on their own during the learning process."*

D5. *"I observe the level of autonomy and responsibility demonstrated by students in managing their own English learning."*

Survey analysis

Figure 2. How often do you plan your study time for English?
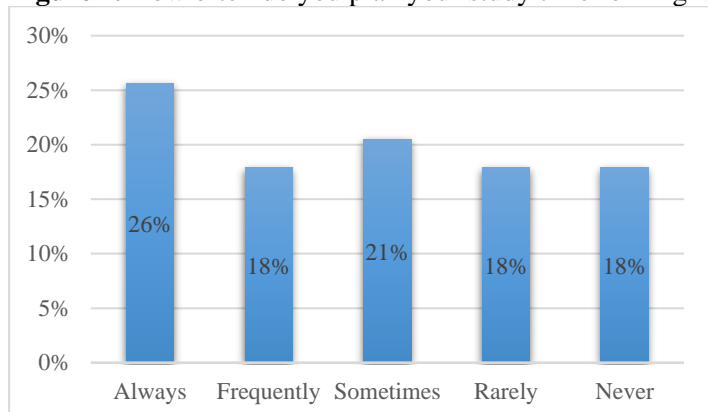
It is evident that 26% of students always plan their study time for English, which is an index of commitment and discipline in their approach to language learning, and 18% of those surveyed indicated that "never", this may be due to a lack of organization or prioritization in their learning activities and the other group there is a variability of levels of commitment and consistency in the planning of its study, highlighting in turn the importance of promoting time management strategies, to improve their effectiveness in learning the language.

Figure 3. What do you do when you encounter difficulties when studying English?
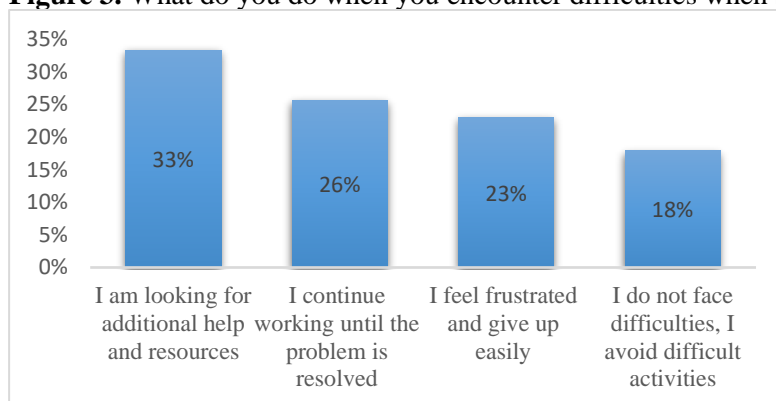
This frequency analysis shows that 33% choose to "seek additional help and resources" when they face difficulties when studying English, this response reflects a proactive attitude towards learning, looking for external solutions to overcome challenges, 26% of respondents suggesting persistence and determination in solving difficulties. However, 23% admitted to feeling "frustrated and giving up easily", which could indicate a lack of resistance to obstacles, 18% of respondents admitted to "not

facing difficulties", which can represent an attitude of avoidance or lack of confidence in their abilities to overcome challenges.

Figure 4. How do you manage your motivation to study English?
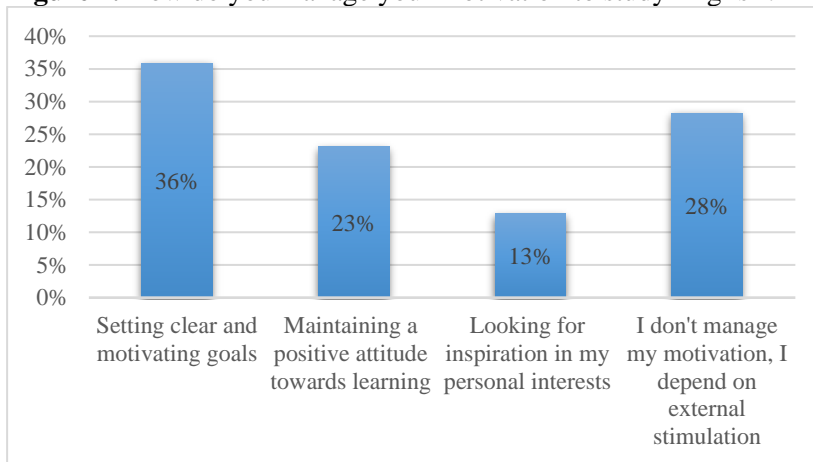
This frequency analysis highlights that 36% of respondents manage their motivation to study English by setting "clear and motivating goals", suggesting that they have a clear understanding of what they want to achieve and are striving to achieve it, which can be a powerful driver to maintain their motivation. On the other hand, 28% admitted not managing their motivation and depending on "external stimulus", indicating a lack of autonomy in their motivation, depending on external factors such as recognition or rewards. In addition, 23% of respondents choose to "maintain a positive attitude towards learning", suggesting that they cultivate an optimistic mindset to stay motivated despite challenges. However, only 13% look for inspiration in their "personal interests," which may indicate an opportunity to foster a more personal connection with the language.

Figure 5. How much time do you spend on independent English study outside of class hours?
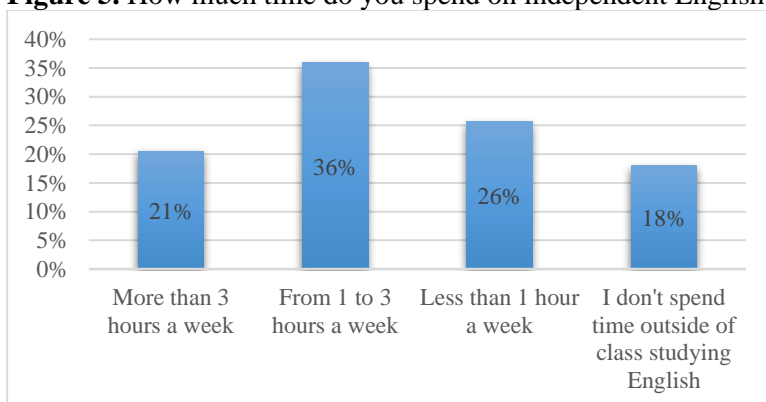
It is evidenced that 36% dedicate "1 to 3 hours a week" to the independent study of English outside class hours, which includes a considerable commitment to autonomous learning of the language, which can

be crucial for their progress and development, 21% of those surveyed dedicate "more than 3 hours a week", indicating an even greater level of dedication and effort in their independent practice. However, 26% admitted to spending "less than 1 hour a week", which could reflect a lack of commitment or prioritization in the study of English outside of class. In addition, 18% of respondents indicated that they "do not spend time outside of class studying English", which requires an opportunity to promote greater participation in autonomous learning. Overall, these results highlight the importance of encouraging independent study habits among students to optimize their progress in English proficiency.

Figure 6 What strategies do you use to remember and apply new English words and structures?
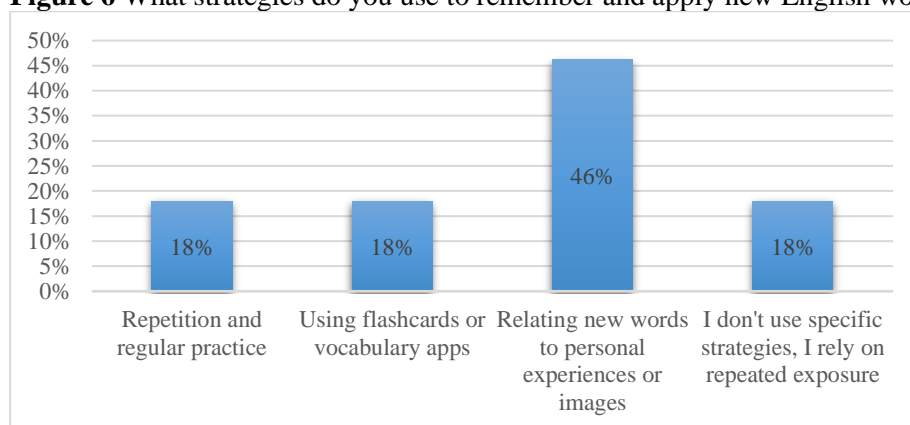
This analysis shows that 46% of respondents employ the strategy of "relating new words to personal experiences or images", giving an intuitive understanding of the importance of associating vocabulary with familiar contexts or visualizations, which can strengthen retention and effective application of new words and structures in English, 18% use both "repetition and regular practice" and "use of flashcards or vocabulary apps". Which indicates a diversity of approaches to vocabulary learning. It is also significant that 18% of respondents admit that they "do not use specific strategies" and rely solely on "repeated exposure". This response could indicate a lack of awareness about the effectiveness of more active techniques for memorizing and applying vocabulary.

DISCUSSION

Authors such as Choez, Graham and Morocho (2020), in their study obtained as results that students recognize themselves as having an intermediate capacity to self-regulate. There is no clarity or variety in the strategies used to self-regulate learning, students are not able to recognize the self-regulation techniques applied by themselves to achieve their academic and/or learning goals or achievements.

Likewise, Peralta (2023), in his study, argues that the lack of planning can be attributed to an absence of awareness about the importance of establishing a study structure or to the presence of other responsibilities that occupy their time. However, the results show that 26% of students always plan their study time for English, which can be considered an index of commitment and discipline in their approach to language learning.

The results of the survey reveal that 36% of respondents manage their motivation by setting clear and motivating goals, thus agreeing with Méndez, Betancourt and Rivera (2022), where they say research showed them that setting clear and challenging goals can be a powerful driver for maintaining intrinsic motivation and engagement in language learning. Diaz (2020) says that by having clear and meaningful goals, these students can maintain their focus and dedication over the long term.

According to the results, 46% of respondents employ the strategy of relating new words to personal experiences or images. This strategy is based on the principle of association, which suggests that linking vocabulary to familiar contexts or visualizations can strengthen the retention and effective application of new English words and structures. This claim is supported by previous research. A study by Bagherzadeh (2020), states that images and personal experiences can serve as effective mnemonic elements for remembering verbal information, by relating new words to personal experiences or images, language learners can create stronger connections in their minds, making it easier to retrieve those words when they need them.

The statements described by the teachers agree that they promote holistic and effective learning of the English language, by developing comprehensive language skills, creating an inclusive and motivating environment, using communicative approaches and incorporating authentic materials, which help students acquire complete communication skills, foster confidence in the use of English and develop a deeper cultural understanding. González y Peña (2020), argues that the use of authentic materials, such as texts, videos, or real-life situations, allows students to relate the language to their everyday lives and develop a deeper understanding of the culture associated with the language.

The affirmation of several teachers in this research highlights the integration of guided reflection activities, where students identify their strengths and areas for improvement in their English language learning process. For Azofeida and Pindras (2021), this practice promotes metacognition, which is the

ability to think about one's own thinking and learning. Metacognition has been widely recognized as a key component of effective learning (Rondón Franco, 2023).

CONCLUSIONS

Research on self-regulation in English language learning in Upper Basic students has yielded significant results that highlight the relevance of empowering students to assume an active role in their educational process, evidencing that autonomy in learning and the ability to reflect on the self-sufficiency study strategies are fundamental pillars for the integral development of students. By integrating self-regulation in the classroom, it not only contributes to English language proficiency, but also promotes the acquisition of metacognitive and self-assessment skills, which are essential for academic and personal success throughout life, in addition, it has been shown that the implementation of self-regulation strategies not only improves the quality of students' work, but also strengthens their self-confidence, autonomy, and persistence in achieving their educational goals.

Recommendations

To provide formative and specific feedback on the performance in learning the English language in students of Upper Basic School of Manta. Specific, goal-oriented feedback will help them identify areas for improvement and adjust their study strategies. Encourage the design of collaborative learning activities in which students work together to set learning goals and support each other, where students can exchange ideas, solve problems, and practice the English language in a meaningful context.

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