



**BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD
AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA**



FACULTAD DE LENGUAS

**Metacognitive strategies that enhance
Language learning in times of pandemic**

**A thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Languages for the degree of
Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés**

**By:
Leslie Guadalupe Ortega Torres**

**Thesis director:
Dr. Celso Pérez Carranza**

NOVEMBER 2022

PUEBLA, PUEBLA



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This thesis has been read by the members of the Thesis Committee of
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the degree of

LICENCIATURA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÈS

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Presentation

Most English language learners do not seem to use metacognitive strategies to succeed in their language learning especially in these difficult times when social or natural phenomena occur such as the pandemic. This type of events might affect students' emotions, behaviors and even performance. In these situations, metacognitive strategies come to be very useful since most students are aware of the abilities and knowledge that they have and which they have to reinforce. In many cases, these strategies have helped them to monitor and regulate their own language learning as well as to regulate their abilities to communicate their thoughts and ideas in a real context.

The literature provides three important types of metacognitive strategies used in language learning. These are planning, monitoring and evaluating language learning in an independent manner. Graham (1997) states that metacognition is "thinking about thinking ". Based on that assumption, Graham explains that learners are meta cognitively aware about what to do, how and when to do something.

Metacognitive strategies have been proved to be relevant for learners, especially when they face an obstacle in their learning process. It has also been proved that the use of metacognitive strategies ignites students' thinking. This thinking leads to a deeper learning and also leads to improve the learner's development of abilities, especially learners who are struggling in their language learning process.

The difference between cognitive and metacognitive strategies needs to be clarified because in this way students can select which strategies are more crucial in determining the effectiveness of their language learning. On one hand, metacognitive strategies allow students to plan, control, and evaluate their own learning. Contrary to this, cognition simply maximizes interaction and input in order to evaluate the strategies that learners are using.

The language learning process is affected by several factors. In first place, the internal factors that might be an obstacle or a tool that allows learning. Such factors are, among others, motivation, gender, age, aptitude, beliefs and learning styles. There are also external factors and, in this case, culture is one of the most

outstanding external factors that has a direct impact in the process of language learning.

In the category of internal factors, we can find motivation as the most important element. Motivation is defined by Harmer as some kind of internal drive that pushes someone to do things in order to achieve something (Harmer, 2001). Similarly, Brown (1994) considers that motivation is a term used to define the success or the failure of any complex task.

Steers and Porter (1991) provide three important features of this concept in terms of what energizes human behavior, what directs such behavior and how this behavior is maintained or sustained.

In a similar way, Dörnyei (2001) considers that motivation is thought to be responsible of why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity and how hard they are going to pursue it. Ryan and Deci (2000) state that to be motivated we need to be moved to do something. On the other hand, unmotivated people who have lost impetus and inspiration are not energized to do something.

William (1997) says that motivated people present characteristics such as interest, curiosity, or a desire to achieve something. However, they believe that that interest is not enough to be motivated. This interest should be sustained. In addition to this, time and energy should be invested to reach the pursued aim.

According to Steers and Porter (1991), motivation can be characterized in terms of needs, expectations, behavior, goals, and some forms of feedback.

Another important factor is gender which is interpreted in different ways. For Ellis (1994), there was nothing conclusive in studies of gender differences in second language learning. For her, gender interacts with other variables in determining language proficiency. However, it is not always the case that females outperform males. Asian men in Britain generally attain higher levels of proficiency in English than Asian women do. Their jobs seem to bring them to be in contact with the majority of English-speaking group, while women are often enclosed at home. Sex interacts with factors such as age, ethnicity, and particularly with social class (p. 204).

Age is another variable which has not been researched extensively in its own right. A great deal of research has gone into comparing how younger and older

learners make progress in their language learning but few studies have isolated strategy use as a focus of investigation.

Graham (1997) claims that it is difficult to trace a clear-cut development in the strategy used related to the age of the learners. However, it seems intuitive to suggest that older and more experienced learners would have, in general, a greater contextual knowledge than, say, 10-year-old learners. With this greater contextual knowledge, they would be able to test their hypotheses about what a word or an idiomatic phrase might mean. It means that older learners make much faster progress with their language learning than young learners. Although, at the end, young learners may end up with native speaker competence whereas adults very seldom do.

According to Ellis (1994) aptitude tends to be difficult to be separated from learning styles, and beliefs. It suggests that aptitude and learning styles are fixed. The effectiveness of the strategy is directly linked to the learner's attributes. It means, that it is fruitless to try to train students to use learning strategies. Finally, the third feature is beliefs. This has a relationship with the manner that learners learn a foreign language likely to derive not only from aptitude but also from learning styles. Those who are analytical in nature might use more strategies involving explicit analysis. This might be because they believe that language learning is about analysis. For that reason, learners who are capable memorizers might not need to dissect language quite as much as analytical learners do.

Regarding external factors, one that surely affects learning is culture. Researchers suggest that the cultural background of the learner may affect the way they use the strategies to help learn the language. Oxford (1996) in her research of language learning strategies shows the evidence that learners from Eastern countries have. They are more reluctant to use clarification than western learners are. Parry 1997 researched about the differences to look for reading strategies used by learners from different cultural backgrounds and noticed that these differences can be attributed to the way that different cultural groups of people learn to read.

McDonough (1995) says that a number of terms overlap with the concept of strategies. He identifies language skills, language, processes, mechanisms of compensation of the lack of language, actions and plans.

Rubin (1981) identified two kinds of learning strategies. They are direct and indirect learning strategies. Different to this, O'Malley (1985) opted for a classification system such as cognitive, metacognitive, and social.

Cognitive strategies are unified by the learner in a common way: manipulation and transformation of the target language.

According to Oxford (2011), there are four strategy categories: cognitive, affective, sociocultural-interactive, and meta strategies.

According to Oxford (1990), language learning strategies are defined as “specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations.”

Learning strategies are also behaviors and thoughts that a learner engages during learning. They are intended to influence the learner’s encoding process (Weinstein & Mayer, 1986). Successful learners often use strategies such as organizing, evaluating, and planning their learning, it means that those learners who allow their own personal executive control use behaviors along with cognitive strategies like analyzing, reasoning, transferring information, taking notes and summarizing, (Brown,1983).

Griffiths (2008-2013) also claimed that learning strategies are related to activities consciously chosen by learners for the purpose of regulating their own language learning.

One research conducted by Tang and Moore (1992) demonstrated that while cognitive strategy instruction (title discussion, pre-teaching vocabulary) improved comprehension scores, the performance was not maintained upon the withdrawal of the treatment. Metacognitive strategy instruction involving the teaching of self-monitoring strategies, appeared to lead to improvements in comprehension ability since they were maintained beyond the end of the treatment.

O'Malley (1985) discovered that higher level students are more able than lower-level students to exercise metacognitive control over their learning.

Considering the description presented above regarding learning strategies, it is conclusive that only few students are aware of these metacognitive strategies.

1.1 Research questions

The research questions that led the study are stated as follows:

- What are the most common metacognitive strategies used in foreign language learning in times of pandemic?
- What are the perceptions of language teachers regarding metacognitive language learning strategies?
- What is the relation between language learning activities and metacognitive language learning strategies?
- What is the level of correlation between the use of metacognitive strategies and successful English language learning in times of pandemic?
- Do learners may use metacognitive strategies in the foreign language learning in times of pandemic?

1.2 Research objectives

The research objectives are related to the research questions and they are presented in this section.

- To identify the most common metacognitive strategies that students use in language learning in times of pandemic.
- To identify the perceptions that language teachers have about using metacognitive strategies.
- To analyze the relationship between language learning activities and the metacognitive strategies in the language learning.
- To compare the level between the use of metacognitive strategies and to be successful in the English language learning.
- To find the number of students that use metacognitive strategies in the process of the English language learning.

1.4 The importance of the study

The aim of this study is to identify the most useful metacognitive language learning strategies in times of pandemic and to determine the level of correlation between the use of metacognitive strategies and English language learning. The study is important because we deal with a topic that can help students to monitor, evaluate and reflect based on their own experiences while learning a language. This topic is also more suitable to deal with the fact that only few students are aware of these strategies.

Such strategies have been proved to help students to monitor their own language learning, their comprehension, and even to be aware of other cognitive enterprises (self-assessment).

Paris and Lindauer (1982) state that learners often recognized the need to use a strategy for task completion, but they choose not to do it.

1.5 Delimitations

This study was carried out at the Language Faculty of the BUAP. This Faculty is located in Puebla, city. The participants are from Target Language V who are supposed to be prepared to use the English language accurately and fluently in a real context.

This study is focused in determining if learners are aware of the importance of using metacognitive strategies and explore how these strategies help students to achieve their goals in the language learning process. Additionally, it was carried out during the autumn of 2020.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Abstract

In a first section, this chapter contains a description of language learning strategies. It also deals with the study of metacognitive strategies which is the main topic of this research. It also encloses a description of the factors that help learners succeed learners in language acquisition and the importance of being aware of the use of metacognitive strategies. It also contains the justification of why metacognitive strategies are an essential tool to understand and boost the learning process through three crucial stages such as planning, monitoring and evaluating process.

2.1 Language learning in pandemic times

The book “languages in a global world” discusses that in this time, globalization language learning is important because it is related to several fields around the world such as politics, economics, history and education.

Meyer (2004) says that more than 175 million people worldwide live outside their country of birth, and most of them in their new country speak one or more languages. Across the world proficiency in the language of instruction is one of the strongest predictors of academic achievement among immigrant students. Sometimes this fact is neglected in debates about language diversity and policies. Researches show that language learning is not only focused on improving communication but it is an important key to promote global understanding as well as to consider that learners need to be familiar with the diversity of languages and the cultures around the world.

Another thing that should be underlined is the importance of using the English language according to the necessities of each individual and how they adapt this to those necessities. Here, there are some examples that people face when they look for a job, learn a language, exchange to other school, travel to foreign countries and so on. That is why learners have to make a self-reflection about how the language can affect their economic and social outcomes.

To have a better notion about the necessities of people, before mentioning the influence in the English language, it is necessary to specify these necessities. Firstly, migration flows and demographic trends at the world level are altering the socio-ethnological composition of the population. It is a phenomenon that is

contributing substantially, though not exclusively, to the development of the extremely rapid transitions affecting our economic, political and social structures. It is also causing major impacts in various aspects of our lives but also in other parts of the world. However, in some countries people are experiencing both migration and immigration at the same time. As a result, it makes people more aware about the importance to learn English because it is the standard language around the world.

According to Azhar (2009) language and culture have to be separated because the focus can sometimes be on teaching and learning languages and not on culture. For that reason, it is necessary to underline the importance of knowing about culture in all the process.

This researcher talked about the importance of learning English. He also underlined that students should learn this language because they can participate in educational debates. Speaking English might give them the opportunity to know all the points of view of the debate. For example, if children have a different opinion toward bilingual education (Talbot., 2019).

There are some reasons why learning other languages. It is really important, especially English because it continues to be the most spoken language around the world.

Activities and culture have a great influence when learning a second or a foreign language because learning has to be related to the cultural context. For that reason, it is necessary to involve students in the language culture, make them comprehend cross-cultural similarities and differences of the foreign country such as time, personal space, body language, worship, relationships, hatred, prejudice, love, respect and so on.

Brown and Hanlon, 1973 and 1970 establish that it is necessary to have meaningful interaction in the target language. For example, it is important to have a real communication in which speakers do not pay attention on the form of their utterances but with the message that they are conveying to the listener. It is also crucial to mention that making corrections and providing explicit rules are not required for the language acquisition. In addition, caretakers or native speakers can help learners to understand their utterances. These speakers can modify their speech and in this way they can facilitate the acquisition process (Snow and Ferguson, 1977). As we have noticed, learners do not require to have a conscious

awareness of the grammar that they already know, instead, they are guided by their feelings. Based on that, they can infer if they are right or wrong.

2.2 Metacognitive strategies

Metacognitive strategies are concerned about what English learners have learned and if they have obtained an effective learning. That means that if the learner improves his or her metacognition, he/she will be able to improve his or her performance of new tasks and solve problems more efficiently.

According to Hacker (2005) metacognition allows people to be in charge of their own learning, to take into account the awareness of how they learn, evaluate their needs, and generate strategies in order to identify these needs and later to apply them.

Nelson (1996) defines metacognition as thinking about one's thinking or the human ability to be conscious of one's mental process. Similarly, Wenden (1998) says that cognition is an ability that implies a high level of a thinking process. It involves active control over cognitive processes as well as more basic processes.

Hacker (2005) considers that metacognition can be divided into two complementary stages:

a) Knowledge of cognition which has three branches. The first branch is related to knowledge of the factors that influence learner's own performance. The second one is the knowledge of different types of strategies to improve the learning and the third one is to know what strategy to use for a specific learning situation

b) The second one is the regulation of cognition which involves settings goals and planning as well as monitoring and controlling the learning. The last one is based on evaluating learner's own regulation by assessing results and strategies used.

Based on Vermut (1989) affective learning activities are conducted at copying with feelings that arise through the learning, and lead to an emotional state that may have a positive, neutral or negative effect in the progress of learning. One example could be self-motivation.

According to Flavell (1979) metacognition is referred to the knowledge and the control that people have over their thinking and learning activities. This is why

researchers proposed an alternative way to teach critical thinking skills within the context of a subject matter. In this way the teacher accomplishes the task by using the model of critical thinking but this model is not used in social studies classroom.

Bloom (1956) states that memory is divided into three parts. The first one is remembering. This is based on recalling or retrieving previous learned information and the second one is understanding which is related to comprehending the meaning, translating and interpreting.

Finally, the third one is analyzing the process of separating material or definitions into component parts so that the organizational structures may be used to distinguish facts and inferences.

Based on Vermut (1989 p.92) cognitive processes are those thinking activities that learners use to process the learning contents.

They are related to learning results in terms of knowledge, understanding, skills, and so on. There are some examples such as making a relationship of the parts of a subject matter, selecting minor and main points, thinking of examples and looking for applying them.

Metacognitive strategies have had a great impact in the last two years in the field of English language learning via online classes because most of the students cannot comprehend clearly what they need to improve or even how to do it to succeed. As it has been mentioned before, metacognitive strategies help students to be aware of what they need to do in order to achieve their goals or even overcome their obstacles during the learning process through getting in mind what are the steps that learners need to follow (planning) by adapting learning strategies. Monitoring is part of this learning because they can make some changes if it is required or they can make a self-evaluation about how much they have learned through the semester or certain period of time. As a result, these metacognitive strategies look for making students conscious and independent in learning a new language in this case English because pandemic times have not allowed learners to get the language properly and neither to adapt their learning styles to this situation. For that reason, teachers have the duty of guiding them to obtain their goals and avoiding that learners get disappointed during this learning process (Mitsea & Drigas, 2019).

According to researchers, metacognition has taken an important outbreak for all students that are coursing classes online because most of them might not find how to evaluate themselves in order to enhance their learning process and make easier to understand the content as well as adapt themselves to a learning strategy which can help accomplish their goals. Additionally, metacognition is defined in the phrase “thinking about thinking” which means that the learner needs to be aware about what, how, when they are able to choose a specific learning strategy. Azevedo (2008) considers that students might not choose suitable learning strategies in online classes despite of being aware that metacognitive strategies are crucial to gain or even enhance their learning process (Azevedo, 2008).

2.3 Using and evaluating metacognitive strategies in traditional and online learning environments

As it was mentioned before, metacognitive strategies make students be self-reflexive and provide an explanation about their learning process. It can be a disadvantage of this fact because students tend to be dependent from the teacher or someone who can guide them to gain the knowledge in a traditional environment but in this pandemic time they cannot be guided directly as it has been done before. Now, learners need to be autonomous by planning, monitoring and evaluating what they know and what they lack in this learning process. In few words, learners can make use of metacognitive strategies because statistically most students have found difficulties to gain knowledge in online learning courses based on Malasya findings (Anthonysamy, 2021).

According to Oxford (1990), individuals from different cultures have different points of view about learning tasks. Consequently, discovering and analyzing these strategies will help teachers, learners and curriculum developers in the culture of generating efficiency of teaching and learning in the language program. Lachini (1997) guided by O’Malley and Chamot’s (1990) conducted a research in this field. He applied a questionnaire to sixty Iranian students. He found that these students use often metacognitive strategies rather than other learning strategies. In this case intermediate students with a high level made use of learning strategies rather than others students. Later on, Tajedin (2001) investigated about the use of learning strategies and other factors such as

gender, language proficiency and the learning situation. The results were interesting since they found that Iranian learners use metacognitive strategies frequently and effective strategies less than other and that gender is not a factor that influences in the use of learning strategies.

Another study was conducted by Zare and Sarmadi (2004). They researched the difference between weak or strong university students related to metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive strategies awareness. In their study they found that metacognitive strategies are used by advanced learners since they seem to use more frequently metacognitive strategies. In this study the gender was not a factor that seem to affect the process.

2.4 Using metacognitive strategies to asses and succeed in the second language

Kormos` model provides a way of considering metacognitive strategies. He considers that his model has had a great impact in the learners` speech performance. He also explains that they get better results when they plan what they will convey by practicing their discourse before speaking. Besides, the second language speech needs to be monitored by reviewing how well they pronounce and the accuracy of their utterances. Consequently, learners of a second language have to evaluate how well they perform their tasks and, in this manner, it will be more evident what learners lack in their speech so they can make the proper corrections in order to get their goal successfully.

Additionally, Kormos` model takes into account that solving problem is another important stage of the learning speech process because once learners identify what is not articulated properly, they measure their time to speak and all the deficiencies that they have are corrected when they convey their ideas. Consequently, learners are able to succeed in their second language speech.

Kormos` model also claims that planning, monitoring, solving problems and evaluating in second language speech are really helpful because they work independently and interactively so this suits perfectly in their task demands as well as giving a great impact in their performance (Kormos, 2011).

2.5 Metacognitive strategies as a main tool to succeed in the reading skill

Khreisat (2022) shows how learners make use of metacognitive strategies in their reading acquisition and he explains that learners of the second language need to be aware of this cognitive process. It means that they need to do a plan in order to achieve their goal. They also have to monitor how well they perform a task by reviewing what they lack and evaluating themselves.

In this same study it is also mentioned that knowledge cognition and regulation cognition are essential in the learning process because the first one helps them to know what to do in order to get their goal and the second one gives them the power to control their language learning, that is why, it is important that they choose a proper meta cognitive strategy.

As a result, metacognitive strategies provide to the learners many possibilities to gain knowledge easily and successfully in comprehending texts by planning, monitoring and evaluating the activities that they perform and also because they are suitable in times of pandemic (Khreisat, 2022).

2.6 Mastering science through metacognitive strategies and self-regulation strategies

According to a research study conducted by Hiller (2017) in which he makes a comparison between U.S. and European learners; he found a big difference in achieving their goals in science. The study revealed that there are some factors that seem to have influence in the mastering of science. These are motivation and interest in acquiring science knowledge. Additionally, it is also observed that many of them has gotten a positive impact in their learning when they used self-regulation because this one allows them to control what they are learning and provide them positive results in gaining knowledge.

Moreover, it was observed that learners are conscious of this self-regulatory. It was found also that metacognitive strategies have contributed positively in mastering science because students seem to be more engaged in planning, monitoring and evaluating their performance in order to succeed in their science learning.

As a result, this research study demonstrated that self-regulation and metacognition are two essential tools that adolescent students have used

recently to succeed in their science knowledge acquisition because they provide the weaknesses and strengthens that each student possess and at the same time, they are able to analyze what needs to improve in order to get their goal successfully, (Hiller, 2017).

2.7 Personality traits and students' employment of metacognitive strategies in foreign language learning and achievement

Metacognitive strategies play an important role in learning a foreign language because these strategies provide to the students the opportunity to think about their thinking. It means that they will be able to plan what they need to do so they can perform an activity successfully. Consequently, learners have to make a review and analyze their learning process when they perform an activity. Finally, learners will be able to evaluate how well they did by measuring the activity that was done in order to succeed in their foreign language learning. Besides, they mention some factors that might affect students' language learning such as students' personality traits (motivation and interest) that have a relationship in their achievements. However, this research study shows that metacognitive strategies have been really helpful because these provides to the student's self-confidence and power to manage their language learning (Jelisaveta Šafranĳ, 2021).

CHAPTER III: METODOLOGY

3.0 Abstract

This chapter describes the methodology of the research. It means that this chapter is dedicated to describe how and what kind of steps were carried out to obtain a reliable data collection. It is important to mention that this research approach was guided by a mixed method. The participants of this study were from target language V at the Faculty of de Languages of the BUAP. Subsequently, the research instruments were supported by interviews and questionnaires which were aimed to students and teachers. As a result, those instruments helped to identify if language learners were really engaged in metacognitive strategies in their learning environment.

3.1 Research approach and method

As mentioned above, this research approach was guided by a mixed method. Thus, the research needed to be guided by research instruments which allowed to gather descriptive and numeric data. In short, both methods helped to support this research and made it stronger because they work as one method (Creswell and Clark, 2007).

It is important to mention that the quantitative and qualitative method were essential, that is why those have to be described one by one.

Qualitative methods allow to observe with detail how metacognitive strategies work from different perspectives in the language learning process. Creswell (2007) claims that qualitative research takes places in a natural setting. It is also constituted by multiple methods that are interactive and humanistic. Eventually, this qualitative method also gives the opportunity to learners to make changes about the questions that were already formulated.

Carla (2001) asserts that, qualitative research is interested in how people make sense of the world and how they experience events.

On the other hand, quantitative research involves meaningful information that is measured through questionnaires to statically quantify the phenomenon being studied (Punch 2005). Subsequently, a quantitative method provides to the researcher helpful and reliable data that is supported by research instruments.

3.2 The research context

This research was carried out at the Faculty of Languages of the BUAP in Puebla and it was delimited to the group of Target Language V as well as the teachers who were currently teaching this subject. In addition, Target Language V was chosen because these students were supposed to get an advanced level of the English grammar and vocabulary. According to the Common European Framework of Reference they were located in B2. For that reason, it was considered that metacognitive strategies might help these students to succeed in the language learning process in these pandemic times because learners need to be more aware cognitively about the manner, they are learning their second language.

3.3 Research participants

The participants were students from target language. Most of them were males. Additionally, they were also from different ages and levels. On the other hand, teachers also participated in this study since they are the source of knowledge that students have. For that reason, teachers from Target Language V also were interviewed in order to know how much they help students through the learning strategies but specially to make sure if teachers recommended the use of metacognitive strategies in times of pandemic. Besides, most of the English teachers from Target Language V were women and their ages were around 35 to 40 years old. Their English level was from B2 to C1.

3.4 Research instruments

To answer all the research questions already formulated in this thesis, it was needed to point out the importance of selecting suitable instruments because they were used as the primary tool of this research study. For that reason, the first step was to know the requirements of the research such as the field study, participants and certainly the context. Based on this, it was clear that the information needed was more descriptive and less numeric. Once the instruments were chosen, it was time to apply them to the participants.

As explained above, the research instruments were interviews and questionnaires. They were designed with the purpose that students and teachers provided their experience in times of pandemic. The questionnaire for students

contained 10 open-questions. They were related to the use of learning strategies and to metacognitive strategies. Besides, the research instruments were based on Chamot's instrument (2006).

3.5 Research procedure

The research was focused on analyzing how many teachers and students of the target language V at Faculty of Languages were concerned about the importance of using metacognitive learning strategies in order to enhance their English language in pandemic times.

In the first stage, a questionnaire was formulated. Secondly, the research instruments were designed taking into consideration the learning strategies that students might use in these pandemic times.

Then these research instruments were applied to students and teachers. After the application of the instruments, the information was gathered to be analyzed and represented in graphs in order to make a comparison and proved if students really used metacognitive strategies in times of pandemic.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Abstract

This chapter describes the results gathered from the research instruments that were administered to 45 students who studied target language V. Subsequently, this study had the purpose of identifying the number of students that use metacognitive strategies during their language learning process during pandemic times. Finally, the data was presented in graphs. The graphs display the percentage of students' answers related to the use of metacognitive strategies.

4.1 The most common metacognitive strategies used by English students in pandemic times

The main metacognitive strategies were used by ESL students of the target language V that are described as the followings: planning, monitoring and evaluating. These strategies make students aware about their knowledge that they already possess and what they lack and needs to be reinforced in order to succeed in their language learning. Additionally, the use of these strategies is performed by themselves especially in times of pandemic when English teachers are not supporting them normally in a classroom. For this reason, in the previous chapter was applied a questionnaire based on the learners' metacognitive learning strategies that they might use when they learn a second language in pandemic times. Consequently, the results proved that learners were really engaged in using them as a primary tool in their learning environment.

Moreover, the three first questions of the research instrument were designed based on students 'planning so they can prove if metacognitive strategies have an impact in their self-learning in pandemic times. Consequently, this questionnaire will help to identify whether students plan their activities to organize their learning process or if they think in their future actions in order to accomplish their objective successfully.

In figure 4.1 displays the answers of the first research question made to the students about the importance of establishing a goal before performing an activity. It is important to mention that it was measured by Likert scale that is

divided into five options such as strongly agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree and strongly disagree.

Additionally, in this first question, it was found that 59% of students agree about this affirmation, 17% is not concerned, 14% strongly agrees, 8% disagrees and only two percent strongly disagrees. To sum up, it is clear that a high percentage of students are conscious that planning is an essential tool when they perform any learning activity during pandemic times.

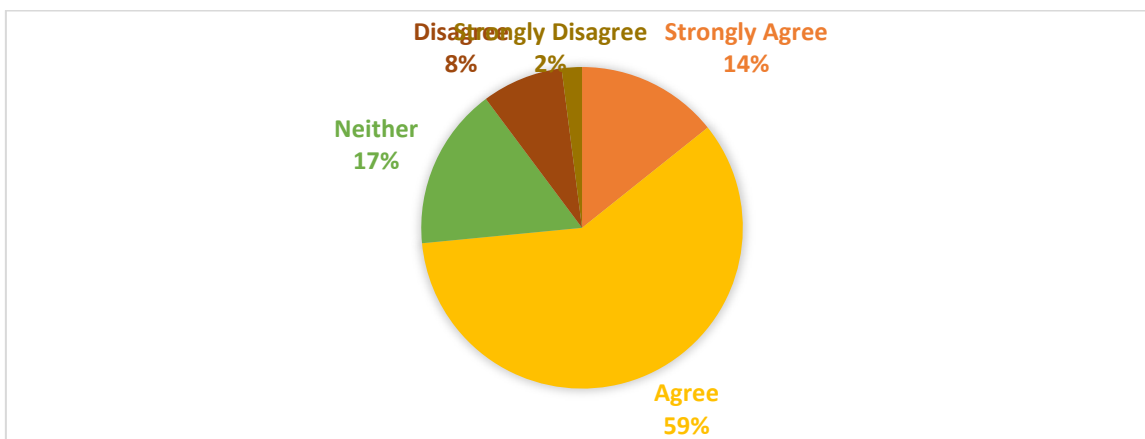


Figure 4.2 Planning the English language learning process

Consequently, figure 4.2 provides more data about the first research question made to the students. It suggests that planning the steps in order to learn a foreign language has a positive impact in their learning process.

Similarly, this question used agreement Likert scale. Answers suggest that 59% of students agrees that planning is important, 17% does not concern with this strategy, 14% strongly agrees, eight percent disagrees and only 2% strongly disagrees. To sum up, it is clear that a high percentage of students are conscious that planning is an essential tool because they need to have a guide that contains step by step in order to enhance their language learning process in pandemic times.

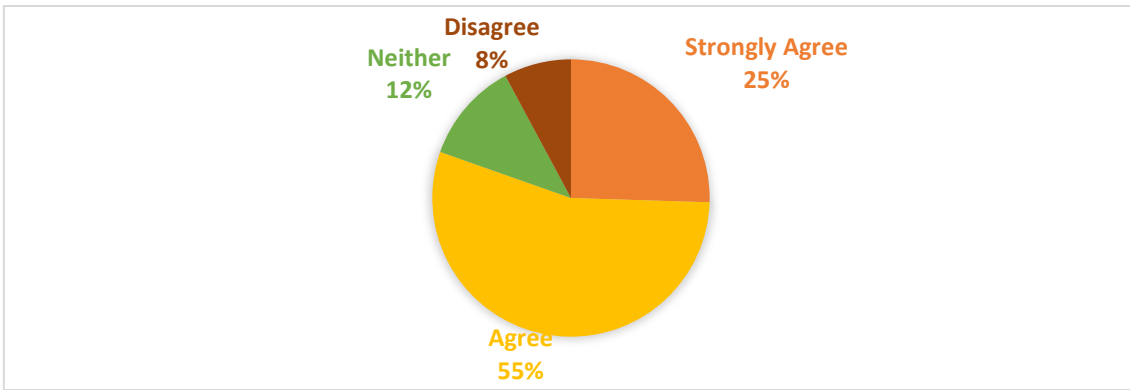


Figure 4.3 Planning the steps to learn a foreign language

Research question number three explores the types of metacognitive strategies that are suitable to learn a foreign language according to their learning styles. Figure 4.3 shows that 38% agrees that planning the type of strategies in advance supports language learning, 42% is not sure about this fact, 10% disagrees and no one strongly disagrees. Results suggest that the majority of learners were concerned that they need to get involve in advance in the looking of a variety of strategies to make easier their learning language. Despite the other 42 percentage might not use strategies or they simply do not know if they are using them because it is done unconsciously during their learning process.

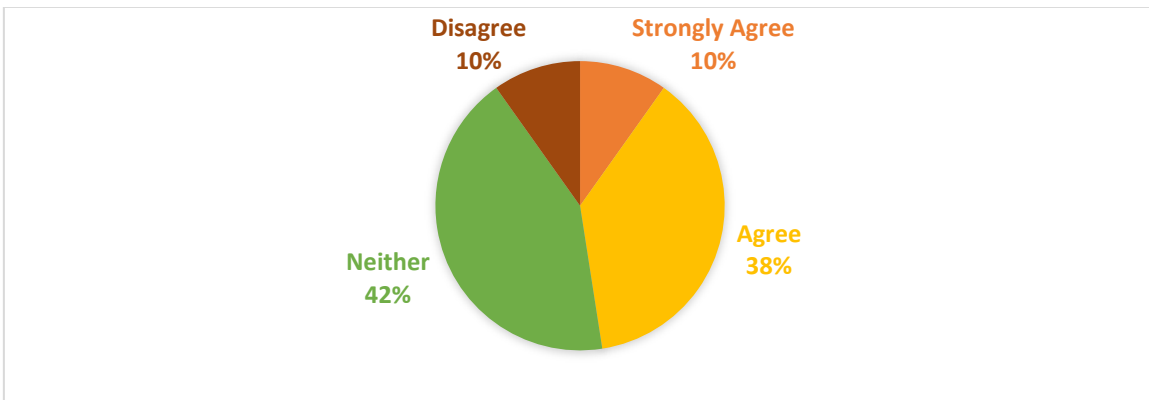


Figure 4.4 Planning what strategies students use to learn a foreign language

Monitoring students' own language learning is also crucial to succeed in this task. Students need to make a review about their learning progress and examine the information that is provided before performing a task. In other words, learners need to make an analysis about what they have acquired correctly and what needs to be changed in order to help them look for new strategies and plan so that they can achieve their goals in pandemic times.

The fourth research question is concerned with examining the students' achievements before performing a task. The graph displays the percentage of the students that might monitor and examine their learning activities.

Figure 4.4 displays the information obtained from students who answered the research instrument. 31% percent strongly agrees, 52% agrees, 15% is not sure about it, 2% disagrees and no one chose strongly disagreed. As a conclusion, students are able to identify easily the factors that affect positively their learning progress and base on that, they seem to be able to enhance their future language learning because it proved that learners are concerned that they need to review and analyze the information that they have to accomplish before performing any task in order to succeed.

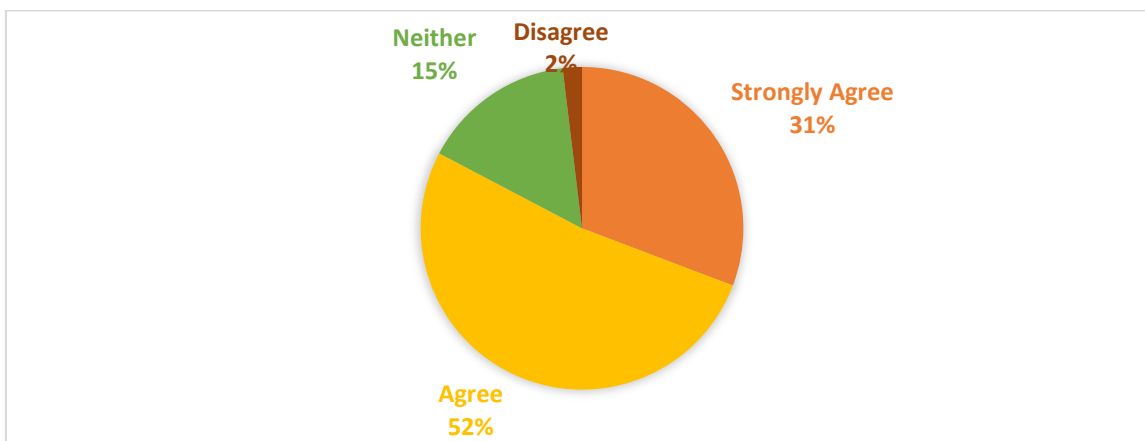


Figure 4.5 Monitoring the information given before performing an activity

Figure 4.5 displays data about the monitoring strategy. With this strategy, students monitor their progress when performing a learning activity so that they can realize how much they are improving or what they need to reinforce during their learning process.

It was found that 46% agrees that monitoring students' advances when performing a task is important because they really use this strategy in every learning activity, the other 46 percent strongly agrees with this strategy and 8% is not actually sure about it. To conclude, the majority of the students, most of the time take a look about their progress in the language learning process. They also believe that it is important to know their strengths and weaknesses because in that manner they are able to plan the strategies that might work better next time they perform any activity.

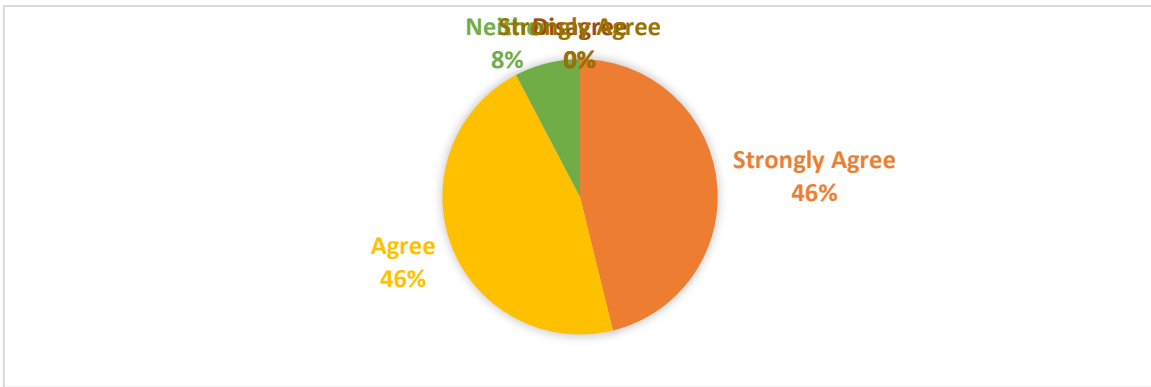


Figure 4.6 Monitoring student's progress when performing activities

In question number six the researcher tried to identify the number of students that usually monitor their comprehension when they try to convey their ideas. In the following graph it is shown the percentage of students from the target language V who answered positively to this question. 25% strongly agrees, 61% percent agrees, 9% is not sure about it, 4% percent disagrees and no one strongly disagrees. As a conclusion, it is proved that a high percentage of students really applies these monitoring strategies in their learning language process as a main strategy because learners analyze their understanding and coherence when they talk to someone and they realized whether the information is conveyed accurately or not.

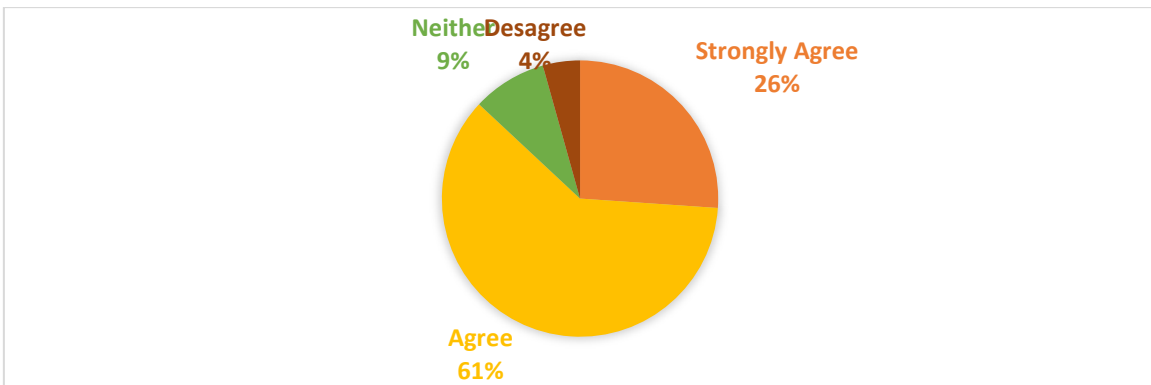


Figure 4.7 Monitoring their understanding when they use the English language

4.12 Evaluating and identifying similar sceneries in the learning language

By evaluating metacognitive strategies learners are able to assess how well they have chosen their strategies and how well they have put them in to practice during their language learning process. In figure 4.7 the results of the answers of their students are displayed. 27% strongly agrees, 53% agrees, 10% is not sure whether using them or not and 10% disagrees. From the results

obtained we can conclude that most learners tend to monitor how well they are using the language and how well they are conveying meaning during interaction.

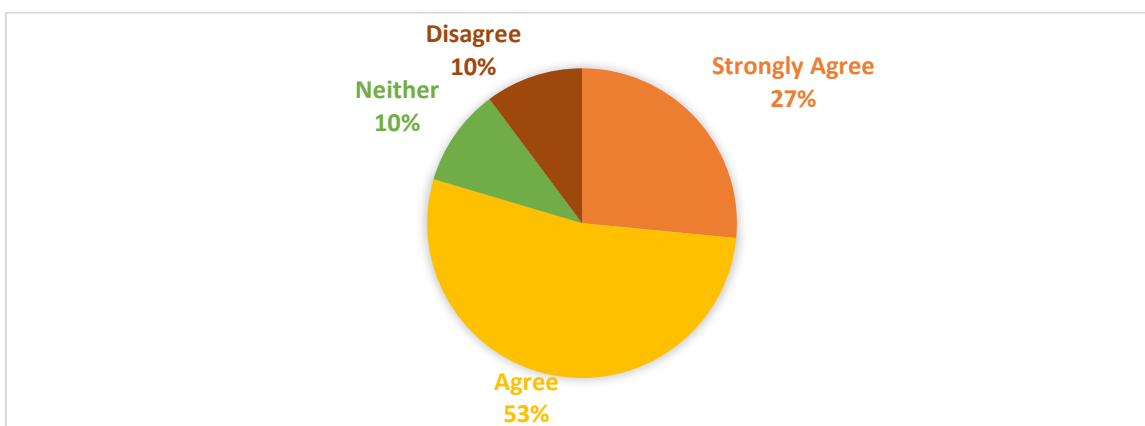


Figure 4.8 Monitoring if students use the appropriate and accurate language to convey ideas

In question number eight which is related to the degree of how well they have completed a task successfully once they have performed the task. Figure 4.8 displays the results from the answers of the students. 77% strongly agrees, 53% agrees, 19% is not sure about it, 10% disagrees and no one strongly disagrees. As a conclusion, it is proved that most students are really concerned in evaluating their learning process.

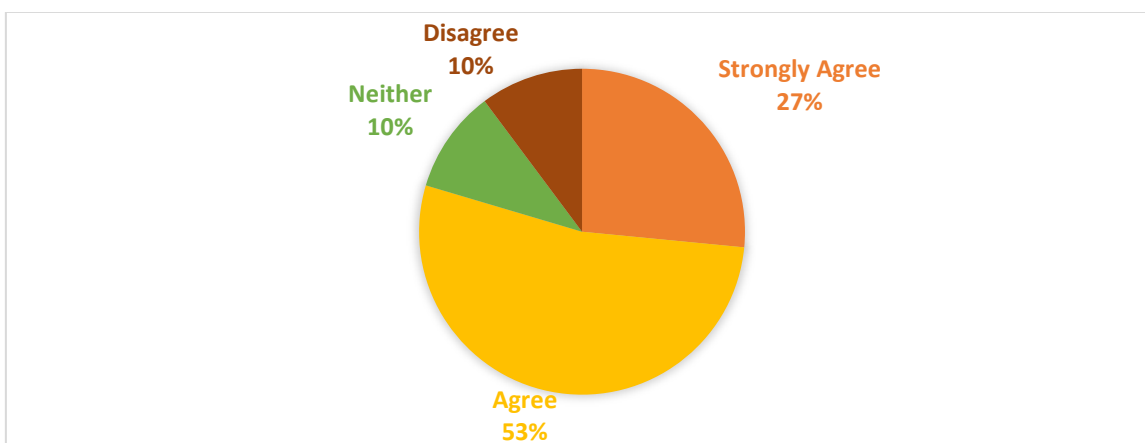


Figure 4.9 Evaluating when students' performance an activity

Question number 9 is related to the evaluation process. Results indicate that students are able and have the ability to measure how much they have learned by performing a task and then they are also able to evaluate what was done correctly or not. Additionally, it shows the results gathered from the research instruments based on metacognitive strategies. In figure 1.9 the results are shown in the following way: 6% of students strongly agrees, 63% agrees, 19% is

not sure about using them and 12% does not agree. Additionally results suggest that the majority of the students from target language V are really applying and assessing their learning strategies in order to enhance their language learning process.

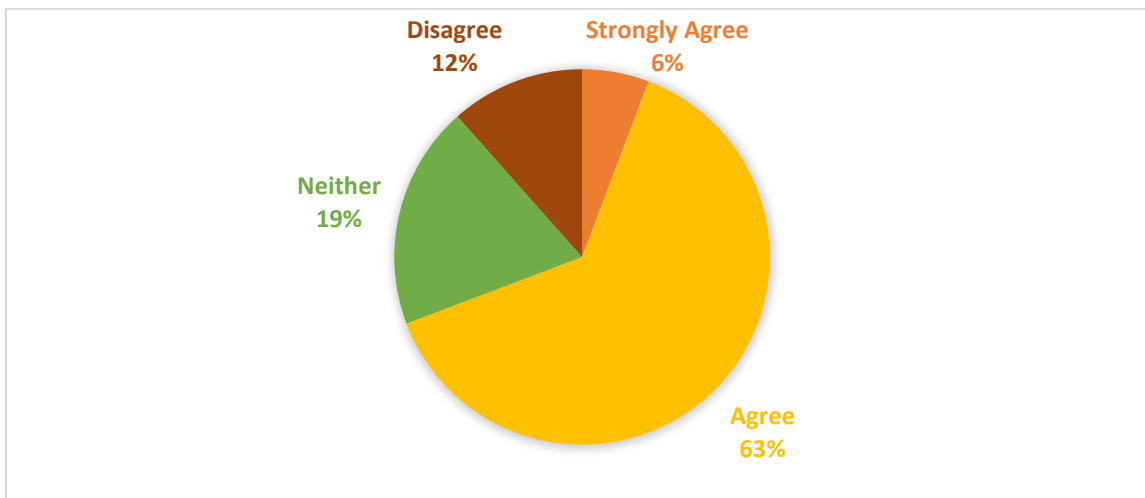


Figure 4.10 Evaluating the learning strategies students use

Based on the question number 10 is pointed out the effectiveness of performing a task and evaluating the strengths and weaknesses in the language learning of the students from target language V.

Figure 4.10 displays the percentages of the students' answers. 4% strongly agrees, 63% agrees, 21% is not really aware weather they use them or not and 12% does not agree. To conclude it was found that students are concerned in evaluating the effectiveness of the learning strategy they chose and also to verify if a task was conducted in a successful way.

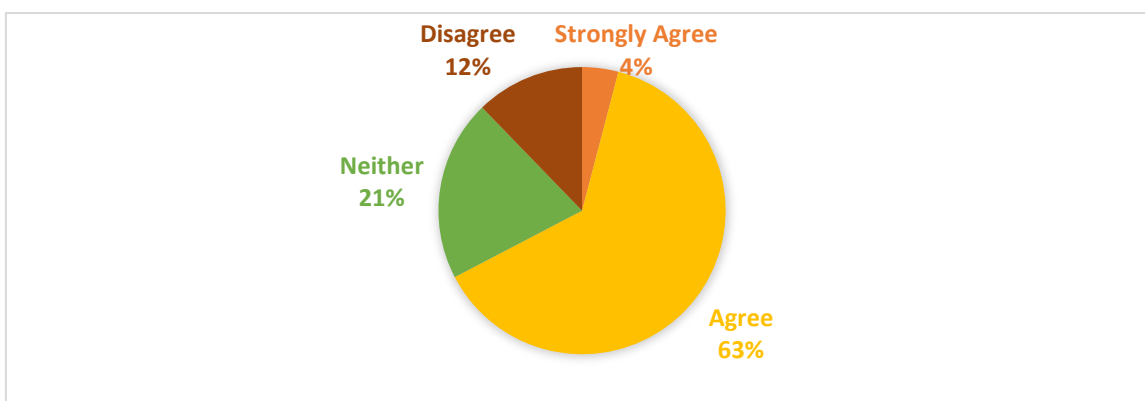


Figure 4.11 Evaluating the effectiveness in the language learning task

Question 11 display the results of the answers of the students of target language V and it is related to the ability to overcome and enhance the similar

learning situations in the near future. 35% percent strongly agrees, 56% agrees, 6% is not really sure about it and only 1% percent does not agree with the evaluating strategy. In brief it is inferred that many students are conscious about evaluating and identifying what they need to reinforce or change when a task is not accomplished successfully so the next time, they can achieve the task in a proper way.

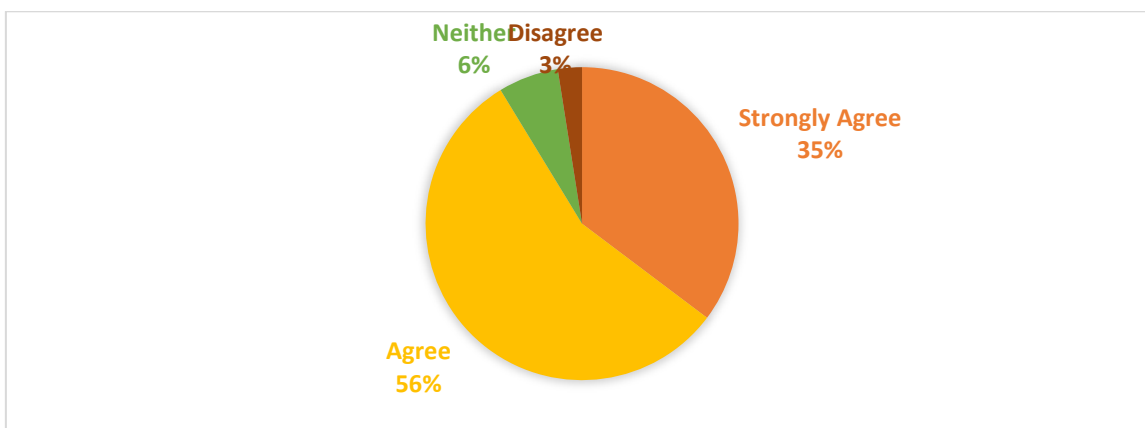


Figure 4.12 Evaluating and identifying similar sceneries in the learning language

As described in the previous paragraphs, graphs display the answers of the students that might use these metacognitive strategies during their language learning process. Additionally, most of them proved that these strategies are applied to perform every single task in their learning environment because they plan and organize every activity, then, they examine and analyze what was done correctly and what was not. Finally, they evaluate themselves how well they succeed in their language learning process.

According to the information gathered from the questionnaires applied to the students from the target language V, they described the different kind of strategies that they usually use to get a better learning. For example, in the question number 10 (Fig.4.1) they mentioned the followings points: watching videos and movies, listening to music, repeating and memorizing phrases, reading articles in English and taking notes. According to their answers, we can conclude that metacognition plays an important role because they are constantly planning, creating and evaluating themselves and also, they solve problems being aware about the task that they need to performance taking into account what they know and may do not know about the English language. In another hand, it is seen that students need to enhance their English language through knowledge and regulation of metacognition. The first one relates to the factors

that influence learners' own performance, as when they want to enhance any ability like reading, they need to know most of the vocabulary to make a better understanding in text. However, to deal with the task they need to know the grammatical rules and punctuation to make an excellent writing.

The second one focuses on the regulation of metacognition, which involves settings goals and planning as well as monitoring and controlling the learning. The answers in the question 10 indicate that they may use metacognition to enhance their English language all the time.

Memory is another important part that learners make to learn the English language because they need to memorize vocabulary and grammatical structures so they do it through reading cultural articles, watching videos with lyrics or watching movies with subtitles. As a result, they may use the metacognitive process to enhance their English language in several ways by selecting minor or major points, thinking of examples and looking for applying them as the graph shows: 39% of the students from target language v learn the English language through listening to music. In the second position, the 22% of the students read articles in English to enhance their English language; the third position is 17% of students that prefer to talk with teachers and classmates. Finally, the two last positions are in the same percent (11%) of students who enjoy memorizing and repeating phrases as well as watching videos and movies with subtitles.

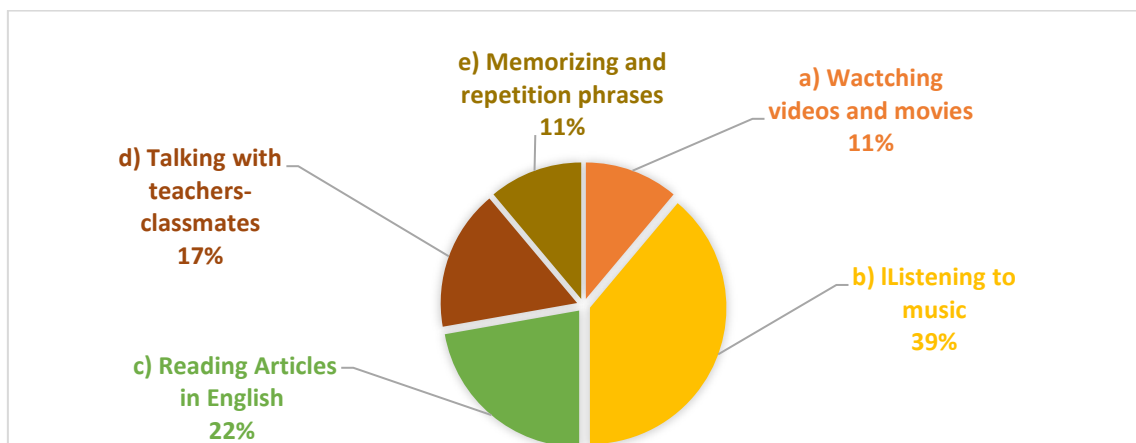


Figure 4.13 Most common metacognitive learning strategies based on students' perceptions

Focused on the information gathered through interviews to the teachers who teach target language V and based on question number 2, we can say that teachers might use some common metacognitive learning strategies in the English language (Fig. 4.13).

Moreover, the question 2 shows that most of the teachers who teach target language V are concerned about the importance of using metacognitive strategies as well as applying them in order to enhance the students' English language.

Metacognition is one of the most common strategies in the English Language Teaching that uses knowledge to learn, this is why teachers are looking for being aware of their students about what they know and do not know to perform a task. In addition, teachers must guide to their students gradually, how to deal with those steps in order to achieve their goals.

The second metacognitive strategy is regulation of metacognition that relates to settings goals and planning as well as monitoring and controlling the language learning. For that reason, it should be applied only for advance students but some of the teachers say that it depends on the context.

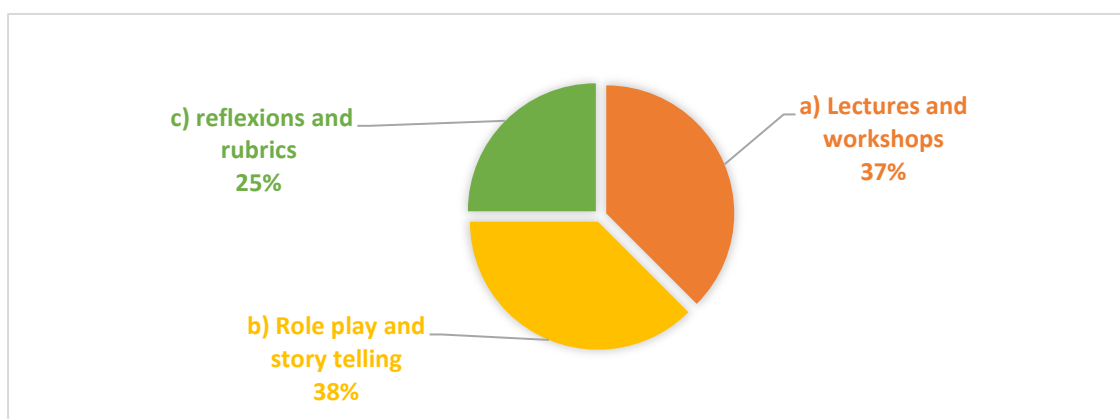


Figure 4.14 the most common learning strategies used in the classroom

As a conclusion, we can say that 38% of the teachers uses storytelling and role-playing to teach the English language; 37% of the teachers uses readings in their English classes and the 25% of the teachers uses reflections and rubrics to succeed in the English language teaching.

Focused on the perceptions that teachers have about using metacognitive learning strategies, we can say that most of teachers make their students aware of what are their strengths and witnesses in the English language, it means, that they make their students know what they know and do not know to perform a task and choose the most suitable strategy to deal with it.

Teachers also consider that gender and English level are not an obstacle or something that may affect the learning language but they have the responsibility

to show to their students how to choose a suitable strategy in order to perform any task.

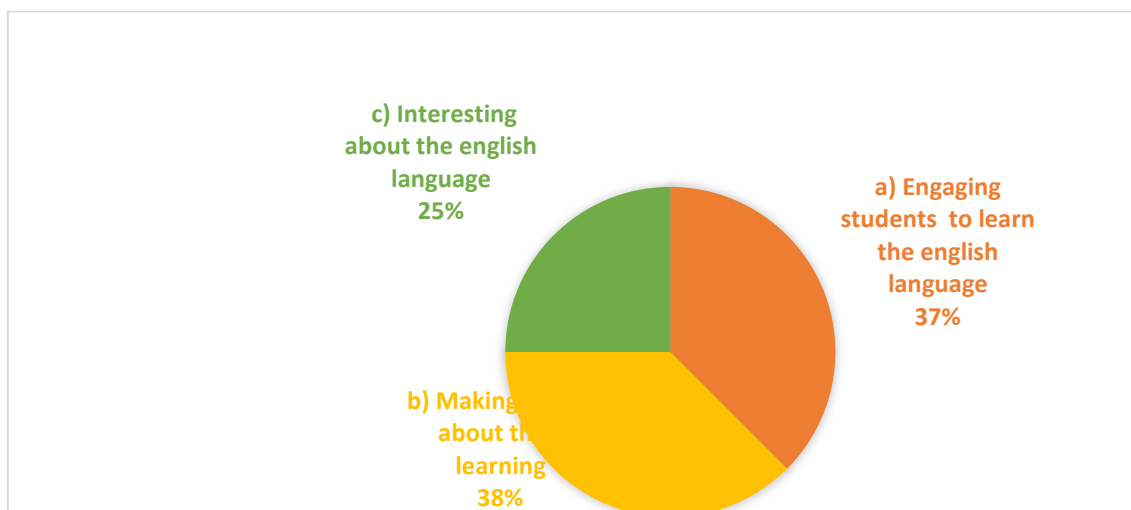


Figure 4.15 Teachers' perceptions output learning a foreign language

As seen above, 38% of the teachers might make aware to their students to succeed in the English language learning, 37% of the teachers consider that they engage their students in their own language learning, 25% of the teachers pointed out that being interested in the English language is another factor that affect the performance of the students.

As a conclusion, we can say that English language learning relates to the metacognitive language learning as a primary point supported by teachers' answers.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Abstract

Chapter V is about the conclusions and recommendations of the research based on the students and teachers' perceptions of the use of metacognitive learning strategies that enhance their English language learning in pandemic times.

5.1 General conclusions

In this part, some conclusions are drawn regarding the utility of metacognitive learning strategies and the level of correlation between the use of metacognitive strategies and English language learning in pandemic times.

The information was obtained through the research instruments applied to students and teachers from Target Language V. As a general conclusion we can determine that most English teachers knew about the usefulness of metacognitive learning strategies. The results revealed that they applied them in the classroom to enhance the English language in pandemic times. Additionally, it is perceived that most students might do not know the importance of using metacognitive learning strategies but they use them unconsciously during their language learning process.

It can also be said that, based on students' perceptions, they need to be guided by a teacher. For that reason, metacognitive learning strategies requires to be showed by the teacher to be more aware that these metacognitive learning strategies can have a great impact in their English language learning, Consequently, the teachers' perceptions show that they use metacognitive learning strategies in the classroom. Additionally, to succeed in the English language learning they have to take into account the different types of learning styles of each student and also how the teacher involves and put students into the context so they can develop their learning abilities and reach their goals according to their personal needs.

5.2 General suggestions based on the results

Based on the results it can be concluded that not all the questions applied to students and teachers provided the expected results. Consequently, the results of the students' questionnaire are described one by one.

The first research question was to know what metacognitive learning strategies are used in the English language learning. Then, the answer to this was that not all the students knew that they were using metacognitive learning strategies and some of them could not recognize what a metacognitive strategy was. For this reason, it was necessary to be more specific and avoid general or ambiguous questions in the research instrument.

The second research question was related to the perceptions that teachers have toward the use of metacognitive learning strategies in the English language learning. Teachers consider that use metacognitive learning strategies are important in the English language learning because students need to be aware of the manner that they learn a second language in order to perform any activity efficiently.

The third research question was to analyze the relationship between language learning activities and the metacognitive strategies in the language learning. In this one, regarding to the results of the students' perceptions. They expressed that they did not realize if their teachers applied activities in the classroom that have a relationship with metacognitive learning strategies. As it is seen, students are not involved in metacognitive strategies because they are not accustomed to call them by their names. In here, it is suggested to formulate questions that include the kind of activities that the teacher applies in the classroom and then classify them to see if some of them belong to any subcategory of the metacognitive learning strategies.

The fourth research question was to compare the level between the use of metacognitive strategies and the successful in the English language learning. Here, the results suggest that when we have these kinds of questions it is necessary to separate both fields to make sure to obtain the most reliable information from students who wanted to reach their goals in this pandemic times. The last one was to show how many students might use metacognitive strategies in the process of the English language learning. Gathering the results, it suggests that is a good idea to make some open questions because in this manner

students provide accurate information and the ambiguity is avoided. In one hand, an open question such as “what kind of strategies they use” or “examples of them” so students are not limited to answer “yes” or “no”. On the other hand, the close questions do not provide any useful information when students even do not know what a metacognitive strategy is.

To summarize, it is suggested to design multiple choice questions and to have several participants available to investigate the issue. It is interesting the perceptions of the participants, especially the fact that metacognitive strategies are essential tools to enhance language learning. For them, these strategies work independently and they can help students to reach their goals successfully.

5.3 Practical implications of the study

Considering the information obtained from the participants of target language V, we could say that most of them considered that, to succeed in English language learning, it is necessary that the teachers have the following abilities: vocation for being a teacher, patience, organizational skills, and knowledge of the subject matter and knowledge of what they teach daily in the classroom.

This study will have an impact on teachers that struggle in times of pandemic because it revealed that metacognitive strategies represent a tool to speed language learning.

It also provides some ideas for researchers to continue exploring these types of strategies to benefit language students.

5.4 Limitations of the study

The results obtained in this study were not what the researcher expected. First because of the lack of experience of the researcher and second because of the time when the study was conducted. It was a time when students were affected emotionally and socially by the pandemic so the questions did not provide the expected information. In the future, we suggest to include more specific questions in the instrument for students because some questions were close and these did not provide so much information. Instead, we think that we needed to include more open questions in order to make sure that the questions are accurate and focused on reaching the objectives of the research that, in this

case, was to identify the use of metacognitive learning strategies to succeed in English language learning.

Moreover, the interviews also needed to be related to the research questions. They needed to have a stronger piloting first but unfortunately, the conditions did not permit to conduct a proper piloting.

Concerning the teachers, it was found that there was not many of them available to participate in the study and also the time given to them to answer the instrument was not enough. However, in the future we suggest to record the interviews to have more complete answers.

5.5 Suggestions for further research

When writing a thesis, it is necessary to have a clear idea about what is the purpose of the research. It means, that we need to know perfectly what it is needed to achieve the expected goal. For this reason, we suggest to young researchers to have a clear idea of the research problem and the objective.

We also suggest to conduct research using observations and even using focus groups. These techniques will provide more evidence of the importance of metacognitive strategies in this kind of events.

It is also necessary to know the context that will be observed (field study), to whom interview or ask (participants) and to delimitate the field of the research.

Another important suggestion is for the participants. We need teachers and students with disposition to answer the research instruments. For that reason, it is convenient to try to work with small groups before choosing the real participants.

Questionnaires and interviews need to be designed carefully. For that reason, it is convenient to make drafts and to ask more experienced researchers to validate the instruments.

As a conclusion, we can say that a thesis is not just a task that help us to write down appropriately and see how much we have learned during these years. It is also a way to develop and learn more vocabulary, grammatical rules, realize all the process that requires learning and teaching a foreign language in order to perform better as future language teachers

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A. Questionnaire for students

This questionnaire has the purpose of identifying the use of metacognitive strategies in order to succeed in their English language learning.

The information that you provide will be kept confidentially. We really appreciate your cooperation.

Gender: F __ M__ **Age:** ____ **English Level:** _____

I. Choose the option that best fits your experience.

1. I consider that it is important to use learning strategies to learn a foreign language.

a) Completely agree b) agree c) not agree-nor disagree d) disagree e) totally disagree

2. I have always applied metacognitive learning strategies in my language learning

a) Completely agree b) agree c) not agree-nor disagree d) disagree e) totally disagree

3. I have a knowledge about how learning strategies work in the learning of a foreign language.

a) Completely agree b) agree c) not agree-nor disagree d) disagree e) totally disagree

4. I consider that metacognitive strategies can help me to learn a foreign language.

a) Completely agree b) agree c) not agree-nor disagree d) disagree e) totally disagree

5. I know the benefits of using metacognitive strategies in the learning of a foreign language.

a) Completely agree b) agree c) not agree-nor disagree d) disagree e) totally disagree

6. I consider that the teachers use metacognitive learning strategies.

a) Completely agree b) agree c) not agree-nor disagree d) disagree e) totally disagree

7. I would like that the teacher uses metacognitive learning strategies in the classroom.

a) Completely agree b) agree c) not agree-nor disagree d) disagree e) totally disagree

8. I prefer that my teacher monitor my speech instead by doing by myself.

a) Completely agree b) agree c) not agree-nor disagree d) disagree e) totally disagree

9. What do you consider that you need to learn a foreign language?

10. What are the strategies that you use to learn a foreign language successfully?

Appendix B. Interview for teachers

This interview has the purpose of identifying the use of metacognitive strategies in order to succeed in the English language learning.

The information that you provide will be kept confidentially. We really appreciate your cooperation.

Gender: F __ M__ **Age:** ____ **English level:** _____

1. Do you consider that it is important to use metacognitive learning strategies to succeed in language learning? Why?

2. What are the common learning strategies that you apply in the classroom?

3. Have you ever succeeded when you apply some of these learning strategies? Which ones?

4. What do you know about metacognitive learning strategies?

5. Do you consider that metacognitive strategies are really important to succeed in language learning?

6. Have you ever used metacognitive learning strategies in your classroom?

7. Do you know the benefits of using metacognitive learning strategies?

8. What are the essential tools that the teacher needs to succeed in the language teaching?

9. Until what level of English do you consider that a student can monitor their speech by themselves?

10. Do you make aware to your students about the importance of using learning strategies to enhance their language learning?