

YOUNG LEARNERS' SELF-ASSESSMENT: UNDERSTANDING AND  
REGULATING THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
LANGUAGE ABILITY IN EFL

A Thesis Presented by

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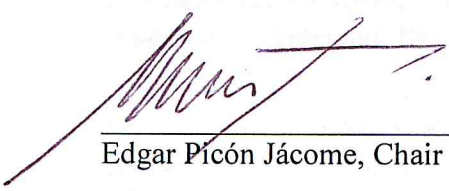
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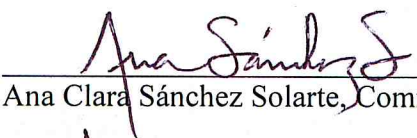
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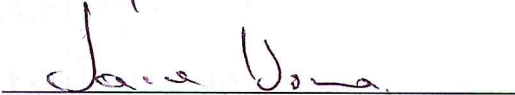
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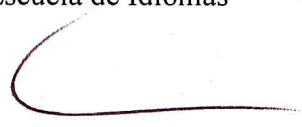
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## DEDICATION

To my family, my advisor and other faculty members in the Master's Program who provided me with all the support to go further in my professional career.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my advisor, Edgar Picón, for trusting my abilities and encouraging me throughout the process. I will appreciate his knowledge, patience, unconditional support and total disposition forever. I have a special feeling of gratitude towards my students and the administrative staff at my workplace, who demonstrated the best attitude to embrace this project since the beginning.

## ABSTRACT

# YOUNG LEARNERS' SELF-ASSESSMENT: UNDERSTANDING AND REGULATING THE DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE ABILITY IN EFL

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It is important that EFL elementary school teachers incorporate self-assessment for formative purposes as part of their regular assessment practices in their classrooms. It can provide both teachers and learners with valuable information about the extent to which the latter are achieving academic goals. Even young learners could benefit from well implemented self-assessment procedures in the English class. This qualitative case study intends to illuminate EFL elementary school teachers' understanding about the possibilities and challenges in promoting self-assessment among young learners.

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which third graders can understand and regulate the development of their language ability in the English class by engaging in self-assessment. The participants were eleven girls in third grade of elementary school. Data collection included participants' self-rating scales and learning journals used to self-assess language ability in two different tasks, and an individual semi-structured interview with four of them.

The results indicate that young learners' understanding and regulation of their language ability was to some extent favored by the procedures and instruments used for self-assessment purposes in the English class. Although some aspects of third graders' metacognition were still limited, such as strategic knowledge, self-knowledge and planning skills, the data analysis evidenced development of other metacognitive skills. For instance, participants developed knowledge of the cognitive tasks proposed during the study, monitoring and evaluating skills, and exhibited awareness of their cognitive abilities.

This study supports the view that with appropriate use of strategies and instruments as well as regular exposure, guidance and training in self-assessment, elementary school learners can move towards a better understanding and regulation of the development of their language ability. Finally, further research about the relationship between young learners' motivation towards EFL, as well as their language proficiency level and their ability to self-assess in the English class, is recommended.

*Key words:* young learners, formative assessment, self-assessment, language ability, metacognition, knowledge of cognition, regulation of cognition

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## **Introduction**

With the advent of socio cultural and constructivist learning models new assessment procedures emerged (Brown & Hudson, 1998; Gipps, 1999). For instance, self-assessment —along with portfolios and peer assessment— has acquired particular importance (Noonan & Duncan, 2005). Self-assessment is the procedure through which learners reflect about their own work, identify strengths and weaknesses, judge their results, and look for strategies to improve, based on previously defined criteria (Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009; Cárdenas, 1997; McMillan & Hearn, 2008; and Ross, 2006). According to Shohamy and Inbar (2006), self-assessment can complement other assessment practices or can be used as an independent procedure.

Many authors consider self-assessment an important alternative procedure to make assessment formative (Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009; Butler & Lee, 2010; Cárdenas, 1997; Clarke, 2005; Elder, 2010; Hayatdavoudi & Ansari, 2011; McMillan & Hearn, 2008; Muñoz, Palacio & Escobar, 2012; Rodriguez, 2007; Ross, 2006; Shohamy & Inbar, 2006; Taras, 2010; Wen-ming & Xiao-zhen, 2008; Wiliam, 2011). Furthermore, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages acknowledges the potential of self-assessment as a tool to raise both students' awareness of their performance and their motivation (p. 192). Nevertheless, Butler & Lee (2010) and Elder (2010) claim that more research about self-assessment processes for EFL young learners and children's self-assessment, related to particular academic goals, is needed around the world.

Regarding empirical studies in the global context, Elder (2010) found that “by helping students reflect on themselves and their accomplishments, teachers can help

students invest effort, interpret their progress, promote the internalization of academic standards, and gain a sense of self-efficacy” (p. 10). On the other hand, Robson (2010) provided evidence of three to four year old children’s self-regulatory behavior when engaged in opportunities to reflect about their academic activities.

In the Colombian context, Cárdenas (1997) has already called teachers’ attention towards the importance of guidance and practice in making self-assessment a more profitable tool for both teachers and learners. However, in a revision of four important journals in our country only three studies on learners’ self-assessment were found, none of them conducted in elementary school contexts. Frodden, Picón and Usma (2001) implemented self-assessment in a prospective teachers’ course at a public university. The researchers assumed that transferring students some control of their own learning process, through the implementation of peer and self-assessment, would enhance learners’ commitment to the course. The authors found that although learners did not know what to do with the control they were being transferred, if a grade had been assigned to learners from their self-assessment outcomes it would have matched their actual performance in that course.

On the other hand, Sierra and Frodden (2003) found that the regular implementation of self-assessment and learning strategies during an EFL course for undergraduate students, at a public university, contributed to enhance learners’ responsibility towards their own learning process and their linguistic performance. Similarly, Cárdenas (2010) reported that the implementation of self-assessment, through the use of a portfolio, helped adults over 50 to propose and develop activities in a beginner’s English class at a public university. In

sum, the literature review revealed that self-assessment in elementary school remains limitedly explored in both international and local settings.

In April 2009, the Ministry of Education in Colombia issued the decree 1290 in order to regulate assessment practices in schools. According to the article number four in the decree, each school is required to describe in their institutional evaluation system the process through which learners will self-assess (p. 1). Therefore, all school teachers are expected to carry out self-assessment and to keep record of this process. However, a focused group interview conducted with third graders during a pilot study in the context of the current study showed that the way in which teachers are implementing self-assessment in their lessons is (1) summative, (2) non-criteria referenced and (3) focused on discipline aspects rather than on academic goals. Consequently, self-assessment practices in this context may not be as formative as they are expected to be. That is to say, they are not intended to promote learners' awareness about the extent to which they are achieving learning goals.

Self-assessment has been associated to the concept of metacognition which has been developed by theorists immersed in a cognitivist orientation towards learning. Schraw, Crippen and Hartley (2006) define metacognition as one's knowledge of cognition and regulation of that cognition. According to McDonald (2007), "self-assessment may be viewed as the act of evaluating or monitoring one's own level of knowledge, performance, and understanding in a metacognitive framework, taking into account the contexts in which it occurs" (p. 28). Since self-assessment and metacognition are interrelated concepts, it is expected that well planned self-assessment practices favor learners' metacognition and that the development of the latter contributes to enhance learners' self-assessment capacity.

This study is intended to explore the extent to which third graders can understand and regulate the development of their language ability by engaging in self-assessment in the EFL class. It contributes to the discussion in the field by providing insight about possibilities and challenges in promoting elementary school learners' awareness of their language learning progress in the English class. To guide my study, I have developed the following question: To what extent can third graders understand and regulate the development of their language ability by engaging in self-assessment in the English class?

## **Theoretical Framework**

Self-assessment is one of the two main theoretical concepts that support the development of this study. According to Gipps (1999), self-assessment and other formative assessment procedures “are rooted in an interpretivist perspective”. In this paradigm, the teacher is expected to analyze how performance is influenced by what the learners expect or assume about procedures in the classroom, their perception of how demanding the task is, and how they make sense of success standards (p. 371). Andrade and Valtcheva (2009) state that self-assessment is central in formative assessment, since it allows students to think about the “quality of their own work and act as another source of evaluative judgment” (p. 12).

Wen-ming and Xiao-zhen (2008), supporting their idea with the work of Blanche and Merino (1989), Harris and McCann (1994) and Oscarson (1997), define self-assessment as the procedure through which learners provide information, not only about their abilities and progress, but also about how they feel regarding tasks or materials, and their achievements and difficulties in the process. From Elder’s (2010) perspective, self-assessment is “the process by which students come to gauge their level of performance and understanding” (p. 5). Rust, Price, and O’Donovan (as cited in Taras, 2010) refer to self-assessment as “all judgments by learners of their work” (p. 201).

In order to implement self-assessment effectively, Ross (2006), McMillan and Hearn (2008), and Andrade and Valtcheva, (2009) propose three steps: (1) A time for students to reflect on the knowledge and strategies required to attain a task, (2) a space for them to judge and generate feedback on the degree to which their work meets established criteria related to academic goals and standards, and (3) a time to plan some actions for

improving their performance and enhancing learning. Moreover, the implementation of self-assessment for formative purposes involves the use of some specific instruments and strategies. For instance, Cárdenas (1997) suggests “checklists, self-ratings, continuous assessment cards in which the students complete the information, questionnaires, diaries (logs or journals), response sheets, progress reports, periodical recordings of audiotapes and even computer programs” as optional tools for recording self-assessment information (p. 66). Chamot (2009) recommends using self-rating scales which “can consist of a single-page ‘learning log’ summarizing content, language and strategy objectives for a single lesson”. They can be used to self-assess “on generic learning activities or more specific learning processes and products” (p. 121).

Self-assessment is intended to enhance learners’ metacognition; therefore, metacognition is the second important concept in this project. According to Schraw, Crippen and Hartley (2006), metacognition is one of the three components of self-regulated learning that enables learners “to understand and monitor their cognitive processes”(p. 112), and involves knowledge of cognition and regulation of cognition. Pintrich (2002) refers to knowledge of cognition as metacognitive knowledge which comprises “knowledge about cognition in general and knowledge and awareness of one’s own cognition” (p. 219). According to the author, metacognitive knowledge is constituted by strategic knowledge, knowledge about cognitive tasks and self-knowledge.

Strategic knowledge involves awareness of the existence of different strategies for memorizing, extracting meaning and comprehending. The author refers to these strategies as general learning strategies which he divides in three categories, according to the three aforementioned purposes: rehearsal, elaboration and organizational strategies, respectively.

An example of the first category can be the act of repeating words or terms to be remembered. Elaboration strategies include the use of mnemonics for memory tasks, summarizing, paraphrasing and selecting main ideas. Finally, outlining, concept mapping and note taking are part of organizational strategies that learners can use in their learning process. Besides general learning strategies, the author states that strategic knowledge includes awareness of metacognitive strategies which are useful in planning, monitoring and regulating one's learning. Examples of metacognitive strategies include setting goals, checking answers to problems and repairing mistakes (Pintrich, 2002, p. 220).

Regarding knowledge of cognitive tasks, this author states that it "includes knowledge that different tasks can be more or less difficult and may require different cognitive strategies" (p. 221). Finally, this author defines self-knowledge as the awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses. A more specific definition of this concept was offered by Flavell (1979) who referred to self-knowledge as the person category and defined it as "everything that you could come to believe about the nature of yourself and other people as cognitive processors" (p. 907). According to this author, self-knowledge can be categorized in "beliefs about intraindividual differences, interindividual differences, and universals of cognition" (Flavell, 1979, p. 907). He states that some examples of these subcategories of self-knowledge would be: one's beliefs about how people can learn something or how one can learn better and, how well one understands, knows or remembers a topic.

The second component of metacognition is regulation of cognition. Schraw (1998) defines it as "a set of activities that help students control their learning (...) including better use of attentional resources, better use of existing strategies, and a greater awareness of comprehension breakdowns" (p. 114). Furthermore, Schraw & Moshman (as cited in



Schraw, 1998) state that regulation of cognition includes planning, monitoring and evaluation skills. Planning includes selecting “appropriate strategies and the allocation of resources that affect performance. Examples include making predictions before reading, strategy sequencing, and allocating time or attention selectively before beginning a task” (Schraw, 1998, p. 115). Monitoring is defined as “one’s on-line awareness of comprehension and task performance” (Ibidem). Finally, according to the author, evaluating implies appraisal of “the products and efficiency of one’s learning” (Ibid.).

The focus of students’ self-assessment in this study was their language ability. Therefore, it is necessary to define the construct of language on which assessment criteria was determined. I proposed a view of language that belongs to a cognitivist orientation to language learning and teaching in which language is considered a mental ability that needs to be developed. For the purpose of this study, I took Bachman and Palmer’s (1996) concept of language ability to determine the language learning goals that learners were expected to achieve, and evaluate through self-assessment in the EFL class.

Regarding the notion of language ability, Bachman and Palmer (1996) claim that a language user is able to produce and understand discourse when he or she combines language knowledge with a set of metacognitive strategies—or strategic competence—. Language knowledge involves two categories: organizational and pragmatic knowledge. Organizational knowledge includes grammatical knowledge—vocabulary, syntax, phonology and graphology—needed to organize utterances, sentences and texts; and textual knowledge—knowledge of cohesion and rhetorical organization—to dispose utterances or sentences to form a text. Pragmatic knowledge refers to the language user’s ability to achieve communicative goals, through the management of functions, in a

particular context. On the other hand, the strategic competence involves goal setting, assessment and planning (Bachman & Palmer, 1996, p. 67). The self-rating scales used by learners to self-assess their performance in the two tasks proposed contained criteria based on the notions concerning the organizational component of the language ability described above, which constituted at the same time the learning goals for them to achieve.

## **Setting**

This study was conducted in an EFL class with third graders at a religious private school for girls. In this institution, learners from first to third grade receive four hours of foreign language instruction in a cycle of six days. As part of the institutional regulations for assessment practices in the English class teachers must create a rubric to assess students' achievements at the end of each term. This rubric must be presented to students and parents in advance, to provide them with a clear view of the contents, the cognitive skills and the attitudinal objectives that students are expected to achieve during the academic term.

Regarding testing regulations, the teachers are expected to administer quizzes at least three times a term. Moreover, learners must take an achievement test at the end of each term and a proficiency test, administered by external evaluators, once a year. The outcomes from testing and other assessment procedures are expressed in terms of four performance levels: Low, Basic, High and Superior.

Self-assessment is considered a mandatory assessment procedure that teachers must implement in all levels and courses. Furthermore, its use should contribute to make the assessment process in this context more democratic and to enhance learners' self-esteem, responsibility and autonomy, as stated in the educational project (PEI). Therefore, teachers are expected to provide all students with the necessary tools for them to self-assess the quality of their knowledge, skills and attitudes.

## **Participants**

The participants in this study were 11 girls in third grade of elementary school, and I. The number corresponds to the amount of learners who, after my presentation of the

study, volunteered to participate and from which I obtained parents' consent. All of the learners were from the same class and aged 8-9 years. They had similar educational and socio-economic backgrounds —from middle to high-class—, received instruction under the same conditions inside the classroom —method, resources, time— and were not remarkably different in terms of their physical and/or cognitive capabilities. This type of homogeneous sample appeared more appropriate to the purpose of my study since I planned to describe the third graders subgroup in depth (Glesne, 2006).

My role in this study was the one of a teacher-researcher. I have been teaching in formal settings for about eight years and I believe that self-assessment can help teachers to address important issues such as their lack of time to provide effective feedback to each student in a large class, and low levels of learners' engagement and performance in their classes. However, I had doubts about implementing self-assessment in my classes with young children, and I felt therefore curious and motivated to carry out this study.

## **Method**

In order to explore the extent to which third graders can understand and regulate the development of their language ability through self-assessment in the EFL class, I conducted a qualitative case study illuminated by a social constructivism worldview. According to Cresswell (2007), in a qualitative study the participants account for different and subjective realities and the researcher is situated inside the participants' context. Furthermore, this author states that from a social constructivism perspective, my job as a researcher is to trust participants' perceptions and establish their complexity in order to identify patterns and generate meaning based on my own perception of reality. Richards (2003), and Johnson and Christensen (2008) refer to the case study as a research design which allows the researcher to elaborate a detailed description of a specific group, in their context and based on a purposeful sample. Along the different stages of the study, I established a dialogue with the participants that allowed me to include the features of the social constructivism perspective described above.

In this study, learners self-assessed their language ability in two different tasks in the EFL class. The first task was a role play about their favorite profession in which they should name the profession and some instruments used in that job, and describe a day in the professional's life. The second task was the production of a three-paragraph text about a relative's occupation, what the person was supposed to do and a day in his/her life. The students used a self-rating scale to rate their performance after they had completed each task, and answered eight questions in a personal learning journal about their learning outcomes and process in attaining that particular task.

The whole self-assessment procedure involved some of the steps suggested by Ross (2006), McMillan and Hearn (2008), and Andrade and Valtcheva (2009). I shared with students the criteria contained in the self-rating scales in advance. After they had completed the task, I gave them time to assess their own performance, process and products, based on the criteria in the self-rating scales and by answering the questions in their journals.

### **Data Collection**

To answer my research question, I gathered data from three different sources: learners' self-rating scales, their learning journals and an individual interview with four of the participants. The interviewees were selected based on the high quality and big amount of data revealed in their learning journals. Data was collected in students' native language, Spanish, during a three- month period.

Regarding ethical issues, I remark that since participants were children their parents were in charge of providing approval through the consent forms (Drew, Hardman, & Hosp, 2008, p. 58). Learners and their parents were invited to a meeting and received all the information concerning their participation in the study. Since children are considered vulnerable population, I had to guarantee that data collected in this study derived "from normal teaching/learning processes and that the use of the information obtained is primarily intended for the benefit of those receiving instruction in this setting"(Drew et al., 2008, p. 60). I did it by (1) clearly stating in the consent form how the children's physical and psychological integrity would be protected and (2) avoiding access of other school members to participants' names and their self-assessment instruments (see Appendix A).

### **Learners' self-rating scales.**

For the purpose of this study, I adopted Chamot's (2009) example of self-rating scales, consisting of a "single-page 'learning log' summarizing content and language". Besides the descriptors and the performance levels, the self-rating scales designed for this study contained (1) the description of the situation in which the task was expected to be completed, and (2) the instruction for the learners to use this instrument. The descriptors displayed on the self-rating scale referred to the content and language studied in class, which learners were expected to know in order to achieve the task proposed. I elaborated them based on the English syllabus proposed by the school and the construct of language proposed by Bachman and Palmer (1996).

In front of each descriptor there were four levels of performance, ranking from "I need more work" to "I achieved it". Learners marked each descriptor with an X under the level of performance they considered pertinent. All the information contained in the self-rating scales was presented in Spanish (See Appendix B). I used participants' self-rating scales for three purposes: (1) to compare the learners' ratings with my judgment of their performance in each task, (2) to see the connection between their results and the interpretations they made in their journals, and (3) to determine any variation in learners' accuracy in rating their performance between the first and the second task.

### **Students' learning journals.**

According to Sliogeriene (2006), a learning journal is a tool for reflection and assessment of students' learning outcomes. It can vary in size, length and type. Regarding the types, Langer (2002) states that it can be an unstructured, a structured or a dialogue journal. An unstructured learning journal provides students the freedom to select the

writing style and the kind of entries they want to make. In structured journals, entries as well as the way in which they are presented are usually established by tutors. On the other hand, dialogue journals include entries from two or more writers to establish communication among them. For the purpose of this study, and to facilitate the process of data analysis, learners wrote a structured learning journal based on guiding questions. Students wrote an entry in their journals after rating their performance in each evaluative task. I provided them with eight open ended questions to guide their reflection. Both the questions and the students' answers were written in Spanish. The questions were the same in the first and the second entries and were related to (1) learners' interpretation of their performance based on the self-rating scale, (2) possible reasons to explain that performance, (3) what they had found easy about completing the task and why, (4) what they had found difficult about completing the task and why, (5) what they would do in order to attain the same task in the future in a successful way, (6) how they could keep or achieve a high level of performance, (7) how they had felt while developing the task, and (8) how they had felt about self-assessing themselves.

There was an extra entry in the participants' personal journals between the first and the second entry. It was in Spanish as well, and learners were inquired about their experience with self-assessment. They answered ten questions related to (1) their view of self-assessment, (2) the kind of thoughts they experienced while judging their performance, (3) how easy it had been to use the self-assessment instruments, (4) how difficult it had been to use the self-assessment instruments, (5) their view of the tasks proposed for self-assessment purposes, (6) the purposes for which they actually used the information obtained from self-assessment, (7) what they had learn from their self-assessment, (8)



perceived similarities or differences between self-assessment in the English class and other courses, (9) the usefulness of self-assessment for their learning process and (10) the purposes for which they could use the information obtained from self-assessment (See Appendix C).

The participants wrote three journal entries in total. I collected their personal journals after they had written the third entry. I used this information (1) to learn about the aspects of young learners' metacognition that emerged from their responses, (2) to determine any changes in learners' metacognition between the first and the second entry and (3) to obtain insight about meaningful questions I should ask learners during the interviews.

### **Interviews.**

I conducted four individual semi structured interviews. According to Burns (1999), semi structured interviews are open-ended and allow the researcher to include questions about emerging themes during its development. Based on this definition, I designed four flexible interview protocols for each interviewee. The interviewees were selected by taking into account those participants who showed in their journals to be more skillful to write about their cognition. The focus of these interviews was to deepen my understanding of the aspects that were still confusing or puzzling after analyzing data from learners' self-rating scales and their personal journals. Each interview was recorded and transcribed for further analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

In order to analyze the data collected from the aforementioned sources, I followed the steps suggested by Burns (1999). According to this author, the process of data analysis

includes five stages: (1) assembling the data, (2) coding the data, (3) comparing the data, (4) building interpretations and (5) reporting the outcomes. Moreover, I used triangulation and peer examinations to enhance validity in the process of data analysis. Besides triangulating information from the different sources, I relied on my thesis advisor as a peer examiner in the process for validation. Based on his deep understanding of my research scenario, he commented on the data which helped to increase the validity of the findings and interpretations in the data analysis process.

## Findings

This study explored the extent to which third graders can understand and regulate the development of their language ability through the implementation of self-assessment, in the English class. The participants used two self-rating scales to evaluate their language ability in two different tasks. Moreover, they kept a learning journal to register perceptions about their performance and self-assessment, based on some guiding questions. I collected data from learners' self-rating scales, their journals and through an individual interview with four participants. The data analysis evidenced that the use of specific strategies and instruments for self-assessment purposes activated and enhanced some areas of young learners' metacognition that allowed them to understand and regulate to some extent the development of their language ability.

Regarding the extent to which third graders can understand the development of their language ability, I found that through planned self-assessment practices they could gain knowledge about the complexity of cognitive tasks. Furthermore, the participants exhibited awareness of their cognitive skills and of the extent to which they were understanding topics. Nevertheless, there was evidence of some limitations in their strategic knowledge, and their self-knowledge concerning how they learn — learning styles—. In relation to the extent to which third graders can regulate their cognition, I found that participants' monitoring and evaluation skills were activated and enhanced during the study. However, the participants exhibited little planning skills to attain the cognitive tasks proposed. I will elaborate on these findings through the following categories. First, I will refer to categories concerning the extent to which third graders can understand the development of their language ability: knowledge about tasks, self-knowledge and strategic knowledge. Finally,

I will elaborate on aspects concerning the extent to which they can regulate cognition: monitoring, evaluating and planning skills.

### **Knowledge about Cognitive Tasks**

According to Flavell (1979) and Pintrich (2002), knowledge about cognitive tasks is part of metacognitive knowledge. It implies awareness of the factors that affect the level of difficulty of a particular task and the strategies to be used. Regarding learners' knowledge of cognitive tasks, the data analysis showed that students gained insight about different factors that could affect the level of difficulty of the tasks proposed. This was visible when comparing learners' perceptions of the level of difficulty between the first and the second tasks.

For instance, to explain the level of difficulty of the first task, most of the participants focused on their own skills, or on strategies they had used to develop the task, more than in the complexity of the task itself. As it was expressed by one of the learners in her learning journal: "It was easy for me to perform the role-play because I memorized a two-page script last year and that helped me. I listened to others attentively and that was useful, in general, it was helpful to study and everything was easy for me" (Learner I, journal).

Other learners' knowledge about the first task proposed for self-assessment centered on what it had been easy or difficult for them about developing that specific task. For instance, one of them wrote: "It was easy for me to memorize the profession or writing about it, it was difficult to speak in front of the class" (Learner H, journal). Other participants did not even state a clear idea of what they had found easy or difficult about the task. As expressed by one girl in her learning journal: "Almost everything was easy for me,

because the topic and everything we have studied is easy, some topics or titles are a little bit difficult” (Learner J, journal).

In contrast, when determining the level of difficulty of the second task, most participants exhibited awareness of other important factors that could be associated to the level of difficulty of a task. This time learners focused on the extent to which the task was familiar or unfamiliar, well or poorly organized and interesting or dull to them. The following excerpts from their learning journals exemplifies it:

It was easy since the teacher explained the activity for us to do it and we had fun, that is why I think it was easy (Learner A, journal). I think the text was easy, I had some mistakes but it was easy because we have worked on that a lot, so it was easy and I felt like a journalist (Learner H, journal).

Similarly, some of the participants expressed that the teacher’s instruction and support, the extent to which the task seemed enjoyable and interesting, and the fact that they had been previously exposed to a similar task, had made the task easy for them. For instance, one of them stated: “The interview to the relative was easy because it was enjoyable, because you feel like a journalist and the teacher explains very well, if you have any doubt about the topic she helps us” (Learner I, journal).

Furthermore, in order to determine the level of difficulty of the second task proposed, other learners referred to the linguistic ability required. For instance, they referred to the type of vocabulary or rules from the target language that they needed in order to develop the task. The evidence suggest that they took these linguistic aspects from the self-rating scales they were using in order to rate their performance in each task. Some of the students even referred to their own linguistic strengths and other participants were

able to establish a comparison between the linguistic requirements of the first task and those from the second one. The following evidence from learners' journals and from the interview is an example of students' gains in their knowledge about cognitive tasks.

The only thing that I think is easy about the task is that I use the verb am very well. Because that was the only goal I achieved. If I had achieved anything else, I would have obtained a smile face! (Learner B, journal).

Er...the role-play was easy because you explained to us how to describe ourselves. Not physically but what we do as professionals. And you told us that we should base our performance on the scale. So, the activity about the relative was more difficult because we had to take into account the "es" or the "s" and I sometimes forgot it (Learner A, interview).

The computer corrects one's work with a red line. I activated the grammar checker and it corrected "watches", "gos" without the "e". So...things like those. And therefore I made mistakes, that is why the text was difficult (Learner B, interview).

### **Self-Knowledge**

According to Flavell (1979) and Pintrich (2002), self-knowledge implies recognition of (1) how people learn and how one can learn better, (2) one's cognitive skills, and (3) the depth of one's understanding. The data analysis revealed that students' self-knowledge comprised mainly the second and third aspects. Regarding learners' recognition of their cognitive skills most of the participants seemed aware of their high or limited capacity to memorize information. The following excerpts from their journals exemplify this.

I felt self-confident during the role-play because I memorized everything and I knew I was going to succeed (Learner D). I performed in that way because I was not good enough to achieve all the goals, I sometimes do not memorize things and I give unprompted answers, but I think I should improve (Learner B).

Regarding learner's recognition of the depth of their understanding, the analysis revealed that they were aware of some aspects that they needed to improve in order to consolidate their language ability. For instance, some learners claimed that they needed to expand and use the vocabulary accurately. The following excerpts from the interview illustrate participants' perceptions of the depth of their understanding through self-assessment.

Now I can understand things better, and what I need to do is to pay attention to sentence completion, to do it well. For example, my routine, the parts of the house. I am missing some vocabulary which I have to review (Learner H).

In the journals, we can provide more complete answers, since we had been never asked about that when self-assessing in other classes, er... I think that based on what I answer I can learn more about me. For instance, I learned that I am doing well but I have to improve some things. Through self-assessment one understands what is to be improved (Learner A).

However, none of the learners expressed ideas concerning how they learned or could learn better — their learning styles—.

### **Strategic Knowledge**

Flavell (1979) and Pintrich (2002) state that strategic knowledge involves knowledge of general learning strategies and metacognitive strategies which can be used to

understand and manipulate information. According to the data analysis, the participants' knowledge of both types of strategies for language learning was limited and somehow imprecise. Reviewing and practicing the topics at home, using the dictionary, paying attention, and listening to the teacher attentively were the general learning strategies they knew to attain the tasks proposed. None of them referred to strategies they could use for extracting meaning or memorizing contents.

In relation to metacognitive strategies, some learners referred to the correction of mistakes as a strategy they knew, but they did not mention specific actions to implement it. To illustrate learners' limited knowledge of both general and metacognitive strategies for language learning, I present the following records from their journals:

I can prepare myself for a similar activity by studying. If I do not understand a word I can search in the dictionary and pay attention to my teacher (Learner I). I think I can improve my results by taking my books home every day; and by studying, I can correct my mistakes if I obtain a low, basic or high score in a test (Learner B).

Now, I will refer to findings concerning the second component of metacognition: regulation of cognition. As stated at the beginning of this section, the data analysis revealed that participants' monitoring and evaluating skills were activated and enhanced through the implementation of well-planned self-assessment practices. However, there was evidence of third graders' difficulties to establish a plan with specific strategies to carry out the tasks proposed during the study. I will elaborate on these findings in the following paragraphs.

### **Monitoring**

Schraw (1998) states that monitoring "refers to one's on-line awareness of comprehension and task performance. According to the data analysis, the participants



seemed to have developed awareness about the way in which they could monitor their performance during this study. For instance, they had not referred to any concrete action to monitor themselves before the second self-assessment event. However, after assessing their performance in the second task, some of them claimed that they had used the self-rating scales to check the extent to which their work met the established criteria. The following excerpts from the interviews illustrate this.

If one sees a work without commas, without “and”, or the apostrophe that you recommend on the scales, one says “ok, I did badly” because it is necessary to include those things (Learner A, interview). The scale is very useful because it reflects the goals of self-assessment. For example, when to write a period, when to use a comma, an apostrophe... You have to learn when and where to use them. So, the scale is useful for me to study (Learner I, interview).

Moreover, other learners recognized that the whole procedure of self-assessment helped them in monitoring the development of their language ability. One of them stated: “If we self-assess more often, we will learn how we are doing in English, for instance we can check if we are spelling words correctly” (Learner B, interview).

As stated above, the data analysis suggested that learners’ started to monitor their performance after the first self-assessment event proposed in this study. Furthermore, they exhibited evaluating skills which helped them regulate the development of their language ability to some extent. The following theme relates to this finding.

### **Evaluating**

According to Schraw et al. (2006), along with planning and monitoring, evaluating is one of the metacognitive skills to regulate one’s cognition. It involves appraisal of

outcomes as well as reflection on the control of one's learning. The data analysis showed that learners' evaluating skills centered on the products of their learning rather than on their control of it. According to the analysis, all of the participants were able to offer quite accurate appraisals of their language ability in the two tasks. By comparing all the learners' self-rating scales with the teacher's assessment of their performance in the first task, I perceived that most of the learners had underestimated their performance to some extent. However, the level of discrepancy between their rating and the teacher's rank was low. In contrast, I found no discrepancy between some learner's and the teacher's ratings in the second task, as shown in table 1.

After self-assessing each task, the participants were asked to write in their journals comments about their results. The data analysis showed that most learners' comments reflected to a great extent the quality of their performance. For instance, those who had an average performance acknowledged their need to improve attention, their lack of knowledge and misuse of strategies to memorize and review information, and expressed their desire to obtain better results. The following excerpts from learners' journals are an example.

My results are good but I should improve attention (Learner A, journal). I think that my results are very good but I have to improve things. I think I obtained those results because I did not study that much, or because I reviewed some things instead of others but I will make an effort and my results will improve (Learner H, journal).

Additionally, some of them focused on how sad or happy they had felt about their results. For instance, one of them wrote "I think I did well and I feel a little bit happy. I feel a little bit sad because I did not achieve everything (Learner B, personal journal).

Table 1

Contrast between learners and teacher's rating of students' performance in the first and second tasks.

<b>Superior</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Low</b>
The student's level of achievement corresponds to "I achieved it" for most of the criteria in the self-rating scale.	The student's level of achievement corresponds to "I can do it better" for most of the criteria in the self-rating scale.	The student's level of achievement corresponds to "I am doing it" for most of the criteria in the self-rating scale.	The student's level of achievement corresponds to "I need more work" for most of the criteria in the self-rating scale.

<b>Student</b>	<b>Task 1 Student Grade</b>	<b>Task 1 Teacher Grade</b>	<b>Level of discrepancy Task 1</b>	<b>Task 2 Student Grade</b>	<b>Task 2 Teacher Grade</b>	<b>Level of discrepancy Task 2</b>
A	High	Superior	low	High	High	0
B	High	Superior	low	Basic	Basic	0
C	Basic	High	low	High	High	0
D	High	Superior	low	High	High	0
E	High	Low	high	High	Basic	low
F	Basic	Superior	high	High	Low	high
G	High	Superior	low	High	Superior	low
H	Basic	Superior	high	High	Superior	low
I	High	Superior	low	High	High	0
J	High	High	0	High	Basic	low
K	High	High	0	Basic	Low	low

After self-assessing the second task, some of the learners' perceptions about their results focused on their language ability. For instance, one of the learners expressed during the interview: "For instance, I have to work more on pronunciation because I am not doing well. I also become confused with spelling; I am not as good at it as I used to be. Er...let me see, word order...I am not placing words correctly within a sentence, for example colors. So, I need to work more on all of that." (Learner B, interview).

Furthermore, as part of learners' capacity to evaluate the outcomes of their learning, the data analysis evidenced that most of them emphasized on honesty as a requirement to judge their performance accurately. For instance, one of the participants wrote in her journal: "You have to be honest to self-assess, you have to be responsible. How? If you learned the vocabulary well and you feel you achieved that, the grade tells you the same. But if you were closed to the objective and in that lesson you did not performed well you have to be honest by admitting it (Learner I, interview).

On the other hand, some learners expressed that it had been difficult for them to recognize their weaknesses at the moment of checking their performance with the self-rating scales, and therefore they had had to think carefully. One of them expressed: "You give us the scales and I start reading carefully. I think on what I am not doing well because as I told you before, it is very difficult to recognize that I am doing badly at something" (Learner H, interview).

Evaluating is part of learners' regulation of their cognition. According to the data analysis, most of them showed a high a level of impartiality and accuracy in their judgments of their performance based on established criteria. However, according to Schraw et al. (2006) evaluating involves more than appraising one's learning results. For

the authors, it comprises the re-evaluation of one's goals and the revision of predictions. According to the data analysis, the participants did not provide information about these aspects through their journals or the interviews.

### **Planning**

According to Schraw et al. (2006), planning involves the learners' ability to select appropriate strategies and resources, establish goals, use previous knowledge and distribute time in order to accomplish a specific task. The data analysis showed that participants referred to some actions that could help them attain future tasks. However, they did not specify a detailed plan to fulfill the tasks proposed in this study. That is to say, they could establish general goals to attain the tasks but did not include information about the time, the resources or the strategies needed. The following examples from the data illustrate this.

I have decided to improve. I will study more, be more self-confident, be relaxed, to improve more and more. I will participate more, and talk more, ask for my turn and stay in silence if a classmate talks to me (Learner H, interview). I will do exercises about the topic, I will study and if I do not understand something, I will ask for help (Learner E, journal).

Their planning included general goals to improve their performance in the English class, but it was rather imprecise in relation to the selection of strategies or resources for attaining specific linguistic tasks. In sum, the data analysis revealed strengths as well as limitations in learners' metacognition that allowed them to understand and regulate to a certain extent the development of their language ability in the English class, through well-planned self-assessment practices. I will discuss findings from my study in the following section.

## Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore the extent to which third graders can understand and regulate the development of their language ability through the implementation of self-assessment, in the English class. The findings suggest that, in spite of some limitations, young learners' metacognition was activated and enhanced through the use of specific strategies and instruments for self-assessment purposes. This made possible for third graders to understand and regulate the development of their language ability to some extent. In relation to understanding of the development of their language ability, the participants showed particular strengths in determining the factors that might make a task more difficult than other —knowledge about cognitive tasks—. Furthermore, despite their limited awareness about their own learning styles, the participants exhibited recognition of their cognitive skills —self-knowledge—. However, they exhibited limited and imprecise knowledge of general learning and metacognitive strategies —strategic knowledge—.

Concerning the extent to which third graders can regulate the development of their language ability, the data analysis revealed improvement of their evaluating and monitoring skills of their performance, based on established clear criteria. Nevertheless, they exhibited limited planning skills regarding their ability to establish a connection among strategies, resources and time to attain particular tasks.

In the next paragraphs, I will present some plausible interpretations of these results as follows: First, I will focus on the aspects of young learners' metacognition that appeared to be favored or neglected by the way in which self-assessment was implemented. Secondly, I will discuss how the interaction between these aspects might help to clarify the

extent to which third graders could understand and regulate the development of their language ability. Finally, I will present some implications of the study as well as its limitations, and suggestions for further research.

The results indicate that, concerning understanding of the development of their language ability, learners in this study developed knowledge of the cognitive tasks proposed for self-assessment purposes in the English class. Similarly, they exhibited awareness of their cognitive skills, with lack of reference to how they learn or could learn better—their learning styles—. Regarding their capacity to regulate their language learning, the data analysis revealed that the participants developed evaluating and monitoring skills.

One possible explanation for this might be that the way in which self-assessment was implemented favored these aspects of learners' metacognition. For instance, it seems that the use of self-rating scales not only provided learners with clarity on task requirements, but with the criteria against which they could judge their performance. This might have contributed to enhance learners' awareness of the different demands of the tasks. Consequently, with this information in mind, learners were able to use the self-rating scales to monitor the extent to which their performance met those requirements. Once learners had rated their performance in the self-rating scales, it was possible for them to appraise the outcomes of their learning and make interpretations in a more accurate way.

These results are consistent with the work of Ross (2006) who states that “when properly implemented, [self-assessment] produces valid and reliable information about student achievement...” Following Ross's idea, McDonald (2007) expands on the

importance of providing students with unequivocal criteria when implementing self-assessment.

Before students can decide on acceptable standards and/or criteria for their work, they must use some reliable and valid forms of reference by which they could be confident that the standards and/or criteria they intend to use to make judgments about their whole corpus of work are "universally" acceptable as far as they exist within their locus of control. (p. 36)

Thus, it appears to be that the extent to which self-assessment criteria are clear to learners plays an important role in helping them to (1) identify tasks demands, (2) monitor their performance, and (3) make accurate judgments of their language learning.

Nevertheless, in relation to the latter, the data analysis revealed that some learners, who made accurate ratings and interpretations of their performance in the second task, had underestimated their performance in the first task. According to Kruger & Dunning (1999), cited in Anderson (2002), it is difficult for learners who are considered smart to recognize their own strengths. However, the authors claim that it is possible for these learners and those who overestimate their performance to learn how to self-assess more accurately. This might explain the slight difference between learners' rating of their performance in the first and second task (see table 1). They were more accurate in rating their performance in the second task because they were being guided by the teacher and the process of self-assessment was becoming more familiar to them.

As stated before, learners in this study exhibited ability to make quite accurate judgments of their performance based on established clear criteria. Furthermore, based on their ratings, they were able to write in their diaries some aspects of their language ability



that they needed to improve. This contradicts Hill's idea, cited in McDonald (2007), about the extent to which young learners can be responsible to assume the evaluation of their own work. According to the author, "while self-assessment may be taken seriously by older children there may be some difficulty in getting younger students to appreciate its worth" (McDonald, 2007, p. 35).

Other arguments that contradict the premise above are related to (1) third graders' awareness on the importance of honesty in judging their performance, and (2) the low level of discrepancy between their ratings and the teachers' found during the data analysis (as shown in table 1). The results suggest that third graders are to some extent aware of the impact of having honest judgments if they want to improve their performance. Almost all of the participants referred to honesty at any moment of self-assessment, through their journals or during the interview. Their views reflected a relationship between this value and the worth of self-assessment as a procedure for formative purposes. For instance, one of the participants expressed in her journal that she felt nervous during self-assessment because it was difficult for her to accept bad results. However, she admitted that being honest led her to the recognition of her mistakes and further correction and that, therefore, she could obtain better results in the future.

Now I will present possible explanations regarding the limitations found in this study concerning the development of some aspects of third graders' metacognition in EFL learning. Regarding third graders' understanding of cognition, the evidence suggests limitations in participants' strategic knowledge, and their self-knowledge regarding how they learn — their learning styles—. On the other hand, some limitations in their planning skills affected the extent to which they can regulate their cognition.

A plausible explanation for learners' limitations in their strategic knowledge might be that explicit reference to a set of general learning strategies and/or metacognitive strategies was missing in both self-assessment and instructional practices. In relation to learners' strategic knowledge, Schraw (1998) states that it is necessary to use instructional aides to improve metacognitive knowledge of strategy use. He suggests a strategy evaluation matrix which "includes information about how to use several strategies, the conditions under which these strategies are most useful, and a brief rationale for why one might wish to use them" (p. 119). On the other hand, Anderson (2002) suggests that

"To be effective, metacognitive instruction should explicitly teach students a variety of learning strategies and also when to use them... Teachers need to show them how to choose the strategy that has the best chance of success in a given situation." (p. 3)

It might be inferred that besides complementing the self-rating scales with aspects concerning strategy use the teacher should offer explicit instruction on language learning strategies, cognitive and metacognitive in nature. The lack of explicit reference to those strategies through instruction and the instruments used for self-assessment in this study might explain why learners' strategic knowledge was limited to some extent.

By the same token, the aforementioned lack of learners' knowledge about cognitive and metacognitive strategies could explain why participants showed limitations in establishing a specific plan for attaining future tasks. Since planning involves selecting appropriate strategies for task development (Schraw, 1998), it is expected that learners know them very well. If young learners' strategic knowledge is very limited their planning skills could be limited as well, since it would not be possible for them to select specific and appropriate strategies to develop a particular task.

Students who know about the different kinds of strategies for learning, thinking, and problem solving will be more likely to use them. After all, if students do not know of a strategy they will not be able to use it (Pintrich, 2002, p. 222).

There are still alternative explanations for this difficulty of learners to set specific plans to attain a task. They include (1) third graders' developmental stage and (2) the lack of explicit opportunities for them to establish their own goals within the proposed self-assessment process. Regarding the first explanation, Berieter & Scardamalia (1987, cited in Schraw, 1998) claim that "studies of skilled writers reveal that the ability to plan develops throughout childhood and adolescence, improving dramatically between the ages of 10 and 14" (p. 115). Therefore, since third graders are between 8-9 years old, one could expect them to have limitations in planning for their writing or oral tasks, for instance.

In relation to the second alternative explanation, there was not a space for learners to think of and set their particular learning goals before attaining each task. For instance, the learning goals contained in the self-rating scales were determined by the teacher, based on the school syllabus for EFL teaching, without the participation of students. This situation, along with learners' lack of strategic knowledge, might explain why learners' planning remained remarkably unspecific. According to Anderson (2002), allowing students to reflect on their own learning aims is as important as providing them with clear learning goals.

Teachers can promote this reflection by being explicit about the particular learning goals they have set for the class and guiding the students in setting their own learning goals.

The more clearly articulated the goal, the easier it will be for the learners to measure their progress. The teacher might set a goal for the students of mastering the

vocabulary from a particular chapter in the textbook. A student might set a goal for himself of being able to answer the comprehension questions at the end of the chapter (Anderson, 2002, p. 2).

Besides little ability to establish concrete plans for task development, the participants in this study exhibited limited self-knowledge regarding how they learn. Pintrich (2002) states that “regardless of their theoretical perspective, researchers agree that with development students become more aware of their own thinking as well as more knowledgeable about cognition in general.” (p. 219). However, the author suggests that for assessment purposes, it is necessary to provide learners with opportunities to reflect on their own cognitive strengths and weaknesses. This author claims that “as students have more opportunities to reflect on their own learning, they will develop more self-knowledge that can be helpful to them” (Pintrich, 2002, p. 224). It might be therefore inferred that the fact that third graders are still very young, plus the little time we had in this study to provide them with opportunities to reflect on how they learn, might be some of the reasons why their self-knowledge did not show to be very deep and precise. Nevertheless, teachers could start inquiring children on how they learn as part of their self-assessment, in the English class.

As in the case of strategic knowledge, learners’ self-knowledge of how they learn needs to be developed through the application of concrete models and providing them with tools to reflect about it. According to Larkin (2010), teachers need to encourage learners’ reflection “on what has been learned, on how it has been learned, on how deep one’s understanding goes, and on what future learning is necessary to progress” (p. 160). It is

important to remark that explicit reference to how individuals learn was missing in instruction as well as in the tools provided for learners' self-assessment in this study.

Different techniques might be useful for this purpose. For example, the incorporation of specific prompts in learners' journals, the use of questionnaires on learning styles or small group conferences. In sum, there were little opportunities for participants in this study to gain understanding of their cognitive characteristics through any of these suggested actions. It might explain to some extent why third graders exhibited limited self-knowledge of how they learn.

So far, I have developed the discussion by mainly referring to smaller units of two big categories of metacognition: understanding of cognition and regulation of learners' cognition related to the development of their language ability. Although, at any point of the discussion, I might have established a connection between units from the two categories, more is to be said on how these two big categories interact to explain the extent to which third graders understand and regulate the development of their language ability. The results suggest that some aspects of third graders' metacognitive knowledge —understanding of cognition— and regulatory processes seemed stronger than others. According to some studies, this could be explained by the existence of an interdependent relationship between these two components of metacognition: understanding of cognition and regulation of cognition (Schraw, 1998).

For instance, Pintrich (2002) remarks the connection between learners' self-knowledge and their ability to regulate the development of their language ability by stating that “students who lack knowledge of their own strengths and weaknesses will be less likely to adapt to different situations and regulate their own learning in them” (p. 223).

Similarly, Kraayenoord & Paris (1997), cited in Elder (2010), refer to the extent to which learners' self-knowledge can affect their regulation of cognition, specifically monitoring and planning skills. According to the authors, "students who are knowledgeable about their personal strengths and weaknesses and who understand the strategies that can enhance their performance may be better able to plan and monitor their work" (p. 10) It could be inferred that the extent to which learners' monitor and plan their task development depends to a large extent on their self-knowledge. Nevertheless, as previously stated in this section, there are other variables such as learners' strategic knowledge, and the existence of clear criteria that might affect the extent to which students are able to plan and monitor their work.

On the other hand, the results suggest that students made quite accurate judgments of their performance. Although they showed some limitations in their metacognitive knowledge, the participants exhibited ability to evaluate the products of their learning in their attempts to regulate it. According to Schraw et al. (2006), a possible explanation for this is that "metacognitive knowledge need not be explicit to be useful and, in fact, may be implicit in some situations". This suggests that learners could have relied on information about themselves, strategies or tasks which they made no explicit during the study, and which helped them in making accurate judgments of their work. Accordingly, it can be inferred that limitations in learners' metacognitive knowledge — understanding of cognition— not always suppose a disadvantage for students to regulate their learning.

This study provides evidence of third graders' ability to make honest and quite accurate judgments of their performance in the English class based on established criteria. Despite their age and some limitations in their metacognition, students might benefit from

well-planned self-assessment practices in the classroom. It seems that, with more time and experience, these young learners will be able to move forward. Regarding this position, Flavell (1979) states that “the quantity and quality of children's metacognitive knowledge and monitoring skills can be increased through systematic training” (p. 910).

However, this study has some limitations worth mentioning. The primary constraints relate to its small sample size and a reduced number of tasks for self-assessment purposes. These limitations might be explained by the reduced time for data collection. An earlier start in data collection would have increased the time needed to gather information from the whole class. Similarly, it would have allowed the time for learners to self-assess their performance in more than two tasks, and to interact with the researcher at different points in the study. It may be the case that more diversity from a larger sample and data would have benefitted the results.

## **Conclusions**

This study has taken a step in the direction of illuminating teachers who are interested in engaging elementary school learners in self-assessment procedures, in the English class. Knowing the extent to which children understand and regulate the development of their language ability provides the teacher with ideas about (1) the amount and quality of information expected from young learners in self-assessment situations, (2) the types of instruments that can be used for valid self-assessment procedures, and (3) the incorporation of children's self-assessment in making important decisions.

The current qualitative case study inquired about the extent to which third graders can understand and regulate the development of their language ability, by engaging in self-assessment in the English class. The results suggest that they can understand and regulate the development of their language ability to some extent, since some aspects of their metacognition are activated through the use of specific strategies and instruments in the implementation of self-assessment. They exhibited improvement of their knowledge of the cognitive tasks proposed for self-assessment purposes, as well as refinement of their monitoring and evaluating skills. Nevertheless, there was evidence of learners' lack of awareness or knowledge of some other metacognitive aspects involved in their capacity to understand and regulate the development of their language ability. Some limitations were found in the following components of their metacognition: strategic knowledge, self-knowledge and planning skills.

The analysis corroborated that, properly implemented, self-assessment is a useful assessment procedure to know the extent to which learners are achieving academic goals in the EFL class, even for the younger ones. Moreover, self-assessment outcomes provide



the teacher with important information to make changes in his practices. As an example, this study revealed that it is necessary to teach language learning strategies and assess students' use of them by designing appropriate tools for self-assessment purposes, even with elementary school learners. Similarly, it is recommendable to use those tools to provide young learners with (1) questions to reflect on how they can learn better, and (2) a space for them to establish their own learning goals. By enriching the self-assessment procedure with these strategies and by providing learners with more time and training it would be possible for them to reach a higher level of understanding and regulation of the development of their language ability, through self-assessment. Other implications of the current study are that (1) teachers need to have a deep knowledge of what they are going to teach and assess: the construct, (2) they need to select a procedure and any of the instruments suggested by the different authors, (3) use language that children can understand when presenting criteria and/or questions and, (4) if it is the case, teachers need to engage in professional development if they feel unable to design and implement well-planned self-assessment procedures.

Finally, more research is needed on how elementary school learners' motivation towards language learning, and their language proficiency level, can affect their capacity to understand and regulate the development of their language ability. Some instructors might underestimate children's abilities to self-assess based on the latter's cognitive or motivational conditions. Therefore, further research would focus on (1) the relationship between children's development of their language proficiency and their metacognition in the English class, and (2) the extent to which elementary school learners' motivation towards the English class could affect their self-assessment outcomes.

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## APPENDIX A

### CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

#### FORMATO DE CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO PARA PARTICIPAR EN INVESTIGACIÓN

**Título:** Autoevaluación de los aprendizajes en clase de inglés con estudiantes de escuela primaria.

**Investigadora principal:** Erika Marcela Restrepo Bolívar

#### Propósito de la investigación

Estoy invitando a su hija a hacer parte de un estudio de investigación para conocer más sobre las características de las reflexiones que ella puede generar, en el grado tercero, como parte su autoevaluación en la clase de inglés.

#### Procedimientos

Si acepta que su hija participe en este estudio permitirá que: yo observe y tome notas sobre cómo ella evalúa su propio trabajo en la clase de inglés; le realice algunas preguntas en una entrevista, junto a otras compañeras, sobre sus reflexiones durante la autoevaluación, entre otras preguntas relacionadas con el tema; y que yo acceda a la información consignada en su diario y la use para fines de la investigación.

#### Riesgos

La participación de su hija en este estudio **NO** pone en peligro su integridad física o emocional y **NO** tiene consecuencias negativas en su proceso académico o disciplinario.

#### Beneficios

Participando en este estudio su hija podría llegar a conocer mejor su propio proceso en la clase de inglés, y así descubrir cómo hacer que sea cada vez mejor.

#### Alternativas y participación voluntaria

Aunque usted apruebe la participación de su hija, es ella quien decide si desea o no desea participar. Si no desea hacerlo, no tendrá ningún problema y nadie se disgustará con ella o usted por ello. Si desea hacerlo y luego se presente alguna dificultad para continuar en la investigación, tampoco tendrá ninguna consecuencia negativa.

#### Confidencialidad

Toda la información que su hija aporte al estudio será utilizada sólo por mí, para el desarrollo de la pregunta de investigación de este estudio. Su nombre **NO** aparecerá en el reporte del estudio y una vez terminado, las grabaciones, diario de campo y otras evidencias de recolección de datos, empleados para este estudio, serán destruidos. Las personas que tendrán acceso al reporte final son ajenas a la institución y pertenecen al comité de maestría en enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras de la Universidad de Antioquia. Su objetivo es evaluar mi trabajo, **NO** el de los participantes.

#### Contacto

Puede hacer cualquier pregunta que tenga acerca del estudio al inicio, durante o al final del proceso dirigiéndose personalmente a mí o escribiéndome desde la página web de la institución.

#### Consentimiento

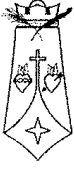
Al escribir mi nombre al final de este formato acepto que mi hija participe en este estudio. Recibiré una copia de este formato después de haberlo firmado.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Firma

\_\_\_\_\_  
Fecha

## APPENDIX B

### SELF-RATING SCALE SAMPLE

	<b>TERESIANO SCHOOL</b> <b>R.R. OF THE COMPANY OF ST. TERESA OF JESUS</b> <b>Envigado – Antioquia</b> <b>Self-rating scale 1 - English class</b>
<b>NAME:</b> _____	_____ <b>Class 3ºB</b>

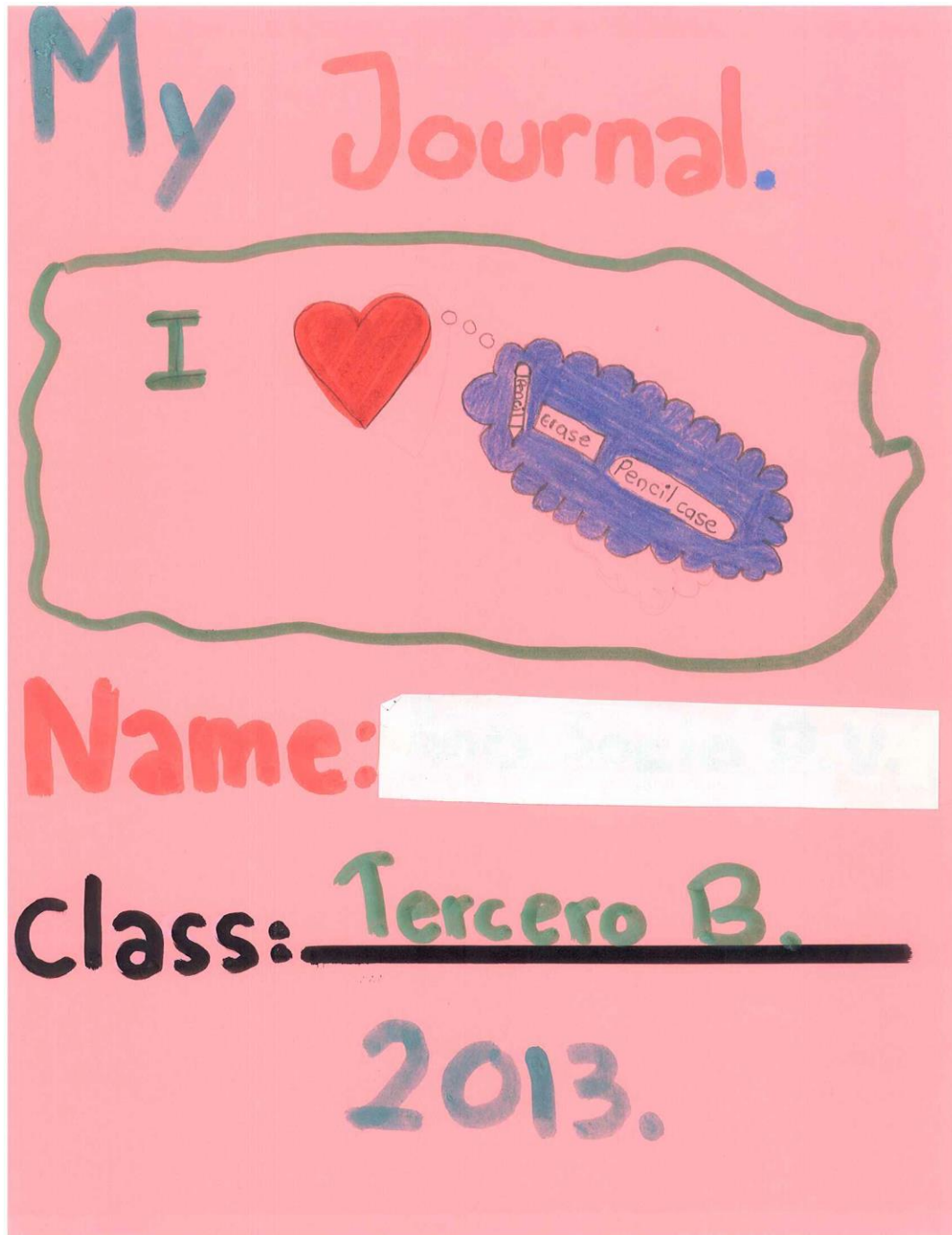
**Tarea:** Vas a disfrazarte y hablar en frente del grupo sobre tu profesión favorita. Debes incluir la siguiente información: el nombre de la profesión que representas y dónde trabajas, si debes usar un uniforme cuentas cómo es, algunas herramientas indispensables para realizar tu trabajo. Además, cómo es un día de tu rutina (a qué horas te levantas, qué haces antes de irte al trabajo, cómo llegas a tu trabajo, qué actividades realizas en tu trabajo, a qué horas terminas tu trabajo y a qué horas llegas a la casa). También debes decir lo que más te gusta de tu trabajo y lo que no te gusta.

**Instrucción para la autoevaluación:** Lee atentamente cada descriptor y al frente marca con una X debajo de la columna que corresponde a tus resultados.

Descriptor	Tengo que trabajar mucho más	Me aproximé	Lo hice bien pero puedo perfeccionarlo	Lo logré
Los siguientes descriptores expresan qué tan bien puedo hablar de una profesión, describir una rutina diaria y expresar mis gustos, según los contenidos estudiados en clase:				
Puedo nombrar en inglés pronombres personales, ocupaciones, objetos relacionados con ellas, actividades diarias y la hora.			✓	
Uso apropiadamente el verbo ser "am" en inglés.				✓
Ubico las palabras adecuadamente en una oración para que se entienda mi idea.			✓	
Empleo correctamente palabras de enlace como "and" y "later".			✓	
Puedo expresar mis ideas sin que mi pronunciación afecte el mensaje.		✓		

APPENDIX C

LEARNING JOURNAL SAMPLE



1 R/ Yo opino que es leer y analizar la pregunta, pensar la respuesta y verificarla. Esas son mis pasos si yo hago eso opino que gaño el trabajo o quiz.

2 R/ Pensar por que tube resultados, buenos, malos o regulares. Yo creo que me fue regularimis por que no se creo que me fue asi.

3 R/ Ami me parecia facil haber hecho la representacion bien por que el año pasado me aprendi un guion de 2 pag eso me ayudo, del quiz me ayudo escuchar la representacion de las demas y en general me ayudo estudiar y todo me parecia facil.

4 R/ Del tema nada, nada, pero nada por que la teacher explica muy bien y yo le entiendo muy bien.

5 R/ Ok yo en alguna otra actividad me voy a preparar estudiando, trayendo las tareas a tiempo y escuchando atentamente a la teacher.

6 R/ Estudiando, siendo creativa, expresando mis ideas y si no entiendo algo le pregunto a la teacher.

7 R/ En la representacion me senti muy segura porque yo me lo aprendi de memoria y sabia que me iba a ir bien y en el quiz un poco insegura porque no estude mucho.

8 R/ Me senti bien asiendo esta auto evaluacion por que me desadogue y fui muy honesta.



1 R/ Opino de mi autoevaluación, que fui muy honesta, sincera y y le puse mucha atención porque no quería ser desonesta.

2 R/ Cuando me autoevaluo pienso que debo ser honesta muy honesta y sincera por que me parece que cuando hay una auto-evaluación debo responder sinceramente y honestamente.

3 R/ Me parece muy facil llenar esa casilla porque estudiando puedes ganar una actividad o examen en cambio sino estudias puedes perder una actividad o examen por eso me parece muy facil.

4 R/ Me parece dificil y facil, facil por que se que le estoy poniendo el esfuerzo y amor necesario y dificil por que quiero hacer mi letra y dibujos lindos pero a veces siento que no lo hago bien o lindo.

5 R/ Opino de las actividades que han autoevaluado. Opino que es para que resconoscamos que hicimos bien o que hicimos mal, es una oportunidad para expresarnos bien por eso opino que esta bien.

6 R/ yo he hecho con esa información, con esa información estudio, hago las tareas y me ayuda a aprender más cada día.

7 R/ Si, si he descubierto algo. He descubierto que debo ser honesta y muy sincera en todas las autoevaluaciones

8 R/ Todas son muy parecidas por que hay que ser muy honesta y no desonesta.

9 R/ Si, claro que si. Por que hay que reflexionar y seguir intentando o seguir asi como voy.

10 R/ Para realizar mejores logros y llegar a la meta

1. R // Opino de mis resultados están buenos porque he trabajado mucho para que mis resultados fueran así y pienso que fueron buenos.

2. R // Creo que me fue así por que para cada trabajo, quiz, examen, etc mi mami como es tan buena en ingles me ayuda a fortalecer mi aprendizaje en el ingles.

3 R // Lo que me parecio facil fue el trabajo de la entrevista a algun familiar porque fue chevere porque te sientes como reportera y la profe nos enseña muy bien y si hay alguna duda que sea del tema nos la resuelve.

4 R // Me parecio un poco dificil la prueba objetiva porque sentí que no me prepare muy bien y casi no entendia pero me fue bien.

5 R // Me puedo preparar para otra actividad estudiando, si no comprendo alguna palabra busco en el diccionario y poniendo atención a mi profe y a mi mami.

6 // Puedo mantener mis resultados o mejorarlos, si tengo una duda le pregunto a la profe, aprendiendo de los libros y mejorar cada día más en el ingles.

6 R/ yo he hecho con esa información, con esa información estudio, hago las tareas y me ayuda a aprender más cada día.

7 R/ Si, si he descubierto algo. He descubierto que debo ser honesta y muy sincera en todas las autoevaluaciones

8 R/ Todas son muy parecidas por que hay que ser muy honesta y no desonesta.

9 R/ Si, claro que si. Por que hay que reflexionar y seguir intentando o seguir asi como voy.

10 R/ Para realizar mejores logros y llegar a la meta

7 R// Me sentí haciendo el párrafo muy bien relajada por que yo de los errores aprendo y si saque S fue por que me pre-pare bien pero si saque Bj es porque debo mejorar.

8 R// Me sentí bien por que yo me desahogo de lo que sentí, etc y soy honesta o mejor dicho debo ser honesta.

Profe sigue así de que si hay una duda tú la aclares y no debes mejorar nada.