Self-Regulated Learning in English Language Instruction at Colombian Universities: Teachers' Perspectives

El aprendizaje autorregulado en la enseñanza del idioma inglés en universidades colombianas: perspectivas de los profesores

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This article reports a descriptive, exploratory study on self-regulated learning in English teaching at eight Colombian universities. Using a mixed-methods approach that combined surveys and interviews, the study explored what Colombian university English instructors know about language teaching pedagogies that promote self-regulated learning and how their teaching practices impact its development. The findings indicate that while most instructors have a broad understanding of self-regulated learning, they are unaware of its specifics and do not explicitly promote it. However, they incorporate related aspects, such as learning strategies and motivation, into their teaching. We concluded that the promotion of self-regulated learning is unsystematic and overlooked as a learning need, with language mastery being the primary teaching focus. Educational alternatives are suggested to help English learners achieve self-regulated and successful learning.

Keywords: English language teachers, self-regulated learning, university education, university English teaching

Este es un artículo de investigación descriptiva y exploratoria de métodos mixtos sobre el aprendizaje autorregulado en la enseñanza del inglés en Colombia. Mediante encuestas y entrevistas, examinamos qué saben los docentes universitarios de inglés en Colombia sobre las pedagogías de enseñanza de idiomas que promueven el aprendizaje autorregulado y cómo su enseñanza influye en su desarrollo. Encontramos que, aunque la mayoría de los participantes tienen una comprensión general del aprendizaje autorregulado, desconocen sus especificidades y no lo promueven explícitamente; sin embargo, abordan aspectos relacionados, como las estrategias de aprendizaje y la motivación. Concluimos que la promoción del aprendizaje autorregulado es asistemática y no se considera una necesidad de aprendizaje, pues el enfoque se centra en el dominio del idioma. Sugerimos alternativas educativas para un aprendizaje autorregulado y exitoso.

Palabras clave: aprendizaje autorregulado, docentes de inglés, educación universitaria, enseñanza del inglés en la universidad

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Introduction

Self-regulated learning (SRL), which has been extensively studied since the 1980s (Panadero, 2017), is crucial for effective language learning, as it involves students' control and effort (Brown & Lee, 2015). It enhances learning effectiveness and equips students with lifelong learning skills (Nilson, 2013).

In foreign-language settings, a lack of SRL can hinder language development due to limited independent learning, particularly in contexts with reduced target-language interaction and class hours (Kormos & Csizér, 2014). Despite national programs aimed at improving education quality and English instruction (Departamento Administrativo de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación, 2016; Law 1651, 2013), Colombia's bilingual education faces these and other challenges, notably students' overdependence on teachers (Peña Dix, 2013).

Nilson (2013) emphasizes students' need for proficient learning skills to thrive academically, noting that many struggle to self-regulate emotions, motivations, and study behaviors. Nilson further argues that learners tend to place responsibility externally, remain passive in the classroom, lack self-discipline, and are distracted by unrelated social interactions or the use of technological devices. Academically, they often settle for minimal effort, exhibiting low commitment to learning goals.

Although Colombian English teachers may be unaware of SRL promotion (Noreña & Cano, 2020), this study explores the extent to which some might inadvertently practice and promote it. Many language-teaching practices inherently support SRL development. While previous research has been skeptical about teachers' conscious promotion of SRL, we anticipate incidental or secondary promotion through effective pedagogical practices.

Our study aimed to examine this phenomenon by asking English instructors at Colombian universities about their perceptions and implementation of SRL in their teaching. By investigating how instructors conceptualize and apply SRL, we seek to contribute to a broader understanding of the role of language education in SRL promotion and propose pedagogical alternatives that support successful and lifelong learning through SRL in the university classroom and beyond. These objectives also align with the national strategic focus on "Sociedad" (Society) within the framework of the *Colombia Científica* program, as our research contributes to national priorities aimed at strengthening higher education and promoting sustainable educational practices in Colombia.

Literature Review

Self-Regulated Learning

SRL encompasses the use and management of cognitive and metacognitive strategies for academic achievement (Nilson, 2013; Wolters & Benzon, 2013). Zimmerman (2002) defines it as "a self-directed process by which learners transform their mental abilities into academic skills" (p. 65). Self-regulated learners proactively manage their efforts, emotions, environment, and attitudes to attain their learning goals, guided by their awareness of their strengths and limitations, rather than relying solely on instruction (Pintrich, 2004).

In the digital age, technological distractions and social influences often hinder learners from achieving high-level learning (Gao, 2021; Nilson, 2013). Furthermore, learners are often not encouraged to exert control over their own learning (Zimmerman, 2002). However, Zimmerman claims that SRL is teachable and requires explicit instruction; its development empowers students to succeed academically (McDonough, 2001).

Self-Regulated Learning Strategies

SRL involves a variety of processes to achieve the expected learning outcomes. Thus, each learning activity is the result of the personal selection and adaptation of a series of steps without which learning can be

affected (Zimmerman, 2002). These steps include (a) setting specific learning goals, (b) adopting appropriate strategies for attaining those goals, (c) monitoring one's performance selectively for signs of progress, (d) restructuring one's physical and social context to make it compatible with one's goals, (e) managing time efficiently, (f) self-evaluating one's methods, (g) attributing causation to results, and (h) adapting future methods (Zimmerman, 2002, p. 66).

Building on Zimmerman's (2002) ideas, Zumbrunn et al. (2011) propose strategies to help students develop SRL and thus contribute to their academic success (Nilson, 2013).

Goal setting encourages learners to think about their learning motivations and plan their learning path (Boekaerts & Corno, 2005). To facilitate self-monitoring, short-term goals should be emphasized (Stock & Cervone, 1990). Early in the learning process, instructors may assign goals as students become proficient at setting their own. It is hoped that learners will become more committed to their goals, enhancing their sense of self-efficacy as a result of their performance, which in turn fosters their SRL (Schunk, 2001).

Planning requires learners to define objectives and select strategies, time, and resources to attain those objectives (Boekaerts & Corno, 2005; Schunk, 2001). Essentially, planning involves organizing the necessary steps to turn goals into actionable progress (Eilam & Aharon, 2003).

Self-motivation (or intrinsic motivation) is a key factor in learning success and engagement, as it encourages students to take initiative without external incentives, fostering autonomy (Brown & Lee, 2015). Research suggests that autonomy-supportive instruction enhances self-motivation (Lam et al., 2009), along with strategies such as proposing challenging tasks, making learning personally relevant, stimulating curiosity, recognizing students' efforts, and offering constructive feedback (Lam et al., 2009).

SRL is closely linked to *learning strategies* (Zhang, 2010), which help students become less teacher-dependent and more self-driven in their learning (Sills et al., 2009). As learners gain confidence in applying strategies, they develop autonomy and determination (Zumbrunn et al., 2011). Instructors can support strategic learning by helping students identify their preferred learning methods, model new strategies, and provide scaffolding to support independent learning (Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Zumbrunn et al., 2011).

Self-evaluation, an instance of formative assessment, helps students reflect on their progress and challenges (Olina & Sullivan, 2004; Ozogul & Sullivan, 2009). With instructor guidance, learners can align their self-evaluations with learning goals and adjust their strategies accordingly (Zimmerman, 2004). Since students may not always fully grasp their learning processes (Zimmerman, 2002), educators play a crucial role in helping them understand how self-evaluation, in conjunction with other SRL strategies, fosters academic success.

Self-Regulated Learning and Language Teaching

Contemporary language teaching prioritizes learner-centeredness and values learners as active learning agents (Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Xiao, 2014). Agency, a language teaching principle (Brown & Lee, 2015), enables proactive and independent learning (Xiao, 2014). It underpins motivation, self-regulation, self-efficacy, identity, and self-determination (Brown & Lee, 2015; Xiao, 2014). Instructors can cultivate agency by promoting decision-making, goal-setting, and reflective learning (Karlen et al., 2024). Additionally, autonomy-supportive environments, where students engage in self-directed and collaborative tasks, empower students to take ownership of their learning, foster long-term academic success (Karlen et al., 2020), and enhance students' SRL (Alvi & Gillies, 2020).

Effective second language pedagogy nurtures learner autonomy, which is crucial for fostering SRL (Kormos & Csizér, 2014). Autonomous language students actively control their learning, exhibit self-initiative, create learning opportunities, and organize, monitor, and evaluate their progress (Benson, 2013). Instructors can promote autonomy by providing choice in learning activities and facilitating reflection (Godwin-Jones, 2019). Additionally, authentic assessment methods, such as self-assessment and portfolio-based learning, empower students to take ownership of their learning, reinforcing SRL practices (Ismail et al., 2023). Research highlights that collaborative learning environments further enhance autonomy by allowing learners to engage in peer feedback and cooperative problem-solving, thereby strengthening their ability to regulate their learning independently (Oates, 2019).

Furthermore, successful language learners develop strategies to learn more effectively, which help them become more autonomous (Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Zhang, 2010). Kumaravadivelu (2003) suggests that students should be taught that learning is not a reactive, but a proactive process, and that their ability to control their learning can occur "only if they are trained to identify and use appropriate strategies" (p. 137). Instructors can model learning strategies (Oxford, 2016) and facilitate scaffolded instruction where students gradually take ownership of their strategy use and strengthen their ability to regulate their learning independently (Schunk & Greene, 2018).

SRL is also aligned with other learner-centered approaches, such as peer review, which allows learners to assess their progress while establishing contrast with their peers' perspectives (Teng, 2022); collaborative learning, as it activates engagement and shared responsibility (Schunk & Greene, 2018); and self-evaluation, which fosters critical thinking and self-reflection.

Finally, motivation should be regarded as a key starting point of SRL, academic success (Banyard et al., 2006), and language development (Dörnyei, 1994). SRL involves "three cyclical phases: forethought, performance, and self-reflection. In the forethought phase, learners engage in task analysis and self-motivation" (Zimmerman, 2002, p. 65). According to Dörnyei's motivation framework, self-motivation aligns with intrinsic motivation, which thrives under learning conditions that challenge and encourage self-determination (Deci & Rayan, 1985, as cited in Dörnyei, 1994). The teacher's role, materials, and course design and development influence intrinsic motivation (Dörnyei, 1994). Intrinsic motivation, in turn, enhances SRL engagement, which in turn improves learning awareness, self-satisfaction, perceived self-efficacy, learning success, and motivation (Zimmerman, 2008).

The Role of Technology in Self-Regulated Learning and Language Teaching

Studies have shown that technology in second language education can have both positive and negative effects. It has been used to teach, evaluate, interact, promote autonomous learning (Benson, 2013; Ene & Connor, 2014), and motivate students (Herrington & Kervin, 2007, as cited in Gao, 2021). However, while enhancing educational standards (Bal & Sanvas, 2021; Phillips, 1998), technology can reduce learners' awareness of autonomous learning, self-management, and planning. It can divert them toward online information unrelated to their learning (Gao, 2021), especially if course goals are not well-defined or integrated with technology (Levy, 2009). According to Phillips (1998), only after defining learning objectives and assessment criteria "can one determine how, where, and when technology can facilitate any part of the process" (p. 25), and its optimal use can be attained if teaching is "well-grounded pedagogically" (Ene & Connor, 2014, p. 112).

Self-Regulation in EFL Learning in Colombia

Research on SRL in EFL settings, including Colombia, highlights current learner challenges and suggests pedagogical applications to promote SRL. Peña Dix (2013) claims that instilling motivation and autonomy in the EFL classroom is a common concern among English language teachers in Colombia. Other studies show that preservice Colombian English teachers lack control, learning purposes, self-determination, and language learning planning (Zorro Rojas, 2019), and their educators perceive they lack SRL (Cuesta Medina et al., 2017).

These studies identify teacher dependence as a factor affecting language learning. According to Su (2018, as cited in Noreña & Cano, 2020), SRL instruction in Colombia is unsystematic, possibly because language instructors lack training, resources, or knowledge of SRL and how to teach it. Nevertheless, research shows that SRL can be developed through autonomy-supportive instruction (Niemiec & Muñoz, 2019) and dialogic sessions (Zorro Rojas, 2019).

While these findings offer valuable insights, further investigation is needed to determine how Colombian English instructors engage with SRL in their daily teaching practices. To address this, the present study explores instructors' perspectives and pedagogical applications related to SRL in university settings.

Study Goals and Research Questions

The literature review revealed key factors for language teaching and learning through SRL, as well as previous studies that have delved into this topic. However, there is still room to explore how EFL teachers' pedagogical practices relate to SRL. Thus, this study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. What do university English teachers know about language teaching pedagogies that promote self-regulated learning?

2. To what extent do university English teachers promote self-regulated learning?

In addressing these questions, we also aimed to propose pedagogical applications to promote SRL in English courses in Colombian universities.

Method

This study employed a mixed-methods, abductive design adhering to all ethical considerations and regulations required by the Institutional Review Board at Indiana University Indianapolis. Data were collected sequentially in a cross-sectional manner. An online survey and deep interviews served as the primary instruments, gathering quantitative and qualitative data, respectively.

The online survey (see Appendix A)—created using Qualtrics, a web-based survey software (https://www.qualtrics.com)—aimed to collect data on teachers' knowledge and use of SRL-supporting language teaching pedagogies. It began with a brief definition of SRL and included seven demographic, seven multiple-choice, and two yes-no questions. These questions addressed reported practices commonly occurring in language lessons that could implicitly or explicitly impact SRL development. Specifically, the teacher's role; teaching, assessment, and feedback practices; methods for promoting motivation; and the use of technology. The survey concluded with a Likert-type rating scale asking participants to indicate the frequency with which they promoted specific SRL processes.

The survey was conducted with 46 participants. However, due to partial completion, the number of respondents in subsequent sections varied slightly, resulting in a total of 42 participants completing the entire survey. Consequently, when the numerical data reported for a specific item differ from the full sample, this is indicated in the Findings section as a subsample ($n = xx$) to ensure accuracy in the presentation of results.

Complementing the survey data, in-depth interviews (see Appendix B) expanded on teachers' responses and explored additional facets of SRL knowledge and practice. These interviews, comprising eight open-ended questions, aimed to uncover nuanced perspectives on SRL, such as participants' individual definitions of SRL. Questions also delved into specific SRL practices, including how teachers fostered students' sense of self-efficacy and guided students to attribute causality to their learning outcomes. Furthermore, the interviews revisited pedagogical practices addressed in the survey to gain deeper insights into their implementation. The interviews, conducted individually online with 10 teachers, were recorded, transcribed, and encrypted. Both instruments were administered in Spanish, the participants' mother tongue, and subsequently translated into English.

Context and Participants

To ensure diverse representation, 26 public and private universities were initially contacted across various Colombian regions; however, only the mentioned eight provided complete information. English department directors facilitated the distribution of surveys among their faculty. A total of 46 university English instructors participated, with 10 of them being interviewed individually. Participants held diverse educational qualifications: bachelor's (17), master's (23), and doctoral degrees (6). There were 24 male participants and 22 female participants. They taught EFL in various academic programs. Participant universities are listed in Table 1.

Data Analysis

This mixed-methods study employed descriptive and statistical analysis for the quantitative data, and exploratory thematic analysis for the qualitative data. The qualitative component involved iterative stages of familiarization with the interview transcripts, initial open coding, and subsequent focus coding to identify recurring patterns and significant insights. These emergent patterns were then synthesized into overarching themes and subthemes. While the analysis broadly addressed the two central research questions (the participants' knowledge of SRL-promoting language pedagogies and the extent to which they foster SRL in their teaching), the findings yielded nuanced insights into the complexities of these areas.

Table 1. Participating Institutions and Total of Respondents (*N* = 46)

Name of the university	Total of respondents
Universidad de Pamplona	3
Universidad del Valle	11
Universidad del Tolima	2
Universidad de la Guajira	17
Universidad Popular del Cesar	7
Universidad de Caldas	3
Universidad Nacional de Colombia	1
Universidad Francisco de Paula Santander, Ocaña	2

The themes and their constituent subthemes are presented in detail in the discussion section, along with the quantitative findings, in which the data are correlated with one another, integrated with existing theory on SRL, and contextualized with previous research on SRL in Colombia.

Findings

The findings reflect university English teachers' self-reported knowledge and descriptions of their classroom practices. Analysis of these qualitative and quantitative data aimed to identify patterns and specific instances in which the reported practices intentionally or implicitly fostered SRL.

Teachers' Knowledge of Language Pedagogies That Promote SRL

While survey data indicated that approximately half of the respondents reported familiarity with SRL-fostering language-teaching pedagogies, interview findings revealed a more limited conceptual understanding: nine of the 10 interviewees reported unfamiliarity with the explicit processes involved. Their definitions of SRL remained general: five described it as proactive and independent learning, two as learning management strategies, and three acknowledged some familiarity with this construct.

Regarding language pedagogies potentially fostering SRL, survey data highlighted various approaches. The project-based learning (PBL) approach was the most frequently cited (36.3%), followed by task-based language teaching (22.7%), communicative language teaching (CLT; 18.1%), the audio-lingual method (13.6%), and other approaches (10%). Conversely, half of the participants indicated a lack of knowledge about SRL-related pedagogies. Interview data largely reinforced these trends, with some distinctions: four interviewees used CLT, three employed eclectic approaches, and the remaining three implemented alternative pedagogies, including PBL, constructivism, and structured planning.

Though instructors reported unfamiliarity with specific SRL processes, interview responses showed that eight participants linked their teaching to SRL facilitation. Predominantly, six participants described encouraging independent work through CLT, while one participant mentioned eclectic approaches, planning and organization, and PBL as strategies to foster student independence in learning activities. Additionally, two participants emphasized the role of CLT and PBL in learning management, and two provided unrelated responses.

Teaching Practices That Promote SRL

Findings indicate English teachers utilize diverse instructional practices that influence SRL. Regarding the teacher's role, survey results showed that 67% of respondents identified as facilitators, while 32.6% viewed themselves as controllers. Roles such as resource, administrator, and director were less frequently selected.

Interview responses revealed a varied distribution of teaching roles, with instructors often identifying with more than one. Of the 10 interviewees, four mentioned administrator; two, administrator and facilitator; two, facilitator; one, director; and one, guide and facilitator. These roles reflected diverse perspectives: Some instructors expressed teacher-centered views (e.g., "I support part of the traditional school" [Interviewee 9]), while others, such as those identifying as both facilitator and administrator, advocated for greater student independence: "Students do their tasks by their own means" (Interviewee 5). Similarly, facilitator/guide instructors underscored promoting learning ownership: "Even the evaluation rubrics are negotiated" (Interviewee 4).

Regarding assessment practices, survey data ($n = 44$) indicated that all respondents promoted self-

assessment of study methods. Specific strategies mentioned included providing grading rubrics (26%), implementing peer review (26%), focusing on language proficiency (17%), and employing alternative methods (6.5%). Interview data complemented this, revealing that educators often prioritized language use and task completion over explicit learner self-evaluation of study methods.

All 10 interviewees consistently prioritized clear instructions in their assessment practices, with two also incorporating grading rubrics. Assessment approaches balanced traditional and innovative methods: Five interviewees preferred traditional strategies, whereas the other five used innovative strategies such as mock tests ($n = 1$), self-assessment ($n = 2$), and peer-assessment ($n = 2$). These alternative methods, participants noted, effectively facilitated effort recognition, progress reflection, and identification of learning strengths.

Furthermore, survey results ($n = 44$) indicated that respondents employed diverse strategies to support learning after feedback. Thus, 38.6 % prompted students to redefine their study methods, 31.8% guided analysis of the causes of academic outcomes, and 20.4% focused on assessing the efficacy of study techniques. Conversely, 9% reported taking no further steps after feedback.

Interview data further contextualized these post-feedback approaches by revealing two key themes on facilitating reflection: addressing accuracy and task completion, and addressing learning behaviors. All interviewees reported assessing assignment accuracy based on instructions, helping students recognize strengths and limitations in language use. Additionally, two interviewees prompted reflection on students' attitudes toward learning and how these attitudes impact performance, often emphasizing areas for improvement. For instance, one interviewee cited procrastination as a barrier, while another underscored dedicating study time post-feedback. Participants generally agreed that such reflection positively impacted learning, despite individual variations.

Further interview insights detailed varied strategies for error correction and self-reflection in feedback delivery, categorized into three distinct themes. Direct and detailed error correction was used by seven respondents. General feedback (3) involved broad comments (e.g., "this is too general, try to express it more effectively," Interviewee 2). The third theme, affective filter in feedback (2), involved instructors addressing strengths before areas for improvement to positively influence self-perception and encourage thoughtful reflection: "I start with the positive aspects, meet with students individually, and tell them the aspects they should improve" (Interviewee 1).

In synthesis, both survey and interview data highlight varied post-feedback strategies: Some participants prioritize reflection on task accuracy, while others emphasize learning behaviors and self-reflection. Feedback delivery methods also range from direct error correction to more affective and reflective approaches, demonstrating diverse instructional practices.

In addition, instructors proactively fostered reflection at the beginning of language courses, not just after feedback. Data from the survey ($n = 43$) show that 81.3% of the respondents fostered learning reflection, 9.3% proposed independent learning and collaborative adaptation of course objectives, 7% addressed strategies for achieving high grades, and 2.3% discussed successful learner traits.

Survey data ($n = 44$) also indicated that educators employ various strategies to promote student motivation, including acknowledging students' strengths (54.5%), addressing learning needs (50%), guiding learners in setting English proficiency goals (31.8%), and incorporating students' cultural backgrounds (20.4%). A smaller proportion (9%) noted grades as a motivational factor.

Interview data provided further insights into motivation-related practices, notably revealing a gap concerning students' self-efficacy. Specifically, four interviewees acknowledged not having incorporated self-efficacy-promotion strategies. The remaining six described approaches related to student empowerment, clustering into four key themes: raising awareness on the importance of learning English (2), assisting learners in identifying their strengths and weaknesses (2), giving deep explanations for better performance (2), and being responsive to learning styles (1). However, a challenge was highlighted by Interviewee 3: "Students sometimes complain they would like to know how to learn but that they can't, and one is like 'I can't do more for him.'"

On the other hand, survey data (n = 43) revealed that 81.3% of respondents utilized technology in English instruction. However, 18.6% employed it without recognizing its potential to enhance SRL.

Interview responses provided deeper insights into technology's role. All interviewees reported using diverse technological tools, such as electronic devices, interactive platforms, virtual campuses, and web resources. Interviewees commonly described how technology promotes SRL, including reducing teacher dependence, fostering new learning strategies, and increasing motivation. For instance, three interviewees cited virtual campuses as promoting learner autonomy and SRL (e.g., Interviewee 7 noted open access to materials fostering independent progress). Additionally, four interviewees suggested that technology facilitated students' learning appropriation, and another four acknowledged its motivational impact, stimulating engagement. As Interviewee 10 noted, "students can even say something, record, and verify," enhancing understanding and progress. Despite the recognized benefits of technology, seven interviewees acknowledged its potential drawbacks for SRL development, emphasizing that technology's impact largely depends on learners' effective management of digital resources.

Finally, Table 2 presents survey responses on instructors' views of SRL-enhancing practices, indicating that they all appear to engage students in goal setting, planning, monitoring, self-assessment, and reflection—albeit with notable variation in how frequently these strategies are implemented.

Table 2. Frequency of SRL Practices in English Teaching in Colombian Universities

Teachers strive to make students…	Always	Most of the time	Often	Sometimes	Never
set specific proximal goals for themselves	5	12	17	4	0
set strategies that are directly related to language learning to attain the learning goals	7	19	14	2	0
plan strategies that are indirectly related to language learning but that facilitate its development (metacognition, affective, social, time management, etc.) for attaining the learning goals	2	12	22	3	0
monitor their learning process for signs of progress	4	17	11	11	0
self-evaluate their learning process	8	11	10	9	0
self-reflect on their learning performance (attribute causation to results)	10	10	13	8	0
make future learning plans based on the learning outcomes (adapting future methods)	5	13	10	11	0

Discussion

English Teachers' Knowledge of SRL-Promoting Pedagogies in Language Instruction

While the literature emphasizes various SRL-promoting strategies in language teaching, survey responses indicated that approximately 50% of instructors reported familiarity with SRL-supportive pedagogies such as PBL, task-based language teaching, and CLT. These learner-centered approaches foster active engagement and strategic language use through contextual, independent tasks (Stoller, 2006, as cited in Mikulec & Miller, 2011). However, interview data revealed that, despite this reported familiarity with the pedagogies themselves, instructors exhibited a limited conceptual understanding of SRL and its underlying processes, suggesting a gap in knowing *how* to effectively leverage these methods for SRL development.

Although Noreña and Cano's (2020) claim that Colombian language instructors may overlook effective SRL promotion aligns with our findings, this study also reveals that many instructors demonstrate initial awareness of how specific language-teaching pedagogies can foster SRL, including learning strategies and learning investment.

English Teachers' Promotion of SRL in Colombian Universities

Consistent with Zimmerman's (2002) SRL framework on proximal goal setting, survey findings indicated that instructors assist students in defining task goals. However, interview data suggested that clear instructions and grading rubrics—while enhancing understanding of the assignment (Andrade, 2005; Sowell, 2017) and reducing procrastination (Nilson, 2013)—may not, on their own, lead students to define their own learning objectives.

A critical gap also emerged concerning explicit guidance in comprehensive learning plans. While survey responses highlighted instructor guidance in various strategies (language-related, metacognitive, affective, social), interviews revealed that instructors do not incorporate strategy planning as a pre-assignment stage. This omission may contribute to learners abandoning tasks, cheating, procrastinating (Nilson, 2013), or failing to meet learning goals (Kormos & Csizér, 2014; Zhang, 2010).

Although some instructors guide students in monitoring progress through peer-assessment, self-assessment, and mock tests, survey and interview data indicate limited adoption. While peer- and self-assessment help instructors foster understanding of strengths, weaknesses, process, and product (Herman et al., 1992; Huerta-Macías, 1995), and mock tests help assess readiness,[1] instructors often target these tools toward language performance without exploring the underlying cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, or contextual factors that influence students' learning progress or lack thereof.

Besides, evidence shows a lack of substantial support to guide students strategically in adapting their environment to achieve learning goals, even though some instructors facilitate independent learning reflection. We found that strategies indirectly related to language skill development receive minimal emphasis despite being integral to SRL. For example, social and metacognitive strategies help learners consider whether others should be part of their learning and plan and assess their learning to achieve greater control (Oxford & Crookall, 1989), strategies that are often not addressed in the classroom.

Data also showed divergent views on engaging learners in self-evaluating their study methods. The survey revealed that about 64% of instructors engage learners in this process, while interview data consistently emphasized language use and task completion.

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1 For instance, Cambridge's *Mock Test Toolkit for Teachers* (https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/teaching-english/resources-for-teachers/mock-test-toolkit/)

According to Purpura (2016), L2 assessment records "are used as evidence for making decisions" (p. 191), which in SRL are targeted at identifying and improving study procedures (Hadwin et al., 2022). An exclusive focus on language mastery and task accomplishment may hinder learners' acquisition of "tacit knowledge," which is not commonly part of classroom discourse and can only be obtained through "discussion, reflection, and experience" (Voogt & Kasurien, 2005, as cited in Clark, 2012). Only two interviewees engaged in such discussions, guiding learners to attribute causality to outcomes beyond performance. Yet, instructors predominantly focused on negative factors, rarely acknowledging reasons for learning success. Recognizing success factors could significantly enhance learners' self-efficacy and motivation (Schunk, 2001; Wolters & Benzon, 2013), which SRL does emphasize (Zimmerman, 2002).

In addition, even though some instructors guide reflection on time management and other strategies, many conclude after evaluation and feedback. This limits students' ability to adapt future study methods and improve performance, thus rendering self-assessment ineffective (Andrade, 2019). Despite assuming learner-centered roles, instructors maintain control over evaluation and assessment. In Colombia, where students often rely on teachers (Peña Dix, 2013), redefining instructional roles is crucial. It is essential to challenge assumptions, even when instructors believe they cannot do more to help learners succeed, as Interviewee 3 claimed. From an SRL perspective, continuous improvement remains essential for both instructors and learners, and strategic learner training can empower language instructors to foster student success (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

While instructors do not exclusively emphasize SRL, findings indicate they promote many related aspects. Survey data highlight diverse motivational strategies, including acknowledging strengths, addressing learning needs and cultural backgrounds,

cultivating intrinsic motivation, engaging learners in group/independent work, and utilizing interactive technology. Instructors also bolster self-efficacy by teaching language learning strategies and, during evaluations, by addressing areas for improvement while recognizing progress, thereby reinforcing learners' confidence. Nurturing these elements contributes to progress, heightened motivation, self-satisfaction, and improved performance (Schunk, 2001; Zimmerman, 2008).

Conclusions

The findings confirm the absence of standardized teaching to promote SRL in English instruction in Colombia, as suggested by Noreña and Cano (2020), particularly at the university level. While some instructors inadvertently address some SRL-related aspects, they appear to overlook SRL as crucial for the potential learning success of university English students. Despite suggestions that university students struggle with SRL (Cuesta Medina et al., 2017), the lack of systematic SRL teaching hinders instructors from recognizing that this is, in fact, a learning need.

Also, assessment and feedback primarily focus on language use and task completion. However, successful SRL language learning requires critical aspects beyond language mastery. Instructors can enhance English competence by expanding their evaluation scope. Encouraging students to plan, monitor, self-assess, and adapt their study methods and contextual conditions improves performance and helps develop the soft skills necessary not only for English but also for lifelong learning.

Instructors acknowledge that some language teaching approaches facilitate SRL. However, their broad view of it suggests a need for a deeper understanding to consistently develop SRL in language teaching.

Focusing on SRL promotion in university English programs will not solve all learning challenges, but it

can significantly impact students' outcomes. By fostering SRL, instructors can mitigate low achievements and help improve Colombia's English proficiency, which remains consistently low in the *EF English Proficiency Index* (https://www.ef.com/wwen/epi/). This persistent issue (Rairan, 2024) highlights the need for continued efforts to enhance language education in the country.

Recommendations

Despite evidence of SRL's positive impact, research indicates that Colombian university students, particularly in English courses, often lack SRL (Cuesta Medina et al., 2017). This gap suggests a need for early intervention. Pre-academic programs focused on SRL and language learning strategies could equip students with tools to achieve success in English development.

In addition, teachers can incorporate student journals and portfolios to facilitate SRL. Journals help students keep track of and reflect on their progress and strategies, fostering self-awareness and adaptability (Cox, 2022). Portfolios, on the other hand, serve as performance records, enabling critical self-analysis (Padilla et al., 1996).

Furthermore, instructors diligently strive to enhance student motivation. Targeting this motivation toward purposeful language learning is crucial. Instructors should help learners connect their English studies to specific goals, whether for future careers, cultural enrichment, or personal enjoyment. This facilitates learning engagement and achievement (Zimmerman, 2002).

To address instructors' unfamiliarity with SRL, universities can facilitate communities of practice and professional development programs to explore SRL and other effective pedagogies that support successful learning.

Lastly, transitioning to learner-centered roles is crucial. Reducing instructor control enhances students' engagement and supports them in becoming proactive participants in their English language education.

Limitations and Further Research

Colombia's socio-political challenges indirectly impacted this study. Frequent academic stoppages due to social protests disrupted data collection, and subsequent schedule adjustments at universities made it difficult to contact some instructors.

Additionally, the study relies on indirect evidence of instructional practices, focusing on teachers' perceptions rather than observing their actual practices, and it does not integrate students' perspectives. While student input would have provided deeper insights into SRL implementation, logistical constraints limited direct student involvement. The combination of social unrest in Colombia, challenges in accessing university students, and geographic barriers (as the study was developed while the main researcher was in the USA) further restricted participant outreach.

Although the small sample size limits generalizability, the findings offer valuable insights into SRL from the educators' standpoint, contributing meaningfully to the language teaching field and providing a basis for further exploration.

Future studies could benefit from alternative research methods that provide a more comprehensive perspective on SRL in language instruction. A more ethnographic approach, including classroom observations and teacher-student interviews, could offer deeper insights into how SRL strategies are implemented and perceived by different stakeholders. Furthermore, integrating student surveys and focus groups would strengthen the practical applications of SRL research, ensuring that findings reflect both teachers' and learners' experiences.

Further research into the relationship between language instruction and SRL is essential for identifying effective teaching, evaluation, and feedback strategies that foster SRL. Additionally, understanding the external factors that contribute to the absence of SRL among Colombian students and exploring feasible interven-

tions to address these challenges remain important areas of investigation.

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Acknowledgments

Appendix A: Survey

Self-regulated learning (SRL) is the ability to exercise control over one's learning processes. Self-regulated learners are proactive and do not passively rely on teaching alone. They exhibit high motivation, autonomy, and actively generate their own thoughts, emotions, and attitudes to achieve their learning goals. This proactive approach contributes to their academic success (Zimmerman, 2002).

Questions[2]

1. Do you know of any language teaching methods (e.g., audio-lingual method), approaches (e.g., project-based approach), principles (e.g., agency, identity), and/or strategies (e.g., facilitation of negotiated interaction) that help to develop SRL?
   - Yes. Which ones? _____
   - I know about them, but I cannot use them because: _____
   - I do not know about them.

2. Your role as a teacher in your English course is best described as: (Select up to two answers.)
   - Controller: You are in control during all stages of your classes.
   - Director: You direct each stage of learning so that the process flows efficiently and smoothly.
   - Administrator: While you monitor progress towards course goals, you also give students the freedom to develop specific areas of their experience.
   - Facilitator: You allow your students, with your help, to find their own path to successful language learning.
   - Resource: You exercise some control but are mostly available as a counselor and advisor when students seek your help.
   - Other. Explain: _____

3. How often do you develop the following teaching practices?

	Never	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost always	Always
Give ample opportunities to practice with your support					
Develop authentic activities					
Promote the use of the English language in all stages of your English classes					
Promote collaborative learning					

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2 The survey was administered in Spanish. It has been translated for publication purposes.

4. Which of the following best describes your assessment practices (formal or informal) in your English teaching? (Prioritize up to two responses based on the frequency of these practices in your teaching.)
   - I always give my students an assessment rubric.
   - I use the assessment exclusively to test language proficiency.
   - In addition to examining language proficiency, I use assessment procedures to promote self-assessment of students' study methods.
   - I do peer assessment to promote another way of learning.
   - None of the above.
   - Other. Explain: _____

5. Which of the following activities do you do most often after giving feedback? (Select only one answer.)
   - Guide your students to self-assess the effectiveness of the study strategies they used.
   - Guide your students to attribute causality to learning successes and errors.
   - Guide your students to make their own decisions about their study methods to enhance their future learning.
   - None of the above.
   - Other. Explain: _____

6. How do you promote motivation in your English learners? (Prioritize up to two responses based on the frequency of these practices in your teaching.)
   - I make positive comments about students' strengths.
   - I take into account my students' learning needs.
   - I take into account my students' cultural background.
   - I help my students to determine a goal to learn English if they do not already have one.
   - Grades are a reward that motivates students.
   - None of the above.
   - Other. Explain: _____

7. Which aspect that helps promote SRL do you emphasize the most at the beginning of your English course(s)? (Select one answer.)
   - I explain the characteristics of a good student of English.
   - I explain how to achieve high scores.
   - I teach my students how to reflect on their learning process.
   - None of the above.
   - Other. Explain: _____

8. Do you use technology (e.g., applications, programs, devices) to promote SRL processes in English teaching?
   - Yes, I use technology to promote self-regulated learning processes. Explain which ones: _____
     _____

- No, I think technology inhibits students from developing SRL behaviors.
- I do use it, but I do not know how to use technology to promote SRL.

9. How often do you help your students in the following learning processes?

	Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Frequently	Most of the time	Always
Set specific proximal goals for themselves						
Set strategies directly related to language learning						
Set strategies indirectly related to language learning but that favor its development (i.e., metacognitive, affective, social)						
Develop their own study plan						
Monitor their own study process						
Self-evaluate their study process						
Self-reflect on their English learning performance						
Make future learning plans based on their outcomes						

10. Are you willing to participate in a brief interview in the next stage of data collection in this study? If so, please provide your contact information.

Appendix B: Interview

1. How do you define self-regulated learning (SRL)?[3]
2. How do the methods, principles, strategies, and/or approaches that you know and/or use in your teaching practice help promote SRL?
   - In what ways do you help your students be self-regulated learners?
   - What activities, materials, and/or strategies do you use to promote SRL?
3. Do you develop any specific strategy to promote students' perceived self-efficacy? If so, how do you do that?
4. How does evaluation (formal and informal) normally take place in your classes?
5. How do you normally give feedback to your students?
6. How do you help your students attribute causality to their learning successes and failures?
7. How does your use of technology in English teaching influence students' SRL?

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3 The interview was conducted in Spanish. The protocol has been translated for publication purposes.