Estrategias de Aprendizaje Autónomo del Inglés como L2 de los Cursos de Inglés Pre-Intermedio en la UGC y la ESIDE

Strategies for Autonomous Learning of English as L2 of Pre-Intermediate English Courses at UGC and ESIDE

Estratégias de Aprendizagem Autónoma de Inglês como L2 dos Cursos de Inglês Pré-Intermediário da UGC e da ESIDE

**Yury Andrea Yepes Landinez[a,*] Johanna Alexandra Barragán Arias[b], Óscar Fabián Pulido Rodríguez[c] [a]**

yury.yepes@ugc.edu.co. Universidad La Gran Colombia. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4022-2383
[b] johanna.barragan@ugc.edu.co. Universidad La Gran Colombia. https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7266-535X
[c] oscar.pulido@ugc.edu.co. Universidad La Gran Colombia. https://orcid.org/0009-0004-3624-4979

**Resumen**

Esta investigación sobre el aprendizaje autónomo del inglés como segunda lengua (L2), se llevó a cabo en conjunto con los estudiantes de Inglés Pre-Intermedio de la Universidad La Gran Colombia (UGC) y la Escuela de Idiomas y Dialectos del Ejército Nacional (ESIDE). El objetivo principal fue implementar las estrategias de aprendizaje autónomo del inglés como L2 en la muestra de la población. Inicialmente, se realizó una revisión de antecedentes relacionados con las bases teóricas, para lo cual se establecieron las siguientes categorías de análisis: Aprendizaje Autónomo, Competencias y Habilidades, Metacognición y Nuevas Tecnologías del inglés. La metodología utilizada fue mixta con preponderancia cuantitativa bajo un diseño cuasiexperimental, y se trabajó con una muestra probabilística intencional. Todo lo anterior se llevó a cabo mediante la implementación de instrumentos como un pre-test de nivel de competencia, un cuestionario semiestructurado y un post-test, que permitieron contrastar y analizar los hallazgos. Finalmente, los resultados demuestran que más de la mitad de la población obtuvo una mejora académica gracias a la implementación de 27 estrategias para el aprendizaje autónomo del inglés. Asimismo, se evidenció la adopción de una cultura autónoma en sus vidas académicas y profesionales.

*Palabras clave:* aprendizaje autónomo, inglés como L2, competencias comunicativas, estrategias de aprendizaje

*Yury Yepes, Johanna Barragán, Óscar Pulido*

**Abstract**

This research on the autonomous learning of English as a second language (L2) was carried out in conjunction with pre-intermediate English students from La Gran Colombia University (UGC) and the School of Languages and Dialects of the National Army (ESIDE). The main objective was to implement the autonomous learning strategies of English as a L2 in the population sample. Initially, a review of background information related to the theoretical bases was carried out, for which the following categories of analysis were established: Autonomous Learning, Competencies and Abilities, Metacognition and New Technologies of English. The methodology used was mixed with a quantitative predominance under a quasi-experimental design, and we worked with an intentional probabilistic sample. All of the above was carried out through the implementation of instruments such as a competency level pre-test, a semi-structured questionnaire and a post-test, which allowed the results to be contrasted and analyzed. Finally, the results show that more than half of the population obtained academic improvement thanks to the implementation of 27 strategies for autonomous learning of English. Likewise, the adoption of an autonomous culture in their academic and professional lives is evident.

*Keywords:* autonomous learning, English as L2, communication skills, learning strategies

**Resumo**

Esta pesquisa sobre a aprendizagem autônoma do inglês como segunda língua (L2) foi realizada em conjunto com estudantes de inglês pré-intermediário da Universidade La Gran Colombia (UGC) e da Escola de Línguas e Dialetos do Exército Nacional (ESIDE). O objetivo principal foi implementar as estratégias de aprendizagem autônomo do inglês como L2 na amostra populacional. Inicialmente foi realizada uma revisão de informações básicas relacionadas às bases teóricas, para as quais foram estabelecidas as seguintes categorias de análise: Aprendizagem Autônoma, Competências e Habilidades, Metacognição e Novas Tecnologias do Inglês. A metodologia utilizada foi mista com predominância quantitativa sob um desenho quase-experimental, e trabalhou-se com uma amostra probabilística intencional. Tudo isso foi realizado através da implementação de instrumentos como um pré-teste de nível de competência, um questionário semiestruturado e um pós-teste, que permitiram contrastar e analisar os resultados. Por fim, os resultados mostram que mais de metade da população obteve uma melhoria académica graças à implementação de 27 estratégias de aprendizagem autónoma de inglês. Da mesma forma, é evidente a adoção de uma cultura autônoma na vida acadêmica e profissional.

*Palavras-chave:* aprendizagem autônoma, inglês como L2, habilidades de comunicação, estratégias de aprendizagem

## Introduction

The use of a L2, specifically English, is highly significant in the academic world and has become a national and international requirement for most professional careers. For this reason, the students of Education Sciences at UGC, who will be future teachers, and the students of ESIDE, who oversee ensuring the safety of the communities because they are officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates of the National Army of Colombia, must be trained in the use of English for their professional lives. However, it has been revealed that once students advance in their professional career, they do not have the level of communication skills necessary to obtain the expected level in the L2. All this can be explained by acknowledging that language is learned and applied in the classroom, but outside of it, sufficient practice of the language is not being generated, which could cause difficulties in English proficiency.

In the first place, within the work carried out between teachers and students, feedback is generated at the end of each academic term of the semester, during which students have stated and they have demonstrated along the academic process that they do not know how to practice English autonomously without being assigned activities or work by the teachers. In addition, students show concern because they realize that the level of their communication skills is not the most appropriate because they do not feel completely confident in themselves at the time of speaking, reading, writing, or listening, and they want to improve it significantly by practicing activities in their day-to-day life. The foregoing is evidenced by the unsatisfactory results of the proficiency level tests, the feedback provided with the teachers and the academic process of the pre-intermediate English course at the beginning of the academic semester at UGC and ESIDE.

As another fundamental aspect for this research, it is essential to highlight the construction and execution of autonomy in the students of the mentioned professional careers, with the aim of finishing their professional career and having the strategies and knowledge that will allow them to practice the L2 to the point of becoming an essential part of their lives, without need to see the practice of the language as a task or a job assigned by a teacher.

According to the proficiency pre-test results and the gaps evident in the academic process, the following research question was established: What are the autonomous learning strategies for students of English as L2 of the pre-intermediate English courses at UGC and ESIDE? The research proposes as a general objective to implement autonomous learning strategies for English students as L2 of the pre-intermediate English courses at UGC and ESIDE. For this, it is necessary, first, to identify the initial English proficiency level of the students and specify the practices and factors that affect the development of the students' autonomous learning in English. In this sense, the autonomous learning strategies for English students can be consolidated as L2 and demonstrate the results of the implementation of the autonomous English learning strategies in the students.

## Theoretical Discussion

### English as L2 in a Globalized World

In a globalized world, with technological, social, and cultural transformations, it is indisputable that mastering more than one language is necessary since the ability to be bilingual is becoming a required competence. The learning of a L2, specifically, English, is one of the challenges of current education since the competitiveness of future professionals must be guaranteed for the development of the country. From the National Bilingualism Program, the government is committed to creating the conditions to develop communication skills in English and has provided different tools aimed at achieving this objective; Krashen argues that individuals are more likely to acquire a second language effectively if they are exposed to meaningful and understandable input in that language. He suggests that being immersed in a bilingual environment, where both the first and second languages are used and valued, can support language acquisition more effectively than traditional language learning methods (Krashen, 1987). For that reason, strategies for autonomous learning are useful and updated in these cases because students have an active role in different contexts.

English as a L2 is crucial in today's globalized world. It is the L2 after Mandarin, and learning it opens new doors and creates opportunities for people from all walks of life. The Colombian government has recognized the importance of English proficiency and has implemented policies to promote bilingualism in the education system. Employers in various sectors are increasingly seeking candidates with bilingual skills, especially in industries like technology, finance, and customer service. While specific statistics may not be available, a survey conducted by the Colombian Association of Bilingual Schools (ASOCOLEN) in 2016 revealed that around 7 out of 10 employers in the country believed that English proficiency was an asset for their employees. Furthermore, the demand for bilingual employees has been on the rise in recent years, indicating the importance of English language skills for employers in the Colombian job market (Ministerio de Educación Nacional [MEN], 2006).

It is advisable to refer to official reports, surveys, or contact Colombian government or business authorities to obtain the most up to date and accurate statistics on this topic. In UGC learning English can also facilitate the acquisition of other languages such as: French, Portuguese, and Spanish. As a result, many students from institutions such as UGC and ESIDE often struggle with daily academic activities in class due to various reasons. One common challenge is the difficulty of grasping new concepts or understanding complex subject matter. This can lead to a lack of engagement and participation during class discussions and activities.

Another obstacle is the language barrier. For non-native English speakers, comprehending and expressing ideas in English can be challenging. Many students may feel self-conscious or lack confidence in their language abilities, which hinders their ability to actively participate in class.

Furthermore, the pressure to perform well academically can be overwhelming for some students. They can lead to stress and anxiety when they want to learn another language. This can further impede their communication skills as they may be too preoccupied with the fear of making mistakes or failing.

The lack of communication skills acquired in the classroom can also hinder students' ability to keep up with activities in English outside the classroom, particularly in their professional lives. As officers and non-commissioned officers, effective communication is paramount to their roles and responsibilities. Without strong communication skills, they may struggle to convey information clearly, understand instructions, or collaborate effectively with colleagues and superiors.

Moreover, professional activities often require specialized vocabulary and language used in specific contexts. If students have not developed the necessary language skills in the classroom, they may find it challenging to understand and engage in discussions related to their professional fields.

To mitigate these challenges, it is essential for educators to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment. Teachers can employ various autonomous strategies such as encouraging participation, providing additional resources or support, and creating opportunities for practice and feedback. Additionally, incorporating real world examples and activities relevant to students' professional lives can enhance their motivation and engagement. It is also crucial for students to actively seek opportunities to practice English outside the classroom. Engaging in conversations with native English speakers, watching English movies or TV shows, or even participating in language exchange programs can help improve their communication skills and bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world applications.

Overall, addressing the struggles students face in daily academic activities and improving their communication skills can significantly impact their ability to excel in their professional activities as officers and non-commissioned officers. By equipping them with effective language skills, educators can empower these professionals to confidently navigate their careers and contribute meaningfully to their fields.

**Autonomous Learning of English as L2**

According to Holec (1981) autonomy is defined as the ability to take charge of one's own learning. It is for this reason that self-direction and self-regulation enable more independent action and leadership by students. According to Hardy-Gould (2013) autonomy is present both in what is learned and in the way it is unlearned, internalizing concepts such as self-direction and self-regulation. This leads us to make a difference with heteronomy, especially when it comes to developing foreign language skills that are involved in learning and identifying the cognitive and affective aspects of the student that interact with other variables such as the social environment and individual variables (school environment, teachers, didactic material) (MEN, 2006).

Vygotsky (as cited in Rueda and Wilburn, 2014) was quoted, mentions that when the student has perfected their original language throughout life, this will help them to easily learn a new language, also if the languages have affective social and cultural ties, students are able to build their own learning considering their context and experience. According to Vygotsky, the learning process comes from the relationship between thought and language that occurs throughout the evolutionary process, through of the interaction with the environment, in this case practicing and working with the different strategies of autonomous learning to learn English becomes the means for the development of learning skills in English, since it allows an interrelation between discipline and autonomy in language learning refers to a learner's ability to take control of their own learning process and make independent decisions. It involves the learner being able to set their own goals, choose their own materials, and evaluate their own progress. Besides, self-regulated learning is a specific approach within autonomy in language learning. It focuses on the learner's ability to monitor and control their own learning process. This includes setting learning goals, planning strategies to achieve those goals, monitoring progress, and reflecting on learning outcomes (Benson, 2001). Learning strategies are the specific techniques and methods that learners use to enhance their learning. These strategies can be categorized into various groups, such as cognitive strategies (e.g., organizing information, summarizing), metacognitive strategies (e.g., setting goals, monitoring progress), and social/affective strategies (e.g., seeking help, managing emotions) (Benson, 1997).

Within the field of language learning, self-regulated learning and the use of learning strategies are considered important for successful language acquisition. Learners who are autonomous and actively engage in self-regulated learning are more likely to achieve their language learning goals and develop proficiency in the target language.

Overall, autonomy in language learning is a broader concept that encompasses self-regulated learning and the use of learning strategies. It emphasizes the learner's active role in the learning process and their ability to make decisions and take responsibility for their own learning.

**Communicative Skills Theories**

Learning a L2 can be challenging, but with the right approach and the right skills, it can be a very rewarding endeavor. Below are some competencies and skills that can help students learn English as a L2: Learning L2 requires time and effort, so it is important to be motivated and committed to the learning process, listening skills must be active and attentive to understand the language since pronunciation, rhythm and intonation are fundamental to learning the language, reading is an important component of learning English. Students must practice reading comprehension to improve their vocabulary, grammar, and general understanding of the language.

On the other hand, speaking practice is crucial to improve fluency and pronunciation. Students can improve their oral communication by interacting with native speakers or with other L2 learners. Grammar is a fundamental pillar of learning English. Students must be able to understand grammatical rules and apply them in their communication through the vocabulary of a large number of essential words to carry on a fluent conversation.

O'Malley et al. (1985) introduced the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA), which aimed to enhance language learning through the integration of language instruction with academic content. This approach recognized the importance of both cognitive and academic language skills in second language development.

Chamot and O'Malley (1986, 1987) further expanded on this proposal by introducing the Cognitive Academic Language Learning (CALL) model. This model emphasized the role of metacognitive strategies in language learning, encouraging learners to actively monitor and control their learning processes. It included various cognitive and metacognitive strategies such as note-taking, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation.

Building upon the CALL model, Chamot et al. (1999) developed the Strategy Instruction Model (SIM), which focused on explicit instruction of strategies to enhance language learning. This model highlighted the importance of systematic strategy instruction, providing learners with the necessary tools and guidance to effectively utilize cognitive and metacognitive strategies.

These proposals collectively highlight the significance of integrating language and content instruction, as well as the importance of metacognitive and cognitive strategies in second language learning. They have contributed to shaping language instruction approaches and have been influential in improving language learning outcomes.

**Using Metacognition and its Methods to Learn English as L2**

The requirement to make teaching and learning a process where various aspects can interact, and access information is addressed using various tools and resources. The selection of sorts of techniques to link practice—whether supervised, collaborative, or independent—with the same competency and appropriation of the language can help define decisions about the materials to utilize or adapt. There are numerous language learning methodologies available based on one's goals, interests, and learning style, as stated by Ungureanu and Georgescu (2012).

The authors' main classification includes the following subgroups also regarding the perspective by Chamot et al. (1999):

1. Metacognitive strategies involve thinking about the learning process, planning learning, monitoring what is being learned during the process, or self-assessing the learning after completing a task.

2. Cognitive strategies, which involve mental management or transformation of materials or tasks, aiming to improve understanding, acquisition, or retention.

**3.** Social/affective strategies, consisting of using social interactions to aid in understanding, learning, or retaining information, as well as immersive strategies, where surrounding oneself with the language and listening to it extensively is key. Additionally, there are certain strategies related to specific techniques such as "storytelling" or "flash-cards," among others.

**4.** Goal-setting strategies, which involve establishing specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound objectives for language learning.

Metacognition and the application of metacognitive methods are crucial tools for enhancing the process of learning English as a L2. Considering a definition by Cambridge University, ELA (2023) students can reflect on and self-regulate their learning by using metacognition, which is defined as a person's knowledge and beliefs about cognitive processes. Using diverse techniques that place an emphasis on metacognition, language learners should actively participate in the learning process. In addition, motivation, active listening, reading comprehension, oral communication, grammar, vocabulary, autonomy, and a tolerance for frustration are necessary for successful language learning. According to Arango and Escobar (2014), students can enhance their English proficiency and accomplish their goals with practice and dedication.

For the purposes of this study, it is necessary to frame the metacognition regarding a foreign language learning as a process, particularly developed through problem-solving and decision-making, however many authors condense it as a cognitive process of thinking about one's own thinking. The purpose of this work is to examine different facets of metacognition and its categorization, so it is relevant to remember that metacognition is not a single idea; rather, it is composed of many different aspects, therefore categorizations need to be used with precaution. The work of notable authorities in the subject, such as Byrnes and collaborators (2006), Schraw and Moshman (1995), Schraw (1998), Schraw and Dennison (1994) and Schunk (2008). Lastly, but not least important, Flavell (1979), one of the most influential representatives on metacognition, explains how metacognitive processes allow individuals to reflect on their thinking processes, assess their knowledge and understanding, and make judgments and adjustments to improve their learning, cognitive and problem-solving strategies to achieve more effective learnings and problem-solving outcomes.

Complementarily, metacognition, as explained by Cuesta (2010), refers to the ability to think about and control one's cognitive processes. This capacity involves being aware of one's own thinking through observation, reflection, and evaluation of one's mental processes, as well as making specific adjustments to enhance learning and problem-solving based on individual needs. In the context of this study, second L2 refers to acquiring proficiency in a language that is not one's native tongue, requiring the learning of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and communication skills in the target language.

Some of the main metacognitive strategies suggested by Cuesta and Anderson (2010) and in her publications include:

- Self-regulation, which involves using strategies to control motivation, emotions, and attention.
- Planning, which entails setting goals, selecting appropriate tasks and resources, and allocating time and effort.
- Evaluation, which involves assessing performance, reflecting on strengths and weaknesses, and seeking feedback.
- Metacognitive awareness, meaning being aware of one's cognitive processes, preferences, and learning styles.

According to these, different methods can help online students improve their self-regulation, motivation, and academic success in online courses. Furthermore, the significance of situational and contextual aspects in metacognitive processes has been highlighted by Schraw and Dennison (1994). The learning environment, task features, and individual variables can all affect the use of metacognition. This implies that classifications must be adaptive and flexible in various contexts.

For students to properly manage their language learning while participating in activities or tasks mediated by metacognitive strategies, metacognition is essential for the acquisition of second languages. As an illustration, the capacity to control our actions is a lifelong talent that is closely correlated with the frequency with which we engage in high-level processes involving two distinct sorts of activity. First, being aware of what we know and don't know about the material we need to learn, and the processes involved in acquiring it, and second, being able to plan our activities for successful learning. Students can reflect on their own thinking through metacognitive awareness, which promotes independent learning and academic performance.

**Use of New Technologies in the Autonomous Learning of English**

Bandura (1982) mentions the importance of self-determined goals set by students for optimal and healthy functioning when acquiring knowledge is done through a process of self-regulation. This idea represents the experience lived from the health crisis of the pandemic from COVID-19 showed that the country was not prepared for this health contingency and there is no clear discipline or pedagogical methodology, however the devices and access to the Internet promote meaningful learning among all the students, it was found that the results were not very positive in the face of the health emergency due to the exhausting hours that both teachers and students had to spend in front of an electronic device (Bautista et al., 2020).

Aristega et al. (2018) indicates that self-employment offers multiple benefits in the formative process such as practice, reinforcement and strengthening the development of English language skills is an important part of self-employment for people who want to advance their career and communicate effectively with people from other cultures, there are fun and effective digital resources that can help improve English skills,

such as flashcard applications like TinyCards and Anki, video platforms such as Flipgrid, browser extensions such as Grammarly, and websites such as Lyrics Training and Road to Grammar. Ultimately, being bilingual fosters intercultural empathy, respect, and global cooperation (Cabal, 2019), which is consistent with the expected independence and autonomy.

Audiovisual resources and audiovisual concepts around autonomy improve the perception of the use of resources and strategies, therefore, it improves and facilitates the way of learning more quickly. On the other hand, it is necessary to highlight the benefits and opportunities that working with AI brings, which contains the previously mentioned elements for the development of English skills. Chat GPT, for example, is an artificial intelligence tool that is used to improve conversation skills in English. Del Real and Núñez (2022) affirm that the learners participating in their research do not consider the steps and stages that allow them to develop their skills autonomously to achieve results in the acquisition of English as a foreign language.

The tool uses natural language processing to understand and generate this language through bots as autonomy. Chatting with Chat GPT can be a great way to improve your English conversation skills in a relaxed environment. You can also use Chat GPT to write English conversations in different situations and real contexts (Pineda, 2022). Chat GPT as a personal English trainer that can be accessed for free. In this order of ideas, we have applications such as Duolingo, one of the most popular for learning languages that has a built-in Bot to generate almost natural communication. It offers interactive grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation lessons (Gordon, 2023).

Karam (2011) states that the development of educational platforms continues to grow significantly in areas where e-learning and b-learning are present, strengthening metamemory and metacognitive judgments as a result. To do this, Karam has suggested using a game tool as part of her master's thesis research and begins by evaluating the effects of a video game on the development of autonomous learning and decision-making.

We can also mention the Babbel page and application, which offers personalized language courses adapted to the user's needs. Includes interactive lessons and pronunciation exercises. On the other hand, on the Memrise platform there are interactive lessons and memory games to help users learn English vocabulary and grammar (Noreña and Cano, 2020). With the help of the greater execution of the mentioned aspects, a slightly more effective teaching process will be generated by the teacher with the use of ICT. Regarding the role of the student described by Beltrán (2017), a more active and responsible role for their own learning is emphasized, so the student must develop the ability to interact in any situation of their daily life. Bosa and Torres (2010), who find that any didactic file that revolves around teaching or strengthening the communicative competence of a language must be supported by a theoretical framework that frames the learning process of the same language (Andújar and Cruz, 2017).

In addition, the design of didactic files that promote communication skills, since working collaboratively, adjusts to the fact that students who are exposed to this type of digital technology and current media foster a spirit of collaboration, connectivism, and self-control, generating greater motivation and interest in their assignments and towards new content, since there is a marked immediacy in the response and feedback in the face of intellectual and academic creation (Weepiu, 2020).

## Methods

Authors such as Hernández et al. (2010) suggest that a single research approach is insufficient to clear up a problem addressed. Therefore, the present research develops a mixed methodology study with a quantitative preponderance to broaden the dimensions of the research and provide greater depth and accuracy in the results.

In this way, the population and sample of the present research is intentionally probabilistic, since it was selected by the researchers from the beginning of the study. The decision was made to work with the pre-intermediate English course at ESIDE and the pre-intermediate English course of the Bachelor's Degree in Modern Languages with an emphasis in English at UGC. Pre-intermediate level is chosen because it is the moment when students begin to acquire greater autonomy and different academic strategies must be implemented which will be central in the more advanced levels, both for the personal life and for the professional career of each future graduate.

The sample of the study was distributed as follows: group 1 of the UGC of the daytime that had 19 students, group 2 from the UGC of 18 students from the night schedule and the 4 pre-intermediate English groups from ESIDE, each with 8 students and one with 6 students, the total of the sample was 67 students.

### Instrument Validation and Application Protocol

For the execution of the methodology, the following protocol was considered:

1. The research proposal was discussed with the director of the research department of the Faculty of Education of UGC, to know his perception and obtain his acceptance.

2. The research idea was made known to the director of the bachelor's program in modern languages with an emphasis on English to obtain her approval and begin the research.

3. An official invitation to the investigation was made to ESIDE, which showed great interest and acceptance in being part of the investigation.

4. The data collection techniques used throughout the development of the research were designed, reviewed, and modified with advice from two experts in the teaching of a second language and the advisor from the research department of UGC.

5. To carry out the data collection, UGC and ESIDE students were asked to accept the informed consent by Google forms.

For the data collection, the application of instruments was given in parallel, applying to the students of UGC and the students of ESIDE quantitatively and qualitatively. The KET pre-test and PET post-test were executed with the supervisory measures of the teachers in the classroom through the virtual Google form for 37 UGC students and 30 ESIDE students, with the aim of identifying and analyzing the level of knowledge in the language in which they are, in order to apply strategies that promote a noticeable improvement in their academic performance and appropriation of the language.

**Instruments and Application**

The first instrument to apply to the study sample was the language proficiency level pre-test which is governed by the model and classification rubric of the KET standard test (Key English Test) of the University of Cambridge, which measures an A2 language level according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Within the test, the skills of oral production, written production, oral comprehension and reading comprehension were evaluated (Cambridge University, s.f.). The test format is filled out virtually using the Google forms tool and the oral production was evaluated with the help and supervision of the teachers of each English course.

Hereupon, the second instrument was a semi-structured questionnaire of closed and open-ended questions designed, reviewed with experts, and applied. This instrument is characterized by being a set of questions facing a particular situation, analyzing different response possibilities; closed and open-ended questions are included, which allow an in-depth analysis of the information provided by the sample in relation to the research (Hernández et al., 2010). The semi-structured questionnaire was executed to the same number of students who presented the pre-test.

After obtaining the strategies for autonomous learning of English as L2 from the theoretical framework, the quantitative and qualitative students' responses used through the triangulation technique (Table 1) and following the quasi-experimental research design. A quasi-experimental design is applied (Arnau, 1995) because the study population and sample were not chosen randomly, on the contrary, it was previously established which corresponds to the students who will apply the same strategies to get to the production of results. The quasi-experimental methodology is characterized by being descriptive, that is, the behavior of the population and the different social variables are observed, considering qualitative and quantitative data. This type of research focuses on identifying the way in which an independent variable is related, in this case the students who do not apply the strategies of autonomous English learning, on the dependent variable.

The strategies were applied from September to November to group 1 of UGC and to groups 2 and 3 of ESIDE to obtain contrasted information compared to the groups (group 2 of UGC and groups 1 and 4 of ESIDE) that did not apply the autonomous learning strategies. The strategies application was executed with the help of a checklist (Figure 1) that was given to each student in the sample so that they could paste it on the last page of their notebooks, and in this way, they would autonomously carry out the activities proposed in the strategies and checking them during the three months prior to the post-test.

**Figure 1**

*Autonomous Learning Strategies Checklist*

**Strategies for autonomous English learning to be carried out from September to November 2022**

☐ Encourage my interest and motivation for learning the language.

☐ Search and do exercises on the internet on a topic that I did not understand well.

☐ Go to a place where I can practice the language outside the academic context.

☐ Learn at least 20 new words every week.

☐ Teach a topic learned in class to a person or a group of people who are not my classmates.

☐ Discover a methodology to practice the language that I really like and that I find easier.

☐ Make a time to practice the language outside of my academic hours.

☐ Listen to a different podcast twice a week.

☐ Learn a new song for me in English.

☐ Watch three movies in English without subtitles that I have seen before in Spanish.

☐ Watch three movies in English without subtitles new to me.

☐ Read a book in English that interests me a lot.

☐ Read news in English at least twice a week.

☐ Attend three times a month a conversational in English.

☐ Have a physical or digital notebook where I can write paragraphs, letters, articles. essays. poems. thoughts, songs, or texts of my choice.

☐ Make use of 5 apps that are to my liking and constant practice.

☐ Study the language in a space that I really like, for example: my bed, a café, a balcony, a park, etc.

☐ Establish incentives that allow me to enjoy practicing the language in my free time. Example: if I read the news in the morning, I'm going to have a nice coffee.

☐ Talk to three native English speakers.

☐ Talk English to myself while I'm alone.

☐ Constantly think in English at least once a day.

☐ Follow accounts or channels on social networks that are related to the teaching or practice of the Language.

☐ Gain more self-confidence in the language by participating or presenting.

Note. Own elaboration.

Finally, a proficiency post-test was implemented to the total of students (67) that is articulated under the model and classification rubric of the PET standard test (Preliminary English Test) of the University of Cambridge (s.f.), which measures a B1 language level according to the CEFR to reveal improvement in the language proficiency through the 3 months of the study. In the development of the test, like the pre-test applied in the research, the skills of L2 were evaluated. The final test was adopted in the same way as the pre-test.
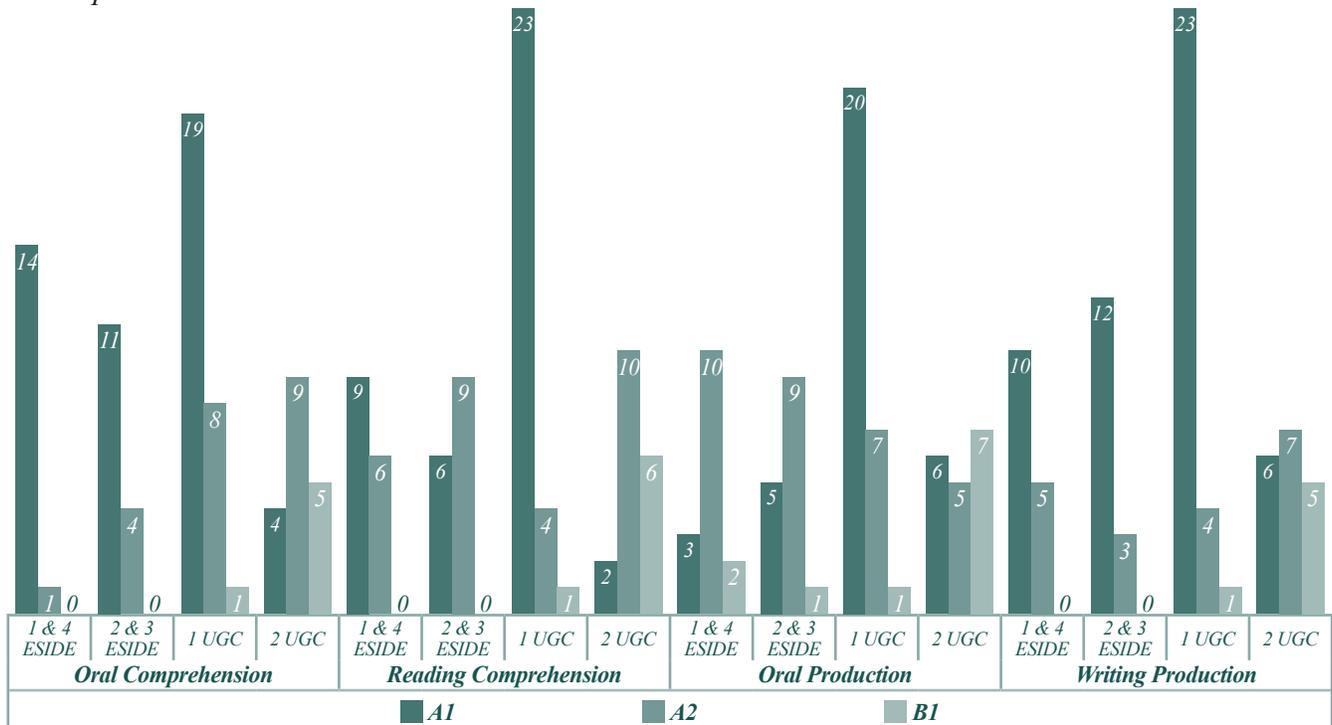
## Results and Discussion

### First Phase

When carrying out the English proficiency pre-test considering the KET international exam model and each of the communication skills, the following results were obtained for each of the 4 groups of the research sample as shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2**

*Initial pre-test results*



Note. Own elaboration.

For group 1 of UGC, a higher frequency is obtained for level A1 in each of the communicative skills, evidencing a very low frequency for the expected levels such as A2 and B1. In addition, written production and reading comprehension show less proficiency for level A2, while students show greater proficiency of the language in comprehension and oral production skills.

On the other hand, in the same institution for group 2, a little improvement is reflected in language proficiency, since a greater number of students have A2 level, standing out in oral comprehension and reading comprehension. In addition, the proficiency of B1 level is much higher on the part of the students compared to the results obtained by group 1 of UGC. Thirdly, A1 level is visualized, which turns out to be very positive, according to the level of language that the students study in their professional career.

In contrast, the results of groups 1 and 4 of ESIDE demonstrate A1 level with high frequency and a noticeable absence of students with B1 level, giving a higher frequency to reading comprehension

and oral production for level A2. In conclusion, for groups 1 and 4 of ESIDE, a greater proficiency in the oral production competence is reflected. Finally, within the results of the proficiency level pre-test, it is evident that for groups 2 and 3 of ESIDE there is a greater proficiency of the language, since A2 level counts with more determination for the comprehension of reading and oral production.

The results revealed in the four groups of the research reflect similar characteristics and outcomes, however, in the case of UGC, group 1 (19 students) has lower L2 proficiency level results, on the other hand, groups 2 and 3 (8 and 8 students, total: 16 students) from ESIDE have a little more proficiency than groups 1 and 4 from ESIDE. For this reason, with the objective of carrying out a quasi-experimental investigation, it was decided to apply the strategies of autonomous learning of English for three months to the groups of students (group 1, UGC and groups 2 and 3, ESIDE) who obtained the lowest results (A1 and A2) in the proficiency level pre-test (oral comprehension and production, writing production and reading comprehension), with the aim of promoting a noticeable improvement in the performance and proficiency of the L2 by students.

After the execution and analysis of the results of the proficiency level pre-test, with the help of the review and bibliographic analysis of the background and theoretical references, a semi-structured questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions is applied to the entire sample of the investigation (groups 1 and 2 of UGC, and groups 1,2,3 and 4 of ESIDE), which investigates the concept that students have of the autonomous learning of English as L2.

With reference to the answers to the semi-structured questionnaire, most students (70.4%) understand and relate autonomous learning as the self-interest that a person has in strengthening, expanding or diversifying what they have learned, recognizing the total importance it has for learning a L2. However, the study sample answered that the frequency of their practice of autonomous learning is sometimes evident (53.5%), with a very low frequency (38%) it is always applied and a worrying percentage of 8.5% almost never applies it. Nonetheless, faced with the difficulty of practicing autonomous learning, students consider that it is easy (45.1%) and difficult (45.1%), leaving a remainder of very easy (8.5%) and very difficult (1.3%).

Besides, when inquiring about the sources that students use for their autonomous English learnig, with a percentage of 91.5% they use the Internet, while another part of the sample prefers to practice it with the knowledge of relatives (36.6%) or through books (19.7%). Lastly, the rest of the sample practice their autonomous learning through music, series in English, interaction applications, their work or profession, and none.

In another manner, the students were asked about their actions to take when this happens in class, the answers showed that a great majority search on the subject in question on their own, followed

by consultations with their classmates and finally, they choose to ask the teacher again in class. As a supportive answer, a student mentioned that he reinforces his acquired knowledge with relatives who reside in the United States. Moreover, the students evidenced that the most common activities they use to practice autonomous learning are linked to listening to podcasts, music, or radio. Additionally, a large percentage demonstrated watching series, movies, or videos and with medium frequency they prefer the use of mobile applications, reading books, news or articles, and with low frequency, talking with relatives or acquaintances who have knowledge of the language and writing texts, emails or paragraphs.

In addition to that, it was sought to investigate the management of communication skills in the language, for which the students responded that the skill they should reinforce the most is oral production (47.9%), then they mentioned oral comprehension (26.8%), written production (14.1%) and reading comprehension (11.3%). Taking into account the previous results, the students indicated that some of the activities involved in the strategies they use to reinforce their communication skills are, to a great extent, listening to podcasts, music, or radio, watching series, movies, or videos, and, to a lesser extent, using applications, reading books, news, or articles, and writing texts, emails, or paragraphs; finally, talking with acquaintances, attending conversation clubs, and using games. When examining the factors contributing to the lack of autonomous learning, it becomes evident that a significant percentage is attributed to time constraints and a lack of discipline among students. Additionally, a noticeable lack of interest in the language, limited access to learning resources and tools, and, to a lesser extent, the teacher's methodology also plays a role in this phenomenon.

Contrary to the fact that students practice autonomous learning strategies, 74.6% respond in the affirmative, while 25.4% acknowledge not using any strategy for autonomous learning. Going deeper into the frequency they use for this practice, it is evident that the majority do it sometimes (40.8%) and the rest do it almost always (35.2%), always (18.3%), and never (5.7%). The entire population that puts all or some of the autonomous learning strategies into practice acknowledges that this has allowed them to consolidate their knowledge of the language.

All the above leads to the application of the triangulation method which according to Pereira (2011) "gives simultaneity in the application of the methods, and none of them is prioritized over the other; only the order varies in terms of concurrence", resulting in the 27 autonomous learning strategies of English as L2 (Appendix 1). The translated answers were coded with the letter S and the student number. Some students did not respond deeply or widely to the total of the questions so that the most argumentative and profound answers were used for the analysis and results. Part of the totality of autonomous learning strategies is disclosed below to demonstrate the triangulation process (Table 1).

**Table 1**

*Strategies for Autonomous Learning (fragment of Appendix 1)*

| Translation of Bibliographic Reference | Translated Answers (quantitative and qualitative) to the autonomous learning questionnaire | Strategies of Autonomous Learning |
|---|---|---|
| Students often show an increase in self-confidence when developing metacognitive skills. Improved self-efficacy enhances motivation and success in learning (Cuesta and Anderson, 2010). | **S13.** Don't lose motivation and practice words through what you like. <br><br> **S24.** Impose the goal on yourself, if there is interest it will be easy to immerse yourself in the language. <br><br> **S30.** The difficulty of autonomous learning is partly in the interest of the student. <br><br> **S14.** It's easy for me because there's interest on my part. | 1. Foster and enhance my intrinsic interest and motivation towards language learning. |
| Benson (2001) refers to the organization of learning materials and tools, making them available and accessible to students through different repositories or databases, even without the presence of a teacher. Additionally, an important concept to consider when navigating the internet is the "self-access centers," as defined by Dickinson (1993). | **S33.** Now there are many easy and practical ways to do it through the internet or social networks. <br><br> **S51.** For example, internet searches, podcasts or writing texts have helped me. <br><br> **S64.** Internet in my spare time. | 2. Engage in online research and exercises related to topics that require further comprehension. |
| Practice involves intentional communication while emitting and receiving messages, as well as analyzing and reasoning information to respond effectively and accurately (Oxford, 2002). | **S42.** To get into the world of English a lot, to try to make English surround you in a beautiful way, and to practice speaking a lot. <br><br> **S47.** Balance my schedules and jobs, leaving a set time for my work. <br><br> **S35.** At home, I aim to exercise and read a little. <br><br> **S67.** Spend more time on it. S63. Dedication, effort, and ATTITUDE. | 3. Seek opportunities to practice the language in real-world settings beyond the confines of academic environments. |
| Combining known vocabulary in new forms to construct sentences and link ideas is crucial (Arango and Escobar, 2014). | **S35.** Watching movies in English, listening to music in English, and reading lyrics are very good strategies for learning vocabulary and ways of forming sentences. <br> **S49.** Listen to podcasts while on public transport. <br> **S23.** I like to practice and challenge myself more and more. <br> **S41.** Watch videos as you learn about everyday life as you gain vocabulary. | 4. Aim to acquire a minimum of 20 new words weekly to expand my vocabulary. |

Note. Own elaboration.

It's important to clarify that, within the scope of this study, autonomous learning should not be misconstrued as learning in isolation or disconnected from peers and the guidance of teachers. Instead, it encompasses an ongoing process of self-reflection on one's learning methods, accompanied by deliberate

choices about learning materials and their adaptation. Additionally, it involves the capacity to assess various components for engaging with and obtaining information. This clarification is provided to establish that the notions and principles proposed by Bandura (1982) and Benson (2001) concerning self-efficacy and independent learning form the foundation of this research.

This decision-making process regarding materials or actions can be concretized into strategies aimed at integrating objectives, preferences, and learning styles in order to achieve a more guided, collaborative, and independent practice, as highlighted by Ungureanu and Georgescu (2012). Hence, there are numerous strategies for language learning, depending on their characterization, interaction, and impact on the development of linguistic and communicative competence.

**Categorization of Obtained Autonomous Learning Strategies**

The strategies listed below were derived from the triangulation process detailed earlier (Table 2). These 27 strategies can be organized according to the authors discussed in the theoretical references and background section into. It's worth noting that a single strategy might fall under multiple categories based on its intended learning objective.

**Table 2**

*Autonomous learning strategies categorization*

| Type of Strategy | Categorization | Number of Strategy |
|---|---|---|
| COGNITIVE | They refer to specific approaches that involve the management and mental transformation of materials or tasks with the purpose of enhancing understanding, acquisition, and retention of knowledge. These strategies encompass a wide range of techniques and mental processes that facilitate more effective and meaningful learning. One of the most common strategies is the organization of information. | 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 18, 25, 26, 27 |
| METACOGNITIVE | Self-regulation, planning, evaluation, and metacognitive awareness are techniques that involve thinking about the learning process, controlling motivation, emotions, and attention, setting goals, selecting tasks and resources, allocating time and effort, evaluating performance, reflecting on strengths and weaknesses, and seeking feedback (Cuesta, 2010). | 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27 |
| SOCIAL/ AFFECTIVE | They are based on harnessing social interactions as a means to facilitate understanding, learning, and retention of information. They focus on the power of the social environment to enrich the process of knowledge acquisition through interaction and collaboration with others. | 1, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24 |
| SPECIFIC TECHNIQUES | Specific strategies such as "storytelling" and the use of "flash-cards," among others, are used selectively to enhance comprehension and retention of information. Emphasis is placed on goal-setting strategies as a key element in language learning." | 1, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14, 16, 22, 27 |

Note. Own elaboration. The 27 strategies and their corresponding number are the result of the triangulation process explained in depth in Appendix 1.

**Second Phase**

Following the quasi-experimental research model, the groups of students (group 1, UGC and groups 2 and 3, ESIDE) who obtained the lowest results (A1 and A2) group 1 of UGC and groups 2 and 3 of ESIDE are chosen to apply the strategies of autonomous learning in the period from September to November of the same year. This is based on the autonomy that students must have, being independent to organize their time and carry them out in the period they consider necessary and pertinent.

After three months of an academic semester, a post-test of knowledge of the language is carried out, which indicates the level for each communicative skill in which the students of the research sample are found. The results are presented in Figure 3.

**Figure 3**

*Final test results*
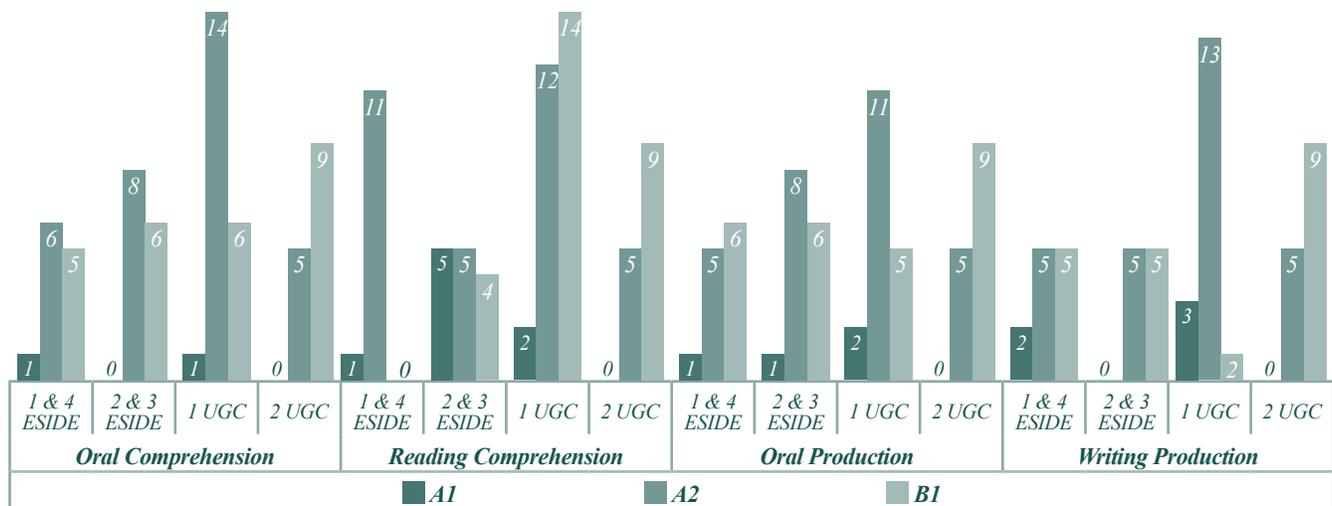


Note. Own elaboration.

For groups 1 and 4 of ESIDE, there is a notable advance in terms of the comparison of the initial and final results, since A1 level had a higher and predominant frequency, and at the end of the course the students demonstrate that they have in three communicative skills higher level for A2, in terms of oral production there is a higher frequency for level B1. Related reading comprehension, there is a frequency of 11 students, being a quite significant improvement. Of 15 students, 3 abandoned, since 2 of them were excluded from the course due to poor academic performance and 1 student was sent to an international commission for excellent academic and professional performance.

Analyzing the results of the final test of 14 students from groups 2 and 3 of ESIDE, of which 1 was excluded from the course for not having the required academic level, very favorable results were found, since for the four communication skills are more frequent at level A2, followed by level B1, which favors the performance of students in the language. However, there are some difficulties in reading comprehension, since it is the skill that has an average frequency for level A1.

Compared to the results obtained in the initial language knowledge test, there is a noticeable improvement, since the students of group 1 of UGC raised mostly from level A1 to level A2, in addition level B1 has a frequency of more than two students for communicative skill, leaving as a result a successful advance in the knowledge and proficiency of the foreign language. Regarding the variation of results, of the 19 students who participated in the initial sample, the study ended with 18 students, since one student decided to retire from the course due to financial issues.

For group 2 of UGC, the results were equally favorable, since the frequency for level A1 was zero while for level A2 almost half of the sample was obtained, with level B1 being most of the students. It should be noted that of 18 students who initially participated in the research, 4 students retired from the academic process due to financial difficulties and issues in their personal lives, which is why they did not continue studying at UGC.

To conclude, when applying the final English proficiency level test, most students increased their level of knowledge in L2 from A1 to A2, followed by level B1, which shows that although not all students applied the strategies of autonomous learning of English, the groups that executed them developed and strengthened communication skills that allowed them a more noticeable domain in L2 for their professional and personal life.

## Conclusions

The results of the first phase of the research reveal that students engage in minimal autonomous learning focused on the oral production of the English language. Consequently, oral production is considered a skill they believe requires greater attention and practice, both in their personal and professional lives. Thus, it becomes imperative to establish more spaces inside and outside of class which encourage active language practice.

The surveyed sample provided valuable insights and demonstrated the efficacy of self-working strategies. Those who implemented these strategies showed significant improvement compared to groups that did not. The success can be attributed to their consistent motivation for learning and enhancing their proficiency in the target language (L2).

It is essential to differentiate various types of learning strategies activities, including metacognitive, cognitive, social/affective, and other techniques specific to language practice. Emphasizing on metacognitive strategies plays a crucial role in the learning process, enabling students to reflect on their cognitive processes, to regulate their learning, and to make effective decisions.

Students found the learning process of the L2 more rewarding and enjoyable when incorporating self-employment strategies, particularly those that incorporate leisure activities such as cinema, music, theater, and socializing. Importantly, these specific strategies can be seamlessly integrated into their personal and professional lives even after completing the academic process.

This study successfully contributed to fostering a culture of autonomous learning in language teaching and learning, particularly in the case of English. This was achieved through a comprehensive theoretical review and analysis of previous research, benefiting the academic and professional growth of students in pre-intermediate English courses at UGC and ESIDE.

Strategies that encourage self-confidence, self-regulation, and self-learning have proven to generate increased commitment, motivation, and interest among students. Such approaches empower students to pursue personal and professional projects, including academic growth and the undertaking of leisure, work, or study opportunities.

Autonomous English learning implies a clear work plan and a lot of discipline on the part of the students. Besides being up to date with the different methodologies, innovations, applications, and platforms to interact with English. For this reason, it is a remarkable fact how autonomous learning and self-directed practices, to improve English language through the implementation of punctual strategies, can be extrapolated in the learning/acquisition process of other foreign languages and other fields of knowledge since it mainly proposes a deep reflection and self-monitoring of how one learns.

One significant extrinsic factor contributing to learning desertion is financial difficulties both by students and by educational institutions. The resulting lack of motivation among both students and teachers calls for educational institutions to take on greater responsibility in finding viable solutions that do not compromise the overall teaching and learning process within the community.

Regarding the research projections of this study, it can be found a close relationship with the use of some trends such as the use of digital and mobile technologies. Additionally, dissemination efforts through radio programs, virtual workshops, seminars, and congresses at local, national, and international levels have further promoted the use of foreign languages as L2.

## References

**Andújar-Vaca, A., and Cruz-Martínez, M. S.** (2017). Mensajería instantánea móvil: Whatsapp y su potencial para desarrollar las destrezas orales= Mobile instant messaging: Whatsapp and its potential to develop oral skills. *Mensajería instantánea móvil: Whatsapp y su potencial para desarrollar las destrezas orales= Mobile instant messaging: Whatsapp and its potential to develop oral skills*, 43-52.

**Arango, L. and Escobar, L.** (2014). Metacognición en el adulto mayor. *Poiésis*, *1*(28), 1-4. https://www.aacademica.org/000-035/309

**Aristega, C. J. E. M., Masacon, M. R. H. and Mayorga, D. C. E.** (2018). El porqué del trabajo autónomo en la Educación Superior. En *Memorias del cuarto Congreso Internacional de Ciencias Pedagógicas de Ecuador: La formación y superación del docente:" desafíos para el cambio de la educación en el siglo XXI"* (pp. 339-348). Instituto Superior Tecnológico Bolivariano.

**Arnau, J.** (1995). Metodología de la investigación en psicología. En M. T. Anguera, J. Arnau, M. Ato, R. Martínez, J. Pascual, J., y G. Vallejo, G. (Eds.), *Métodos de investigación en Psicología* (Cap. 1). Madrid: Síntesis.

**Byrnes, J. P., Wigfield, A., and Eccles, J. S.** (2006). Development during early and middle adolescence. In P. Alexander and P. Winne (Eds.), *Handbook of educational psychology* (2nd Ed.). New York: Macmillan Publishing.

**Baker, A., and Burri, M.** (2016). Feedback on second language pronunciation: A case study of EAP teachers' beliefs and practices. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, *41*(6), 1-19. https://ro.uow.edu.au/sspapers/2449/

**Bandura, A.** (1982). Self-Efficacy Mechanism in Human Agency. *American Psychologist*, *37*(2), 122-147. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.37.2.122

**Bautista I, Carrera G, León E, Laverde D.** (2020). Evaluación de satisfacción de los estudiantes sobre las clases virtuales. Evaluación de satisfacción de los estudiantes sobre las clases virtuales. *Minerva*, *1*(2), 5-12. https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=8377947

**Beltrán, M.** (2017). El aprendizaje del idioma inglés como lengua extranjera. *Revista Boletín Redipe*, *6*(4), 91-98.

**Benson, P.** (2001). *Teaching and researching autonomy in language learning*. England: Pearson Education Limited. 254 p.

**Benson, P. and Voller, P.** (1997). *Autonomy and independence in language learning*. New York: Longman.

**Berenguer-Román, I. L., Roca-Revilla, M., and Torres-Berenguer, I. V.** (2016). La competencia comunicativa en la enseñanza de idiomas. *Domino de las Ciencias*, *2*(2), 25-31. https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=5761589

**Bosa Higarrerro, L., and Torres Higera, S.** (2010). *Criterios para el diseño de fichas didácticas que promueven el desarrollo de la competencia comunicativa en la lengua extranjera - inglés mediante el uso de canciones infantiles norteamericanas*. https://hdl.handle.net/10901/5442

**Cabal, C.** (2019). *Five digital resources for autonomous English language practice*. British Council. https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/five-digital-resources-autonomous-english-language-practice

**Cambridge University** (s.f.). *English Language Assessment*. (2023). https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/es/exams-and-tests/. Cambridge University Press & Assessment

**Cuesta Medina, L.** (2010). *Metacognitive instructional strategies: a study of e-learners´ self-regulation.* In Aerts, A., Colpaert, J. and Oberhofer, M. (Eds.). Fourteenth International CALL Conference Proceedings: Motivation and Beyond. ISBN: 978-9057282973

**Cuesta Medina, L., and Anderson, C. E.** (2010). *Course design for graduate students: Strategic planning and actions.* Paper presented at the 13th National ELT Conference – Challenges for the ELT Syllabus: Developing Competencies for the 21st Century, Universidad de La Salle, Bogotá, Colombia.

**Del Real Jaraba, E., and Núñez Arrieta, M. Á.** (2022). *Factores que limitan el aprendizaje autónomo para la adquisición del inglés como lengua extranjera* (Doctoral dissertation, Corporación Universidad de la Costa). https://hdl.handle.net/11323/9649

**Dickinson, L.** (1993). Talking shop: Aspects of autonomous learning. *ELT journal*, *47*(4), 330-336. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/47.4.330

**Flavell, J. H.** (1979). Metacognition and cognitive monitoring: A new area of cognitive-developmental inquiry. American Psychologist, 34(10), 906-911.Gordon, C. (2023). *How Are Educators Reacting to Chat GPT?* https://www.forbes.com/sites/anafaguy/2023/06/15/justice-department-will-investigate-pga-tour-liv-merger-report-says/?sh=6ddb14442314

**Hardy-Gould, J.** (2013). *Learner Autonomy.* Oxford University Press: English Language.

**Hernández et al.** (2010). *Metodología de la investigación* (5ta Ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.

**Holec, H.** (1981). *Autonomy and foreign language learning* (publicación original de Pergamon Press Pergamon.

**Karam Rozo, J. M.** (2011). Creatividad y videojuegos: nuevos paradigmas en la generación de aprendizaje autónomo. *Revista Repertorio de Medicina Y Cirugía*, *20*(1), 45–50. https://doi.org/10.31260/RepertMedCir.v20.n1.2011.674

**Krashen, S. D.** (1987). *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition.* Prentice-Hall International.

**Lewis Ramsa** (2021). *How to Learn English On Your Own | Guide for Independent Learners.* https://www.leonardoenglish.com/blog/learn-english-on-your-own

**Ley 115/94, febrero 8, 1994.** *Diario Oficial*. **[D.O.]: 41214.** (Colombia). http://www.secretariasenado.gov.co/senado/basedoc/ley_0115_1994.html

**Ministerio de Educación Nacional** (2006). *Estándares básicos de competencias en lenguas extranjeras: Inglés. Serie guía Nº 22.* https://eco.colombiaaprende.edu.co/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Estandares-Basicos_V2021-1.pdf

**Noreña, D. M. and Cano, L. M.** (2020). *Interculturalidad, enseñanza y aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera. El papel del docente*. http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11912/8107

**O'Malley, J. and Chamot, A., Stewner-Manzanares, G., Kupper, L., and Russo, R.** (2006). *Learning Strategies Used by Beginning and Intermediate ESL Students*. Language Learning. 35. 21 - 46.

**Oxford, R. L.** (2002). Language learning strategies in a nutshell: Update and ESL suggestions. *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*, *4*(3), 124-132. https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:143203929

**Pereira, Z.** (2011). Los diseños de método mixto en la investigación en educación: Una experiencia concreta. *Revista Electrónica Educare*, *15*(1), 15-29. http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=194118804003

**Pineda Castillo, K. A.** (2022). Desarrollo Autónomo de Competencias Comunicativas en el Idioma Inglés. *Revista De Lenguas Modernas*, (35), 211–231. https://doi.org/10.15517/rlm.v0i35.44485

**Rueda Cataño, M. C., and Wilburn Dieste, M.** (2014). Enfoques teóricos para la adquisición de una segunda lengua desde el horizonte de la práctica educativa. *Perfiles educativos*, *36*(143), 21-28. http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0185-26982014000100018&lng=es&nrm=iso

**Schraw, G.** (1998). Promoting general metacognitive awareness. *Instructional Science*, *26*(1-2), 113-125.

**Schraw, G., and Dennison, R. S.** (1994). Assessing metacognitive awareness. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *19*(4), 460-475.

**Schunk, D. H.** (2008). Metacognition, self-regulation, and self-regulated learning: Research recommendations. *Educational Psychology Review*, *20*(4), 463-467.

**Ungureanu, C. and Georgescu, C. A.** (2012). Learners' Strategies in Language Learning. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *46*, 5000-5004. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.06.375

**Vygotsky, L. S.** (1989). Concrete human psychology. *Soviet psychology*, *27*(2), 53-77.

**Weepiu Samekash, M. L.** (2020). Uso de whatsapp para mejorar el aprendizaje autónomo en los jóvenes universitarios. *Educare et Comunicare: Revista científica de la Facultad de Humanidades*, *8*(1), 78-87. https://doi.org/10.35383/educare.v8i1.396

## Appendix 1
### Strategies for Autonomous Learning

| Translation of Bibliographic Reference | Translated Answers (quantitative and qualitative) to the autonomous learning questionnaire | Strategies of Autonomous Learning |
|---|---|---|
| Students often show an increase in self-confidence when developing metacognitive skills. Improved self-efficacy enhances motivation and success in learning (Cuesta and Anderson, 2010). | S13. Don't lose motivation and practice words through what you like. S24. Impose the goal on yourself, if there is interest it will be easy to immerse yourself in the language. S30. The difficulty of autonomous learning is partly in the interest of the student. S14. It's easy for me because there's interest on my part. | **1.** Foster and enhance my intrinsic interest and motivation towards language learning. the language. |
| Benson (2001) refers to the organization of learning materials and tools, making them available and accessible to students through different repositories or databases, even without the presence of a teacher. Additionally, an important concept to consider when navigating the internet is the "self-access centers," as defined by Dickinson (1993). | S33. Now there are many easy and practical ways to do it through the internet or social networks. S51. For example, internet searches, podcasts or writing texts have helped me. S64. Internet in my spare time. | **2.** Engage in online research and exercises related to topics that require further comprehension. |
| Practice involves intentional communication while emitting and receiving messages, as well as analyzing and reasoning information to respond effectively and accurately (Oxford, 2002). | S42. To get into the world of English a lot, to try to make English surround you in a beautiful way, and to practice speaking a lot. S47. Balance my schedules and jobs, leaving a set time for my work. S35. At home, I aim to exercise and read a little. S67. Spend more time on it. S63. Dedication, effort, and ATTITUDE. | **3.** Seek opportunities to practice the language in real-world settings beyond the confines of academic environments. |
| Combining known vocabulary in new forms to construct sentences and link ideas is crucial (Arango and Escobar, 2014). | S35. Watching movies in English, listening to music in English, and reading lyrics are very good strategies for learning vocabulary and ways of forming sentences. S49. Listen to podcasts while on public transport. S23. I like to practice and challenge myself more and more. S41. Watch videos as you learn about everyday life as you gain vocabulary. | **4.** Aim to acquire a minimum of 20 new words weekly to expand my vocabulary. |
| Surviving in an era of industrial revolution that could potentially replace teachers in the future highlights the need for autonomy in learning and teaching in the new digital age. Teachers are not only language instructors, but they must also equip students with the necessary skills for success (Baker and Burri, 2016). | S12. Why when learning something in the classroom where you are learning, you are taught in a different way than the one worked on or handled in an informal context, such as how to communicate in a real context. S36. Watch videos of native speakers speaking and teaching, how they really speak their language, and what their grammar is like. S25. Challenging myself, talking to acquaintances, listening to what I like in English. | **5.** Demonstrate mastery of a subject learned in class by teaching it to individuals or groups distinct from my peer circle. |

*...Continúa Appendix 1. Strategies for Autonomous Learning*

| Translation of Bibliographic Reference | Translated Answers (quantitative and qualitative) to the autonomous learning questionnaire | Strategies of Autonomous Learning |
|---|---|---|
| MEN establishes different levels according to the performance of each student and obtains a B1 assessment level in the Common European Framework, a minimum degree requirement for professionals who practice any area of knowledge. Hand in hand with the acquisition of a second language, when learning English as a foreign language, it is necessary to consider the context of the students and the variables that can influence their learning, this can range from materials, strategies, and methodologies (Pinto, 2015). | S10. Because it looks for ways to learn in an easier way. <br> S33. Use your cell phone to study your language and less for other less important things. <br> S41. I do something I like and where I put the language into practice. <br> S4. Investing my free time researching what I don't fully understand. | **6.** Discover a methodology for practicing the language that I really like and that I can use. |
| This is why it is repeatedly warned that the man of the future [...] will either have acquired the aptitude and self-discipline to learn for himself, or he will learn very little" (Mallas, 1997, p. 28). | S44. Because it depends directly on your discipline and commitment. <br> S20. Listening to music, practicing words I don't know. <br> S24. It is important for each student to achieve their own goals and be a quality professional, in addition to providing all the information in my opinion is encouraging laziness in each student because they receive all the information and decide to stop studying. <br> S16. For example, internet searches, podcasts or writing texts have helped me. <br> S12. Make a work schedule. | **7.** Make a schedule to practice the language outside of my academic hours. |
| Listening comprehension is specified as the action of decoding and understanding the message received, it is the active participation of the sense of listening and its connection with the brain response, generating a similarity in the message sent, because the same message that wants to be transmitted is not always received, nor in the same way that it is sought. Here, the tone of voice, the emotions in each individual and the contexts in which they are executed in each situation play an important role, resulting in a personal assessment (Council of Europe, 2001). | S49. I find it difficult because the skill that I find most difficult is listening. <br> S16. Listen to music in English in The Space From Home To Work and From Work To University. <br> S10. Listening to music, practicing words I don't know. <br> S14. I am accustomed to listening to understand the meaning of the songs. S35. Watch movies, read, and listen to podcasts. | **8.** Listen to a different podcast twice a week. |
| In this order of ideas, oral comprehension in a foreign language is one of the fundamental skills that must be had when interacting and arguing, that is why through this competence it is possible to work on interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence, in which, according to (Crispin, 2011) | S49. Listen to podcasts or songs in English during free time and use of apps. <br> S43. Music helps a lot. <br> S3. Watch movies, read, and listen to podcasts. <br> S42. Listening to music, understanding it and learning it, makes it easier for me to pronounce it. Read books of my personal interest that the main language is English. | **9.** Learn a song that is new to me in English. |

*...Continúa Appendix 1. Strategies for Autonomous Learning*

| Translation of Bibliographic Reference | Translated Answers (quantitative and qualitative) to the autonomous learning questionnaire | Strategies of Autonomous Learning |
|---|---|---|
| O'Malley et al. (1985) introduced the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA), which aimed to enhance language learning through the integration of language instruction with academic content. This approach recognized the importance of both cognitive and academic language skills in second language development. | S47. Impose the goal on yourself, if there is interest it will be easy to immerse yourself in the language through readings, films, and others.<br><br>S50. Series or movies in English.<br><br>S8. Reading even if you don't understand, watching original movies in English, listening to music. | 10. Watch three movies in English without subtitles that you've seen before in Spanish. |
| Chamot and O'Malley (1986, 1987) further expanded on this proposal by introducing the Cognitive Academic Language Learning (CALL) model. This model emphasized the role of metacognitive strategies in language learning, encouraging learners to actively monitor and control their learning processes. It included various cognitive and metacognitive strategies such as note-taking, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. | S8. Reading even if you don't understand, watching original movies in English, listening to music.<br><br>S14. Invest more time in the evenings.<br><br>S2. Listening to podcasts, reading a lot and watching movies and series in English, also losing the fear of making mistakes.<br><br>S17. Watch videos as you learn about everyday life as you gain vocabulary. | 11. Watch three movies in English with no new subtitles for me. |
| Krashen argues that individuals are more likely to acquire a second language effectively if they are exposed to meaningful and understandable input in that language. He suggests that being immersed in a bilingual environment, where both the first and second languages are used and valued, can support language acquisition more effectively than traditional language learning methods. (Krashen,1987). | S38. During the holidays I was practicing and studying in the app and when I started classes again, I saw that I had good comprehension and confidence in reading.<br><br>S52. Read more books and listen to music.<br><br>S67. Investing my free time researching what I don't fully understand.<br><br>S38. I use apps to study English where I can learn new verbs and sentences and it takes the number of days as a streak which I always want to maintain. | 12. Read a book in English that interests me a lot. |
| For the country's future professionals, they must develop the four cognitive skills: writing, reading, speaking and listening, in order to achieve clear and timely communication (Ministry of National Education, 1995) | S24. Read and listen to a lot of music or dialogues to learn and speak, even if there are mistakes to get the language loose.<br><br>S35. At home, I aim to exercise and read a little.<br><br>S4. Listening to podcasts, reading a lot, and watching movies and series in English, also losing the fear of making mistakes. S8. When I have free space, I take the opportunity to read and listen to music. | 13. Read news in English at least twice a week. |
| Practice the new language through real, realistic contexts, such as in a conversation, reading a book or an article, or listening to a lecture are important and relevant strategies to perform Cassany, D. (1990). | S13. I've seen improvements when it comes to speaking the language.<br><br>S26. Try to talk more and adapt.<br><br>S24. Talking, asking questions, using one's own resources, using social networks and apps in a foreign language, and so on.<br><br>S16. Thanks to internet access, it allows one to carry out independent work. Additionally, studying face-to-face at the center allows you to listen to tourists speak in English. | 14. Attend a conversational event in English three times a month. |

*...Continúa Appendix 1. Strategies for Autonomous Learning*

| Translation of Bibliographic Reference | Translated Answers (quantitative and qualitative) to the autonomous learning questionnaire | Strategies of Autonomous Learning |
|---|---|---|
| Cognitive strategies and processes are relevant in the foreign language, students develop skills such as: reading, writing, listening, and speaking, the latter two with more difficulty than the others when learning a second language (Roldán, 2019). | S51. For example, internet searches, podcasts or writing texts have helped me.<br><br>S22. Sometimes it is difficult to generate autonomy on one's own because one does not generate self-interest.<br><br>S50. With digital media. | **15.** Carry a physical or digital notebook where you can write paragraphs, letters, articles, essays, poems, thoughts, songs, or texts of your choice. |
| "The use of technology in English language teaching and learning can also foster the development of strategies necessary for modern survival: communication, collaboration, and information gathering and retrieval." (Teachers of English Speakers of Other Languages, 2009, p. 15) | S38. I use apps to study English where I can learn new verbs and sentences and it takes the number of days as a streak which I always want to maintain.<br><br>S45. Learn the language through music (use of the "sounter" app).<br><br>S24. Talking, asking questions, using one's own resources, using social networks and apps in a foreign language, and so on.<br><br>S38. Apps that keep track of your daily study that helps us not to get away from practicing day by day. | **16.** Make use of 5 apps that are to my liking and constant practice. |
| Based on the theories of several psychologists and psychoanalysts, the aspects of autonomy and its role in the psychological, social, and academic context in the student environment have been investigated (Bandura, 1997) affirms "the importance of the self-determined goals set by students for optimal and healthy functioning when acquiring knowledge" | S32. I usually spend a lot of time on the activities I like, and these involve the language in some way.<br><br>S65. I always study and reinforce the topics after class.<br><br>S62. I try to stay in touch with the language as much as I can.<br><br>S39. When I feel the need. | **17.** Study the language in a space that I really like, for example: my bed, a café, a balcony, a park, etc. |
| A self-critical person who manages to work autonomously for and for his interests makes a comparison and an opposite vision to the heteronomy of the theory of morality (Piaget, 1965). | S67. Dedication, effort, and ATTITUDE.<br><br>S35. If it's because before I did it, I didn't know many things, part of it is the attitude and the desire to learn.<br><br>S46. Because each person is responsible for acquiring that second language and it is necessary to have an attitude to achieve it, but because one wants to acquire that new knowledge.<br><br>S35. If it's because before I did it, I didn't know many things, part of it is the attitude and the desire to learn.<br><br>S57. Look for something according to your area of interest to make it motivate. | **18.** Establish incentives that allow me to enjoy practicing the language in my free time. Example: If I read the news in the morning, I'll go get a delicious coffee. |
| It is the student's autonomy to put this information into practice through communication and dialogue with other students, their ability to communicate with foreigners or natives and acquire vocabulary by listening to music in English or watching movies in the language, which are the most common activities for them (Toapanta, 2014). | S37. Watch videos of native speakers speaking and teaching, how they really speak their language, and what their grammar is like.<br><br>S17. Watch videos as I learn vocabulary.<br><br>S33. Watching videos or podcasts and watching series to get used to a new language.<br><br>S38. Use apps and talk to yourself or friends about the language you are learning.<br><br>S24. Talking, asking questions, using one's own resources, using social networks and apps in a foreign language, and so on. | **19.** Talk to three native English speakers. |

*...Continúa Appendix 1. Strategies for Autonomous Learning*

| Translation of Bibliographic Reference | Translated Answers (quantitative and qualitative) to the autonomous learning questionnaire | Strategies of Autonomous Learning |
|---|---|---|
| All students learn in different ways, some people prefer to learn with visual resources and other people are more musical, mathematical or linguist (Garner, 1983). | S18. It takes practice to become a teacher.<br><br>S31. I consider that if we don't give ourselves a space outside of our classes to practice that second language, it's as if we don't want to learn this language and I say this because all my life I have practiced English through games and different activities not related to academics and thanks to that, I now have a level of English to be proud of.<br><br>S27. When I have time left, I always leave some time to practice. And since I like music in English it's pretty easy for me to practice. | **20.** Speak English to myself while I'm alone. |
| According to Dickinson (1993) we can define it as the area in which designed, adapted, or processed materials can be used by students in such a way that they can direct and evaluate their own learning with or without assistance. | S21. I've learned new things and put them into practice.<br><br>S4. I feel more confident and confident when speaking in another language.<br><br>S15. I feel more confident and confident when speaking in another language.<br><br>S13. Practice free space at home.<br><br>S21. Work hard, give them time to learn, don't compare your process to anyone else's, because we all learn differently. | **21.** Constantly think in English at least once a day. |
| How you learn and why you learn, an assessment of students' learning needs is to generate strategies to meet these needs and then implement them in their context (Hacker, 2009). | S24. Talking, asking questions, using one's own resources, using social networks and apps in a foreign language, and so on.<br><br>S33. Now there are many easy and practical ways to do it through the internet or social networks.<br><br>S22. Sometimes it's hard to learn on your own because you don't know how to do them and get tangled up.<br><br>S7. If you want to learn something, you need to reinforce it.<br><br>S10. Well, it's easy: when you want to learn, there are many tools. | **22.** Follow accounts or channels on social networks that are connected to the teaching or practice of the language. |
| Students often show an increase in self-confidence when they develop metacognitive skills, self-efficacy improves motivation and success in learning as they are fundamental pillars to achieve that consolidation and security that students need to achieve that independence in the face of the acquisition of a second language (Carmona, 2020). | S23. Not only did it help me to consolidate, but also to have confidence in myself and my knowledge.<br><br>S4. I feel more confident and confident when speaking in another language.<br><br>S12. Yes, why do I feel like I'm a little more lost in the story and I don't feel so lost.<br><br>S16. Because I have support from my boyfriend. | **23.** Follow accounts or channels on social networks that are connected to the teaching or practice of the language. |
| "Today's teachers don't just teach languages; they are expected to equip children with the skills needed to succeed in the world in the twenty-first century" (Baker, 2016). | S14. Be disciplined and love what you do.<br><br>S66. You must be very disciplined.<br><br>S67. Effort.<br><br>S60. First put your heart into it and then fall in love with the language.<br><br>S54. Don't give up. | **24.** Love English as sincerely as possible. |

*...Continúa Appendix 1. Strategies for Autonomous Learning*

| Translation of Bibliographic Reference | Translated Answers (quantitative and qualitative) to the autonomous learning questionnaire | Strategies of Autonomous Learning |
|---|---|---|
| Aristega et al. (2018) indicates that self-employment offers multiple benefits in the formative process such as practice, reinforcement and strengthening the development of English language skills is an important part of self-employment for people who want to advance their career and communicate effectively with people from other cultures, there are fun and effective digital resources that can help improve English skills | S11. Because I have become more self-taught in my way of studying and analyzing different topics or knowledge.<br>S63. Because it's not a Latino culture, and directed learning is ingrained from childhood.<br>S13. It helps us understand the world and its different cultures, as well as more outlets. | 25. Research customs and traditions of English-speaking countries. |
| Vygotsky (as cited in Rueda and Wilburn, 2014) was quoted, mentions that when the student has perfected their original language throughout life, this will help them to easily learn a new language, also if the languages have affective social and cultural ties, students are able to build their own learning considering their context and experience. | S51. For example, internet searches, podcasts or writing texts have helped me.<br>S53. Setting certain schedules.<br>S44. Time usage and time division.<br>S37. Yes, Why can I expand my vocabulary?<br>S50. It never stops because knowledge is evolutionary and constant. | 26. Improve my spelling and writing style. |
| These strategies can be categorized into various groups, such as cognitive strategies (e.g., organizing information, summarizing), metacognitive strategies (e.g., setting goals, monitoring progress), and social/affective strategies (e.g., seeking help, managing emotions) (Benson,1997). | S20. Be active, and often practical in English.<br>S15. A lot of listening and speaking.<br>S6. Don't depend on the university, look for your own learning strategy.<br>S33. By reading or listening, you learn more new words.<br>S59. Always force the practice of hatred. | 27. Take two mock international exams online. |