Promoting Autonomy in a First Semester MEIF group at the Language Center in Poza Rica.

MAESTRO EN ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA

PRESENTA

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CONTENTS

Abstract ........................................................................................................page 2

Chapter One

Introduction .......................................................................................................page 3

Chapter Two

Literature Review ..............................................................................................page 5

Chapter Three

Methodology .......................................................................................................page 18

Chapter Four

Analysis of task I ...............................................................................................page 31
Analysis of task II ..............................................................................................page 40
Analysis of task III .............................................................................................page 48
Analysis of task IV .............................................................................................page 54
Analysis of the final task ..................................................................................page 60

Chapter Five

Discussion ...........................................................................................................page 70

Conclusion ..........................................................................................................page 79

Appendix .............................................................................................................page 84
Abstract

This study explores the process that a group of students experienced while doing autonomous work in a Self-Access Center (SAC). The study focused on aspects such as students’ ideas and feelings about autonomy and independent work; students’s perceptions about SAC activities, problems and solutions; the role of learning styles and the use of metacognitive strategies, as well as teacher’s and students’ roles during the process. The study is an action research project which was carried out in an English as a Second Language group of beginners at the University of Veracruz who used the SAC for their autonomous work. Students were given five tasks designed to help them achieve a higher level of autonomy. Information was gathered through a diary of field notes for the teacher as well as a questionnaire and interviews for students at the end of each task. The results show that the teacher’s intervention was essential in order to raise students’ awareness of the use of learning styles and metacognitive strategies, and as a scaffolding process that allowed students to work from basic to more complicated tasks. The process helped students to modify their own concept of autonomy and learn how to reach a higher level of independence.
Chapter One

Introduction

The concept of autonomy has considerable relevance nowadays. The roles of the participants in the learning process have been changing. Students are expected to be independent, to take decisions and to be active participants in their own learning. Nowadays, the Self Access Centers of the University of Veracruz offer the conditions for students to develop their independence. Students can take English lessons in a classroom and have additional practice in a Self Access Center, where autonomy and independence can be promoted. The methodology of the English course includes independent work at the Self Access Center (SAC), considering the place as a practice center where students can develop their sense of autonomy. Consequently, the concept of autonomy needs to be clear for both, teachers and students since the beginning of the course. Moreover, students need to be familiar with the concept of a Self Access Center and with the place itself. For this to take place, we need a redefinition of teacher and learners roles within the parameters of the syllabus.

The present study reports on the process towards autonomy experienced by a group of students at the Language Center of the University of Veracruz in Poza Rica. The teacher trained them to become more independent through practice in the Self Access Center (SAC) which is also known as CAA (Centro de Auto Acceso) and considering aspects such as learning styles and metacognitive strategies, as well as students's needs, strengths and weaknesses. The study describes students's perceptions of their process towards autonomy as well as their perceptions of themselves as more independent students and of their teacher's role.

The rationale for undertaking this study was the observation that previous generations of students who seemed to work in an independent way were not working effectively and they were still having trouble working on their own at the Self Access Center in the middle, and in some cases at the end of the semester. Full autonomy is a desirable but unrealistic
ideal due to the fact that students do not become autonomous in a few weeks or even some months.

Many students may have certain level of autonomy and become more autonomous by means of different elements in the process such as awareness of their capacities, skills and needs. Autonomy is a process in which students need to be active participants, but also a process which requires support from the teacher because at a certain stage they need some guidance, orientation and assessment.

This is the reason why, in this study, I undertook Action Research to design a series of tasks in which students were guided to become more autonomous. The aim of the study was to explore the process that students went through while doing autonomous work at the SAC and to describe: a) students' ideas and feelings about autonomy and independent work, b) SAC activities, problems and solutions, c) the role of learning styles and the use of metacognitive strategies, d) students's role, and, e) the teacher's role.
Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

Autonomy and the learner
Learning English as a second language is a process in which both learners and teachers are involved and are responsible for its success. Nowadays the teaching of English has gradually changed since there is a tendency to make students more responsible for their own learning. This process is called autonomy, which is defined by Benson (2001: 8) as “the capacity to take charge of one’s own learning”. Taking this idea into account, autonomy is seen as a natural product of the learning in which the objectives, progress and evaluation are determined by the learner himself.

Autonomy is also considered as “the freedom and ability to manage one’s own affairs, which entail the right to make decisions as well... Autonomy and responsibility both require active involvement, and they are very much interrelated” (Scharle and Szabó 2000: 4). Based on this idea, students are expected to develop the ability to take charge of every stage of their own learning. Chan (2001: 506) considers that the stages of the learning process should be setting learning goals, identifying and developing learning strategies to achieve those goals, developing study plans, reflecting on learning (identifying problem areas and finding solutions for these problems), and assessing their own progress. Autonomy provides students with opportunities to be active participants in their own learning process.

Autonomous learning
A term that is closely related to autonomy is autonomous learning, which is considered as a process which students need to go through on their own in order to learn a language. It also refers to the ability to learn or use the language without the help of a teacher. Jeffries (1990: 88) considers autonomous learning and independent learning as the same thing and defines it as:
the learning in which an individual or group of learners study on their own, possibly for a part of parts of a course, without direct intervention from a tutor. This can involve learners in taking greater responsibility for what they learn, how they learn, and when they learn. It can also lead to learners being more involved in their own assessment. Independent learning is likely to be most effective when at least some support is available.

Besides, to go through this process, students need to have some specific knowledge of the language and the skills necessary to decide why, how and what to learn. In other words, it is the "learning that may take place when autonomy is being or has been acquired" (Holec 1981: 3).

The Self Access Center
Autonomous learning is often linked to a Self Access Center, which is a place especially designed to work with tasks related to the second language along with materials which foster independence. For Benson (2001: 114) "a self-access centre can be broadly defined as any purpose-designed facility in which learning resources are made directly available to learners". A Self Access Centre can be considered as either a learning or a practice center. As a learning center, it is considered as the place which provides the resources, the material and the necessary conditions to allow independent students to set and achieve their own learning goals. Sheering (1991, in Benson 2001: 113) defines a Self Access Center as "a way of describing materials that are designed and organized in such a way that students can select and work on tasks on their own". Similarly, Gardner and Miller (1999, cited in Benson 2001: 113) define it as "an environment for learning involving resources, teachers, learners and the system within which they are organized". This view of Self Access Center as a learning center suggests that students are responsible for their own learning by deciding what aspect of the language they want to learn, when and how to learn it. They are also responsible for deciding when to move to another stage or level of the language. To this end, the responsibility and the making of decisions are aspects of autonomy that students may put into practice in a self access center where students can work on their own and be involved in the process of autonomous learning.
On the other hand, a Self Access Center can also be considered as a practice area when it is part of students' formal instruction. In this case, students take lessons in a classroom with the presence of a teacher and they make use of the Self Access material in order to practise or review what they have already checked in class. Benson (2001:114) states that a Self Access Center "often functions as a quasi-independent unit with its own philosophy and routines for engaging learners in study outside the classroom". This quasi-independent unit is an area with available and appropriate material that second language students use as an extra resource. Here, it is the teacher in a classroom who often takes advantage of Self Access resources to promote individual and independent work among students, although this work is under the guidance of the teacher. The idea is to encourage learners to work on their own in order to develop their sense of responsibility and to help them learn how to learn a language by making use of Self Access material. Self Access Centers occupy a central position in the practice of autonomy and many teachers have come to the idea of autonomy through their work in them (Benson, 2001:114).

A Self Access Center usually has certain characteristics with regards to the material and the organization of this material. The material should be designed in such a way that students can evaluate themselves. This can be done, among many other ways, by providing an answer key to each task in order to allow students check their answers themselves. A Self Access Center can be regarded as a practice center and it is designed to enable the learners to progress at their own speed. "Such a system is closely integrated with the institution's teaching program to the extent that learners are directed to or can easily locate materials which relate closely in grammatical and lexical level to the work covered in class" (Sturtridge 1992: 5). The material is generally arranged in such a way that they are physically and cognitively accessible to learners. "The role that a center plays within the instruction is reflected in the way it is organized and equipped, in the materials it offers and in the sort of learning that is likely to go in it" (Ibid: 4).
Teachers' and learners' roles

In the process of students' autonomy development, it is important to consider the role of the teacher and the role of the students. Teachers usually play roles such as a guide, monitor, observer, organizer, and/or advisor to mention a few. The teacher is considered as a guide when s/he gives instructions about what to do and how to do it, working as a model in order to have students following her/him. As a monitor, the teacher is the one who frequently reviews what students are doing in order to help them. As an observer, s/he pays attention to students' activities and behavior so that s/he can observe their needs and weaknesses. As an organizer, s/he plans tasks or activities in such as way that s/he takes into account the level of students, space, time and other factors that may influence students to carry out the activities. As an advisor, s/he needs to know students in order to orient each of them in an appropriate way.

Besides, in the process of students becoming autonomous the roles of the teacher may include those of a facilitator, helper, coordinator, counselor, consultant, adviser, knower and resource, which Voller (1997) in Arnold (1999: 9) reduces to three. He suggests that "the role of the teacher in the development of learner autonomy is generally considered to be that of facilitator, counselor or resource". Facilitator refers to the idea of working with groups of students in which the teacher is seen as providing support for learners. S/he is a facilitator, concerned with her/his own sensitivity to the learners and to their individuals differences in learning styles and rates of learning; s/he wants to train students to develop their own learning strategies so that they will not be dependent on her/him. Voller (1997: 102) points out that teachers who play this role help students to plan and carry out their independent language learning by means of needs analysis, objective setting, work planning, and selecting materials. In relation to this, Little (1989) and Kelly (1996) in Suttanu (2001: 110) argue that counselors are responsible for raising language and learning awareness, facilitating learner self management, providing mental support (encouragement, empathy), helping learners to identify their needs, define objectives, select appropriate materials, choose appropriate learning strategies, organize themselves, evaluate and monitor their progress.
The teacher as a counselor concentrates more on one-to-one situations. Here "the teacher is encouraged to identify students who are having problems and learning difficulties, and to offer individual counsel to students who need it" (Richards and Lockhart, 1996: 100). The role of the counselor is better reflected in a Self Access Center. According to Voller (1997) in Arnold (1999: 147), both facilitators and counselors provide psycho-social and technical supports. Psycho-social support refers to caring and to motivating learners, as well as to raising learners' awareness on the importance of learning a language, as well as on the importance of making use of a Self Access Center, while technical support refers to helping learners to plan and carry out their learning, to evaluate themselves, and to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to plan, implement and evaluate their learning. The difference between the facilitator and counselor is that facilitators mostly work with groups and counselors in one-to-one situations. These factors, as well as those of the facilitator or counselor being caring, supportive, patient, tolerant, empathic and open, are some characteristics of a teacher who is involved in the process of autonomy and who is in charge of facilitating and counseling students' process of autonomy.

Finally, the teacher as a resource is when a teacher can be seen as a resource of knowledge and expertise or as a talking encyclopedia or catalogue. For Voller (1997: 105) in Arnold (1999: 147) there are two ways of looking at teachers as resource. The first is that they can be seen as a talking encyclopedia or catalogue. The second is that they are the knowers or experts and can be used as a way of maintaining unequal power relations between teachers and learners. Teachers as a resource offer support by solving doubts of students who probably need more help, guidance or supervision. They help students to feel more confident of what they are doing or they are about to do. Arnold (1999: 152) argues that to be a useful but not an interfering resource requires teachers to always 'be' with students, although not necessarily physically present. Learners' decisions to ask for correction should be respected. In order to respond to the request, teachers need specialized knowledge and skills. Teachers need greater expertise to balance the power between the teacher and the learner rather than holding all the power themselves.
With regards to learner's roles, these are also a key element in the process of becoming more autonomous. Learners need to be active participants in their own learning. Scharle, A. and Szabó, A. (2000: 9) suggest that one of the main characteristics for autonomous students is responsibility, which implies several aspects such as willingness to work, changing their attitude from passive to active learner and participant, and becoming aware of their own learning process. Besides, Chan (2001: 505) states that the autonomous learner is expected to develop the ability to take charge of every stage of his/her own learning including identifying and developing learning strategies to achieve the learning goals and reflecting on learning (which include identifying problem areas and means of addressing these problems), among others. Students are expected to have the willingness to act independently and in cooperation with others. They need to have knowledge about the learning process and the learning strategies. Thus, conscious awareness of the learning process is particularly important because without such awareness, the learner will find it difficult to take advantage of the learning resources and to be an active participant of her/his own process of becoming autonomous.

Learning styles
Another important factor to consider with regards to autonomy is learning styles, which refer to personal preferences. Brown (2000: 113) defines style as:

a term that refers to consistent and rather enduring tendencies or preferences within an individual. Styles are those general characteristics of intellectual functioning (and personality type, as well) that pertain to you as an individual, and that differentiate you from someone else.

Learning styles might be thought of as "cognitive, affective, and physiological traits that are relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment", or "as a general predisposition, voluntary or not, toward processing information in a particular way" (Keefe 1979: 4 in Brown 2000: 114). All learners have particular attributes relating to their learning process. Some people present visual presentations; others may prefer spoken language; and others may better respond to hands-on activities. People learn differently and at different paces because of their biological and psychological differences. This is why student have different learning styles.
Visual learners or learners who learn through seeing need to see the teacher's body language and facial expressions to fully understand the content of a lesson. They tend to prefer sitting at the front of the classroom to avoid visual obstructions (e.g. people's heads). They may think in pictures and learn best from visual displays including: diagrams, illustrated text books, overhead transparencies, videos, flipcharts and handouts. During a lecture or classroom discussion, visual learners often prefer to take detailed notes to absorb the information. Some common characteristics of Visual learners suggested by Wong (2003: 8) are that they learn best by seeing information; they can easily recall information in the form of numbers, words, phrases, or sentences; they can easily understand and recall information presented in pictures, charts, or diagrams; they have strong visualization skills and can look up and see information; they can make "movies in their minds" of information they are reading; they have strong visual-spatial skills that involve sizes, shapes, textures, angles, and dimensions; they pay close attention and learn to interpret body language (facial expressions, eyes, stance); and they have a keen awareness of aesthetics, the beauty of the physical environment, and visual media.

Auditory learners or learners who learn through listening learn best through verbal lectures, discussions, talking about things and listening to what others have to say. Auditory learners interpret the underlying meanings of speech through listening to voice tone, pitch or speed. Written information may have little meaning until it is heard. These learners often benefit from reading texts aloud and using a tape recorder. Wong (2003: 8) states that some characteristics of auditory learners are that they lean best by hearing information; they can accurately remember details of information heard in conversations or lectures; they have strong language skills that include well-developed vocabularies and appreciation of words; they have strong oral communication skills that enable them to carry on conversations and be articulate; they have "finely tuned ears" and may find
learning a foreign language relatively easy; and they hear tones, rhythms, and notes of music and often have exceptional musical talents.

Kinesthetic or tactile learners are those who learn through moving, doing and touching. Tactile / Kinesthetic persons learn best through a hands-on approach, actively exploring the physical world around them. They may find it hard to sit for long periods and may become distracted by their need for activity and exploration. Reid (19995: 229) suggests that some characteristics are that they are well coordinated, with a strong sense of timing and body movements and they often have been labeled “hyperactive”. They relate to such words as: feel, touch, do, move; they enjoy working with their hands; they want to feel and touch everything; they tend to be skilled at repairing and assembling things, even without instructions; they like to explore their environment; they focus well during ‘hands on’ projects and activities; they like variety in classroom activities; they enjoy opportunities to work collaboratively with a partner or a small group on a task.

Learning strategies
Another aspect to consider in the process of development of autonomous learners through the use of Self Access materials, is the strategies. Oxford (1990: 1) argues that strategies are especially important for language learning because they are tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence. Oxford (1990: 14) divides strategies into two main classes, Direct and Indirect. On the one hand, Direct Strategies are like the performer in a stage play and require mental processing of the language. They are divided into memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies. On the other hand, Indirect Strategies are for general management of learning. They are like the director in a stage play and are divided into metacognitive, affective, and social being the metacognitive for coordinating the learning process, affective for regulating emotions, and social for learning with others. The kind of strategy that seems to fit in this process of becoming autonomous is the metacognitive strategy. Oxford (1990: 136) states that metacognitive means beyond, beside, or with the cognitive. Thus, metacognitive strategies are actions which go beyond purely cognitive devices, and which provide a way for learners to coordinate their own learning process. They allow learners to
control their own cognition or coordinate the learning process by using functions such as centering, arranging, planning, and evaluating.

Centering your learning is a set of three strategies, although for this piece of research I will only discuss two of them due to the fact that these are the ones that are closely related to the current research. They help learners to direct their attention and energies on certain language tasks, activities, skills, or materials. The use of these strategies provides a focus for language learning. The first is called Overview and Linking with Already Known Material. Comprehensively, it overviews a key concept, principle, or set of materials in an upcoming language activity and associates it with what is already known. This strategy can be accomplished in many different ways, but is often helpful to follow three steps: learning why the activity is being done, building the needed vocabulary, and making the association. The second is called Paying Attention and refers to deciding in advance to pay attention in general to a language learning task and to ignore distractors (by directed attention), and/or to pay attention to specific aspects of the language or to situational details (by selective attention).

The second set of strategies is called Arranging and Planning your Learning, which helps learners to organize and plan so as to get the most out of language learning. It contains six strategies, although I will only refer to two of them due to the fact that they are the ones that fit in the research. The first is organizing, and it refers to understanding and using conditions related to optimal learning of the new language, organizing one's schedule, physical environment (e.g. space, temperature, sound, lighting), and language learning notebook. The second, setting goals and objectives, focuses on setting aims for language learning, including long-term goals (such as being able to use the language for informal conversation by the end of the year) or short-term objectives (such as finishing reading a short story by Friday).

The third set of strategies is Evaluating your Learning, which contains two related strategies, both aiding learners in checking their language performance. One strategy involves noticing and learning from errors, and the other concerns evaluating overall
progress. The first is called self monitoring which refers to identifying errors in understanding or producing the new language, determining which ones are important (those that cause serious confusion or offense), tracking the source of important errors, and trying to eliminate such errors. The second is called self-evaluating and it refers to evaluating one's own progress in the new language. For instance, students can make use of the self-evaluation by checking to see whether one is reading faster and understanding more than 1 month or 6 months ago. They could even check their progress in understanding a greater percentage of a conversation.

Studies on learner autonomy
Besides all these factors, there are also relevant studies on autonomous work. One previous piece of research on autonomy is the one by Chan (2001) carried out in the Hong Kong Polytechnic University in Hong Kong in 1998-1999. The study explores learner's attitude and perceptions of language learning, teacher and learner roles, their learning preferences and perceptions of learner autonomy. The primary objective was to examine the validity of learner autonomy in the tertiary context and explore possible strategies for promoting learner autonomy in the tertiary classroom. The study was carried out within a class of 20 second-year language major students on the 'English at the Workplace' course having Cantonese as their native language. The needs analysis survey focused on the learner's views in a) aims and motivation of language learning; b) perceptions of the teacher's role and their own; c) learning styles and preferences; d) learners' perceptions of autonomous learning; and e) the extent to which they consider themselves autonomous learners.

The findings suggest that the group was interested in learning English in order to communicate (instrumentally motivated) and that learners were able to articulate their specific goals in the study of English clearly and adequately. Here the teacher was seen as 'the resource person', 'the instructor' and the facilitator. With regards to learners' role, they generally liked to be given the chance to contribute to the learning process, such as choosing learning tasks, activities and even what to cover on the course. Learners' preferences were basically for collaborative group work arrangement, which fostered
learner autonomy. They also preferred activities such as language games, role-plays, reading newspapers, watching English TV and movies, listening to English radios and songs, and speaking to native speakers. In the learners' perception of autonomy there were strong indications of a high positive attitude and the study showed that they had definite views of the nature of learner autonomy and they were very aware of its demands. Finally, students evaluated their capacities and readiness to learn autonomously fairly negative stating their low esteem to prior learning experience, their passive orientation and their lack of motivation to learn. We may conclude that in this specific piece of research teacher guidance and help were needed.

There is a different study about ways in which mechanisms for promoting learner autonomy have been incorporated into one English language program (Cotterall, 1995 in Wallace 1998: 172). The course has been carried out at the English Language Institute of the Victoria University of Wellington for more than thirty years in the summer months. Certain program components were originally designed with the explicit objective of encouraging learners to take more responsibility for their language learning. These components are: 1) Learner/teacher dialogue established in an interview with students at the beginning, mid-point, and the end of the course. The first was to establish a personal relationship between teacher and learner, and the setting and clarifying objectives; the second aims to assess and discuss the learners' progress and to offer advice; and the final interview is to assess learners on the future study of English. 2) Learning a Language study theme is a unit of work on learning a language for the first week of the course. This unit presents some key concepts in language learning, and encourages learners to explore issues such as the amount and type of language input they are getting, and the use they make of it in arranging adequate practice opportunities. 3) Classroom tasks and materials aim to replicate those learners confront in 'real-world' situations, and to incorporate language support. 4) Student record booklet divided into two sections: the first contains a series of self-assessment scales and a place to separate occasions during the twelve-week course. The second is concerned with monitoring learning activity. It contains a number of graphs and charts on which learners can record their activities and progress during the course. 5) The use of a Self Access Center to provide a selection of self-study
materials to practice reading, vocabulary, listening and grammar. These, together, make up an overall strategy for fostering autonomy and focus on learners’ understanding of how language learning proceeds, how effective the support provided for learners is, and how learners’ access to resources and feedback works.

The experimentation with this course-wide strategy for fostering autonomy has been productive and encouraging, and the conclusions are that autonomy in language learning is desirable; dialogue is more important to autonomy than structures; the relationship between the learner and the class teacher is central to the fostering of autonomy; and autonomy has implications for the entire curriculum. The implications are that a vocabulary of language learning shared by all participants is required, that time must be made available within programs for teachers and learners to engage in dialogue about the learning process, and that teacher education programs need to incorporate practice in the skills required for management of the learning dialogue.

In the piece of research I carried out, the concept of autonomy will be related to the work students need to do at a Self Access Center in combination with their class. Thus, these kinds of students are not expected to reach a high level of autonomy and independence. Instead, the English program seeks to foster students's individual work through a gradual process to achieve certain level of independence and autonomy:

> it would be unrealistic to expect to change attitudes instantly. We can only make changes gradually, think about the effects of these changes and consolidate them before trying something else... Students will need time to notice the benefits of increased autonomy for their language learning in particular, and their personal development in general (Lowes & Target 1998: 14).

**Scaffolding process**

To this point it might be relevant to mention that the gradual process in which students were involved can be known as scaffolding. For Bruner (1975: 67) the concept of scaffolding is based on the work of Vygotsky's concept of the *zone of proximal development* (ZPD). “The zone of proximal development is the distance between what children can do by themselves and the next learning that they can be helped to achieve with competent assistance” (Raymond, 2000: 176). He proposed that with an adult's
assistance, children could accomplish tasks that they ordinarily could not perform independently. Scaffolded instruction is "the systematic sequencing of prompted content, materials, tasks, and teacher and peer support to optimize learning" (Dickson, Chard, & Simmons, 1993). Scaffolding is a process in which students are given support until they can apply new skills and strategies independently. When students are learning new or difficult tasks, they are given more assistance. As they begin to demonstrate task mastery, the assistance or support is decreased gradually in order to shift the responsibility for learning from the teacher to the students. Thus, as the students assume more responsibility for their learning, the teacher provides less support.

Similarly, Verna Lange (1983: 15) refers to scaffolding as a strategy that consists of teaching new skills by engaging students collaboratively in tasks that would be difficult for them to complete on their own. The instructor initially provides extensive instructional support, or scaffolding, to assist the students in building their understanding of new content and process. Once the students internalize the content and/or process they assume the responsibility for controlling the process of a given task. The temporary scaffolding provided by the instructor is removed by the permanent structure of students understanding.

The kind of research that I carried out was based on a set of tasks for students to perform as part of a scaffolding process. Thus, an appropriate method that allows us to reach a goal by means of practice is Action Research, which is considered as a disciplined method of investigation which gives credibility to the claims that are made. It is a research method which 'fits' the parameters of the classroom for it allows teachers and pupils to be active change agents, not simply participant observers (Macintyre, 2000:2).
Chapter Three

Methodology

Context
This piece of research was carried out in a group of twenty five first semester MEIF (Modelo Educativo Integral Flexible) students at the Language Center Poza Rica in a period of one semester. They are students of different majors at the University of Veracruz who have to take two semesters of English during the first two years since English is part of the common core of all the university study programs. The English class consisted of an hour and thirty minutes from Monday to Thursday, making an average of six hours. However, the program suggests five hours to the class and one hour for the teachers to give counseling to their students. During this hour, students can also do autonomous activities, basically at the SAC. This is what is called “the sixth hour”. The purpose of the course is to provide students with basic knowledge of English so that students may use it as a tool in their professional life. In the first semester course, one element of the evaluation criteria worth 10% is for students to work fifteen hours at the Self Access on their own during the whole semester since a Self Access Center is for MEIF courses the closest space to what autonomous practice is.

During the first week of class it is the classroom teachers who usually take their students to the Self Access Center to give them an induction course. Students who take English in a classroom are given the induction course to the Self Access Center or SAC by their own teachers. This is the result of a school agreement due to the fact that Self Access counselors provide counseling basically to autonomous students.

Participants
The participants were university students between eighteen and twenty two years old. They came from different majors such as Social work, Engineering, Pedagogy, to mention a few. However, many of those students entered the university with a poor English background due to several factors. The main ones were that many of them had not taken
English classes previously and that they had come from rural high schools, as the majority mentioned. These kinds of students usually had classes at their different faculties all day and they needed to have time to come to the Language Center, which is for many of them far from their faculties, to take their English class. Besides, as English was a compulsory subject, their motivation was basically to pass the course, not to learn the language. The class had a maximum of twenty five students, which was an appropriate number to work with.

For this study I was also considered a participant. I was the classroom teacher and also the one who carried out the project. I observed students during the time they spent at the SAC and I also interviewed them after each task of the study. Thus, it was important for me to plan the lessons in such a way that the study was not considered a factor that affected classes.

Instruments

Three data collection instruments were designed: teacher’s diary, student questionnaire, and student interviews. The purpose of the first instrument was to collect information from me as the teacher; it was a personal diary of field notes to write comments, notes and reflections based on observations of students during the time they spent working at the SAC (see guide in Appendix I). These notes were about what students did, how long they took to find their material and start working, and how easy or how difficult it seemed for them to work on their own. I observed them in each of the five tasks carried out every two weeks. Students are not allowed to work at the Self Access Center during class time in this Language Center due to the fact that the SAC is a bit small to receive all classroom students at a certain time. However, as I needed to observe what each student did and how they worked at the SAC, I took them there during class time as a special agreement once every two weeks in order to observe all of them. It is relevant to mention that teachers are not normally allowed to be in the SAC with students due to the fact that it is the time for students to carry out activities on their own.
The second instrument was a questionnaire for students to be administered at the end of each task in order to gather information about what they thought of the activity, what they did, how they felt with the task, what they learned from the task, and what their perceptions were about the process, their roles as more independent learners and the teacher's role (see Appendix III, VII, IX, XI, and XIV). These data were collected at the end of every task during one semester in order to have accounts on how students felt and how they had worked, and reports of what activities the teacher had set for them to deal with on their own. One questionnaire was given to every student and it was answered individually. Students were asked to write their name on the top of the questionnaire so that the information could be more personal and I could have the accounts of each student along the four tasks of the project so that these could be modified as needed.

Some interviews with students during the assessment time were also conducted (see question guide in Appendix IV, VIII, X, XII). These were teacher-student personal interviews. The questions were related to how students felt with the tasks, how they worked at the SAC, what areas of the SAC they worked in, if they followed the teacher's advice, and what difficulties, if any, they faced when working on their own. For the interview students had to take the personal planning report card, which they used in task two, three and four, and their bitacora (or self access log for students) so that they could have the information of what specific activities they did at the self-access. This was a format especially designed for students to have a complete report on what material they checked at the SAC, what areas they visited, and some other details (see Appendix II).

Procedure
The project consisted of five stages. These stages or tasks were designed to be carried out every two weeks in order to allow students to have enough time to practice during these weeks. Besides, the questionnaires and interviews were taken during class time. The tasks and data collection instruments were given to all the students. All of them participated in this project due to the fact that the activities were part of the class. However, I just considered the information of fifteen students in order to have a manageable sample for the data collection. Besides, I considered that 15 out of 25
students was a suitable sample of students to provide reliable data. I devoted Thursday to
giving students their tasks or to let them plan what to do during the following week; Mondays to taking students to work at the Self Access Center, which gave me the
opportunity to observe them and take notes; and Tuesdays for the administration of a
questionnaire and the interview, which included revision of their Self Access log.

First Task

Before I started with the project, I took students to the Self Access Center to take the
induction course and provide them with a personal key number they needed to have
access to the center. It is a requirement of the Self Access Center for students to register
on a computer every time they enter in order to have control of the material they use and
to keep their personal time record.

The induction course consisted of an hour. In the first part of the course students were
explained, in theory, what a Self Access is, what it consists of, how it is structured, how
the materials are arranged and organized, and how to make use of the center. It is
relevant to mention that the induction course does not include information or preparation
about any kind of strategies and the word 'autonomy' is only mentioned, but not explained.

In the second part of the induction course students were taken by the teacher around the
center to show them the different areas: listening, speaking, computer, video, reading
(with materials for writing, grammar, vocabulary, grammar books, dictionaries, course
books, just to mention some). We stopped in each area so that students could have an
eample of how to select some material and how to work with it. They were explained that
each material they would select needed to have a worksheet so that they could work or
practice. After the induction course students were asked to work alone in the Self Access
Center as an extra class activity, to look for material related to the unit or topic checked in
class, to choose a specific area and to start working so that they could link topics they
checked in class and the materials at the SAC.
After they had taken the induction course, I started with the first task. This was on the second week of the course when students had already worked on two units of the course book. For this task students needed to work at the SAC considering the topics they had been checking in class, taking their own decisions about what to do and what area to choose: listening, speaking, reading, writing, video, grammar, etc. However, I suggested students only find two activities to solve or work with, taking into consideration that a single activity usually takes students about thirty minutes to solve, in general. This first task was a kind of exploratory work, basically to observe what students did, the difficulties they faced when they worked alone, the time they spent looking for material and the decisions they took the first time they worked at the Self Access Center.

Students needed to fill in a chart (See Table 1), which was a guide for them to know what to do before they actually entered The Center. However, as this first task was to find out the time and difficulties they faced at the SAC when selecting their material, they were asked to fill it in after their practice. The idea was to make them become familiar with the format they were to use in the following tasks.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIRST TASK</th>
<th>LEARNER’S CHOICE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CADI area (Students’ decision)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activity (Students’ decision)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

After students had been to the SAC they filled in the Self Access log (see Appendix II) answered a questionnaire designed for this first task (see Appendix III) to know what decisions students had taken, why they had chosen certain material, what criteria they had used to decide, and mainly how students had worked and how they had felt without
the help of the teacher. They also participated in the interview (see Appendix IV), answering questions about why they chose the area, and the material, and how the tasks helped them in their learning of English. Students also provided information about how the tasks allowed them to learn how to work at the Self Access Center, how they felt working without the teacher, as well as what they would like the teacher to do in order to help them or guide them to work at the SAC in a more effective way.

**Second Task**

The second task was more personal and specific. This time, the objective was to find out students' personal learning styles by means of a survey administered during class time (see Appendix V) in order to know students' preferences for learning and thus know in what specific areas at the SAC they may work to have more effective results with their learning. The results were analyzed in the classroom with students so that they could be aware of their own personal styles. Information about what each style consisted of was given. Once students were aware of what a learning style was, the link between the information and the kind of material they could find in the Self Access Center was made. This time it was important to select material that seemed to be more appropriate for each style. It was also necessary to explain that students might have fit into more than one style included in the survey.

Besides, before this second task during class time I shared information with students about metacognitive learning strategies to raise awareness on the need of developing and using them. I let them know that there are some specific strategies to plan their actions, some others to organize the activities they plan to carry out, and some others to evaluate their own work (see Appendix VI). Students knew the name of the strategy, the definition and how they could use each strategy. I gave them a photocopy containing the information due to the fact that they needed to have it with them all the time because they would put it into practice in the following tasks. The idea was that students became familiar with the strategies little by little and by means of their use. To do this, I planned'
Then, based on the results, I knew whether the awareness about metacognitive learning strategies worked or not. Some reflection was also needed on why the awareness worked, why it did not work and what was wrong. Students were also observed during their work in the Self Access Center, so that I could take notes about the activities they did, the time they spent and how they behaved when working alone.

After students went to the SAC they needed to fill in the Self Access log with the required information, to answer the questionnaire (see Appendix VII), and to answer the teacher's questions during the interview (see Appendix VIII). This information was about what they did, how they felt, what problems they had faced, how they considered the independent work, and how their opinion about the teacher's amount of help in this process.

**Third Task**

The third task was also personal and specific to each student, like the second task. However, this time I based my recommendations considering students' learning styles, the topic checked in class, SAC areas, and also students' weaknesses and linguistic needs. Students' weaknesses and needs were not considered until the third task in order to observe what difficulties students could have presented as the course was progressing. Some quizzes were administered in class as a review of previous units and were checked in class so that students could realize what their problems were in terms of topics and skills (listening, reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary). The information about students' learning style and their weaknesses were together so that I could compare what learners' preferences and needs were and thus make a balance between these two factors. Students also had this information about themselves in order to have a clear idea of what materials and areas they needed to choose in the Self Access Center, either to practise or to reinforce topics checked in class.

Students were observed during their practice in the Self Access Center and notes were taken about the activities that they did, the time they spent looking for material and carrying out the activities, how many work sheets they selected to accomplish the
activities, and how they behaved when working alone. After the task students filled in the chart (Table 3) with the information of what strategies they used, if any, as well as the Self Access log, as in the previous tasks. They also answered the questionnaire (see Appendix IX) and the interview (see Appendix X) to report on what they did, how they felt, what they had learned, what they thought about their independent work, and how they considered the role of the teacher in this process.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Learning Style</th>
<th>Student's Needs</th>
<th>Strategies used</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>CADI Area</th>
<th>Activity / Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Auditivo</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Kinestésico / Táctil</td>
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</table>

Fourth Task

Based on what students had learned during the course about how and why to select certain activities and materials at the Self Access Center, the fourth task was selected by students themselves based on what they decided to do taking into consideration their learning styles, needs, strategies, the topic they needed to check according to the program, and the area they wanted to work in order to practice or reinforce a topic. This time students were expected to be more conscious of what their styles were, how to identify their own weaknesses and what strategies they would use in advance. This time the report chart shown below (Table 4) was filled in in the classroom in order to check what students were planning to do and why.
Students were observed during their work at the SAC taking notes about the activities they did, the time they spent finding their materials and how they behaved when working alone. The Self Access log, questionnaire (see Appendix XI) and interview (see Appendix XII) were answered after students had already been to the SAC. These instruments were used to know how students felt, how they considered themselves as more autonomous students and their process of working in an independent way.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Learning Style</th>
<th>Student's Needs</th>
<th>Strategies used</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>CADI Area</th>
<th>Activity / Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Auditivo</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Kinestésico / Táctil</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Final Task**

The final task was designed to close the project. I arranged students in groups according to their learning style, or their more predominant learning style in case they had more than one. The objective was to know how much they had learned about the selection of material at the SAC in the process. At this point students could create their own pathway in which they were expected to show that they knew the areas at the Self Access Center and how the material was arranged, which has been one of the basic problems when they started to work in an independent way and one of the reasons why they usually felt
disoriented. There were four teams of three to four students, for the sake of balance. Then, each group with a certain learning style was asked to go to the area in the SAC where they worked best (for instance, kinesthetic students went to the computer and reading area to work on the writing skill). There were some teams that covered more than one room because their styles allowed them to do it and because there was not much material to check, such as in the listening and the video section. By the time students were given the final task they were supposed to be already familiar with the Self Access Center, how to work there and the materials they could use. For students who still had problems working independently, the rest of the team was there as a support.

Once groups were arranged, they went to the SAC area suggested by the teacher to check the material in order to create their own pathway. The kinesthetic team was sent to the writing area as well as to the grammar and computer room to check the materials related to this skill; the visual team checked the video, computer, reading and vocabulary areas; and the auditory team checked the listening area, including songs, and the computer area with material related to the skill of listening. Students were asked to find materials of unis 8 and 9 of the course due to the fact that these were the units we were to check in class by the time we finished the project. The task lasted one week. When they had the information, they organized it to create their pathways. They needed to hand their pathways in and share them with the rest of the teams so that each student had updated information and thus they knew what materials they might find in the Self Access Center for the rest of the course (see Appendix XIII).

There was also a final questionnaire (see Appendix XIV) in which students answered questions about the whole process. These questions were to know students' perceptions about their autonomy development process, how the specific tasks set by the teacher helped them in this process, what difficulties they faced when working on their own, what they did to overcome difficulties after having passed through all this process. The next chapter includes more detailed information and analysis of the different stages or tasks.
The following chart is shown as a summary of the tasks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before the Task</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>After the Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TASK 1</strong></td>
<td>Induction Course.</td>
<td>Students work at the Self Access Center on their own and select the material and the area where they wanted to work considering the topics they had been checking in class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Give students a key to sign in when entering the SAC.</td>
<td>Students fill in the SAC log (Appendix II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students decide what area and what activities to carry out in the SAC.</td>
<td>Students fill in Table 1 (Page 22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students fill in Table 1 (Page 22)</td>
<td>Answer questionnaire 1 (Appendix III)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Take interview 1 (Appendix IV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher's observation during students's work at the SAC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TASK 2</strong></td>
<td>Administer Learning Styles survey (Appendix V)</td>
<td>Students fill in the SAC log (Appendix II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students and the teacher analyze the survey results.</td>
<td>Students Fill in Table 2 (Page 24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The teacher shares information about metacognitive strategies (Appendix VI)</td>
<td>Answer questionnaire 2 (Appendix VII)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The teacher designs students's activities to work on in the SAC.</td>
<td>Take interview 2 (Appendix VIII)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher's observation during students's work at the SAC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TASK 3</strong></td>
<td>The teacher administers quizzes.</td>
<td>Students fill in the SAC log (Appendix II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The teacher designs students's activities to work on in the SAC.</td>
<td>Students fill in Table 3 (Page 26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students' work at the SAC on activities designed by the teacher based on their learning styles, the topic checked in the classroom and the areas in the SAC.</td>
<td>Answer questionnaire 3 (Appendix IX)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Take interview 3 (Appendix X)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher's observation during students's work at the SAC.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| TASK 4         | Students select what activities to carry on in the SAC. | Students select their activities considering their learning styles, needs, strategies, the topic and the area to practice or reinforce it. | Students fill in the SAC log (Appendix II)  
|               |                                                           |                                                                 | Students fill in Table 4 (Page 27)  
|               |                                                           |                                                                 | Answer questionnaire 4 (Appendix XI)  
|               |                                                           |                                                                 | Take interview 4 (Appendix XII)  
|               |                                                           |                                                                 | Teacher's observation during students's work at the SAC.  
| FINAL TASK    | The teacher arranges students in groups according to their learning style | Students create their own pathway to show that they knew the areas at the Self Access Center and how the material was arranged. | They hand in their pathways and share them with the rest of the teams (see Appendix XIII)  
|               |                                                           |                                                                 | Answer questionnaire 5 (Appendix XIV) |
Chapter Four

Analysis

This chapter presents the findings regarding each task of the project. Different aspects are considered: students' concept of autonomy, criteria students used to select the area and activities at the SAC, reasons to go to the SAC, advantages of working at the SAC according to students, problems students faced at the SAC, how students solved the problems, feelings towards independent work, ways to improve their independent work, and students' perception of what the teacher's role should be.

TASK I

The first task consisted of letting students work at the Self Access Center on their own and, based on their personal criteria, select the material and the area they wanted to work in. The aim of this first task was to identify students' idea of what autonomy was, to report on what they had done, what problems they had faced, how they had carried out their activities during their work at the SAC, and what they would like the teacher to do in order to guide them to work better and to be more independent. The information was first taken from field notes during students work at the SAC (see Appendix I), then from a questionnaire students answered after the first task (see Appendix III), and finally from an interview after the task (see Appendix IV). The information provided influenced the decision I needed to take in designing the Second Task. It is important to clarify that, although the data were collected with three different instruments, the information was mainly taken from the questionnaires and from the interviews due to the fact that I could find more relevant and detailed information than in the field notes.

STUDENTS' CONCEPT OF AUTONOMY

The first aspect to consider was students' personal concept of autonomy. This allowed me to have a broad idea and justify the link between the concept of autonomy and the work at
the Self Access Center due to the fact that it is a center where students can work on their own with tasks related to the learning of a second language, and that provides materials which foster independence. Students understood autonomy as the individual work they carry out independently. Most of them defined it as the activities they perform on their own taking their own decisions, with responsibility, without depending on anybody and without any kind of pressure. Some students' definitions taken from the questionnaire: “Es no depender de nadie, tomar tus propias decisiones sobre cómo realizar ciertas actividades”; “Cuando una persona no necesita de nada, ni de nadie para realizar algún fin u objetivo”; “Es realizar actividades con responsabilidad y sin ninguna ayuda o que nadie nos apresure pero siempre ser responsable”.

The third part of the students emphasized the individual nature of autonomy: “Es un trabajo individual en donde me pongo a prueba”; “Es la forma en que uno aprende por su parte, individualmente”; “Es una forma individual para trabajar en particular de forma autónoma, es una forma muy bonita”; “Trabajar en forma individual en cuanto a lo que yo tengo a mi alcance de realizar mis actividades”. Besides, the interview revealed that about three students (20%) autonomy is a way for a person to work on their own and without the presence of the teacher: “Ya tengo que trabajar solo”, “Tengo que aprender por mi cuenta”; “Se trata de que el maestro ya no vaya con nosotros, de que nosotros aprendamos por nosotros mismos”.

THE SELF ACCESS CENTER

SAC AREAS AND ACTIVITIES THAT STUDENTS SELECTED

With regards to the activities they chose to do at the Self Access Center, out of 15 students: 3 reported that they had worked in the reading area using a grammar book and a dictionary; 5 worked in the listening area solving a worksheet and using audio cassettes to check pronunciation; 7 in the computer area using a grammar or a listening program related to the topics in class. Results from the field notes taken during my observation of their work reveal that many students worked in the computer area, which may have been
because it is an area that usually attracts students' attention because of the interactive programs. The questionnaire revealed that one of the main reasons was because they considered it the easiest way to work. Besides, the interview revealed that the majority of the students (more than 50%) chose that area because it was the only area they knew, because it is the only area they remember from the induction course, because they like to work on computers, or because it is easy for them: "Es lo único que conozco de ahí adentro, por eso me fui ahí", "Es de lo único que me acuerdo del curso de inducción", "Me gusta trabajar con computadoras, se me hizo fácil".

CRITERIA STUDENTS USED TO SELECT THE AREA AND THE ACTIVITIES

It is important to know the criteria students used to select the activities. In the questionnaire students said that they based their decision on A) what they thought they needed: "Creo que me faltaba repasar algunos temas y por eso escogí un material para repasar lo que me faltaba". B) They also based their decision on what they liked: "Decidí trabajar en el área de computo porque me gusto desde que la maestra nos lo mostró en el curso de inducción". And C) they based their choice on what they felt difficult to understand in class: "Tuve problemas para entender los temas de clase y or eso fui a buscar material para revisar". Similarly, the interview revealed that the selection of the material and the area was based on what they liked: "Lo escogí porque me gusta mucho la música, y si escuchando aprendo, pues esto es lo que a mi me gusta trabajar"; on what they thought it was difficult: "Porque gramática es donde mas se me dificulta y quise practicar"; on what they thought was the easiest way to work: "En computo se me facilita mas y ahí me fui directo"; or on the topics we were checking in class: "Seleccioné basándome en el tema de la clase"; or only on what they could remember from the induction course: "Porque solo me acordé de que en el curso de inducción usted nos mostró un disco, y fue de los único que me acorde".

Some other reasons students mentioned in the interview were that the area where they worked was the first they saw, or it was the room nobody was using, or the opposite, that was the area where many people were working: "La sala de lectura fue lo primero que vi, y
como mi compañera ya tenía el material en la mesa, pues busqué lo mismo”, “En computo se me facilita más y ahí me fui directo”, “Me fui a la sala de ‘listening’ porque nadie la estaba usando”, “Vi que había mucha gente ahí y se me hizo fácil irme directo. Mis compañeros me dijeron que programar utilizar”.

REASONS TO GO TO THE SAC

Another aspect to consider was why students thought they had to go to the SAC during this English course. This was basic information to take into account because first they needed to have the objectives of the course clear so that students could find out the relationship between the course and their work at the Self Access Center.

In response to the questionnaire, about four students (more than 25%) said that, besides the fact that it was part of their global grades, the Self Access Center represented a complement to their learning and a practice resource besides their class: “Porque es importante para la comprensión y para tener otro tipo de apoyo además de la del maestro”; “Debemos ir al centro de Auto Acceso para reafirmar los conocimientos que la maestra enseña en la clase, así mismo hacer ejercicios para ir aprendiendo, ya sea escribiendo o escuchando el idiomas del Inglés”; “Además de beneficiarme me ayuda a aprender mucho más o a practicar lo que en clase tuve dificultad de pronunciar y aprender, además de que en el SAC existe suficiente material para aprender cosas que podré ver en niveles superiores”.

Interestingly, the majority wrote in the questionnaire that, besides the fact that it was a practice area, it was a way in which they could learn how to work independently and how to be more responsible: “Para aprender a ser responsable y así valerme por mi misma, además para practicar lo que vemos en clase y hacerla más comprensible”; “Para mejorar nuestro aprendizaje y además que uno se vaya haciendo responsable de sus cosas”; “Para ser autodidacta y saber realizar actividades uno solo sin que lo estén cuidando o apresurando y tener una responsabilidad y ética al saber que es una oportunidad que nos dan para aprender sin costo y que otros quisieran”. In the same vein, during the interview
mucho tiempo”. They were not able to understand instructions in English: “Se me hizo difícil el ejercicio porque no entendía que hacer”. And because they did not know how to look for the material: “No se todavía buscar bien el material para trabajar y por eso me metí a la sala de cómputo porque sentí que era mucho más fácil trabajar ahí”.

The interview revealed some additional problems. Students mentioned that some problems they faced were related to the topics: “Tuve problemas en cuestión de la gramática”. To the language because they did not understand what to do: “No entendía que quería decir, había muchas palabras que no entendía”. To the pathway because they do not know how to look for material: “No se utilizar la ruta de aprendizaje”, “Tardo mucho buscando mis actividades”. To the number of people because they wanted to work in a different room, but it was full: “Todo estaba lleno y tuve que trabajar en un área que no quería”. To the appropriate way to work: “Solo escuché el cassette pero no resolví la hoja de trabajo porque no sabía que lo tenía que hacer”. And to the use of the resources or technology: “Quise trabajar con un CD ROM pero no lo pude descargar en la computadora”. This information was of crucial importance due to the fact that the second task of this research needed to be planned based on students’s problems in order to find solutions to these problems.

HOW STUDENTS SOLVED THE PROBLEMS

With respect to the problems students faced when doing their independent activities, it was observed that the most frequent help (a little more than 70%) that students received was mainly from a partner, to understand an exercise or to look for material. Another kind of help (a little more than 10%) was from an expert to install a computer program. About three of the students (20%) received help from their teacher to remind them that they needed a worksheet. This intervention from the teacher in the Self Access Center happened during the observation while they were working in the SAC, which is an activity not allowed for classroom teachers due to the fact that the orientation for students is given in the classroom. However, as I was observing in order to take my notes, it was difficult not to try to correct them. The following comment was taken from the observation notes:
"Many students in listening were just listening without a worksheet. So, after 35 minutes, while I was walking around, monitoring, I reminded them to take a worksheet along with the tape so that they could accomplish the task in an effective way".

In the interview they mentioned that a way to solve their immediate problems was to ask a partner what to do. They did exactly what their partners were doing, so they entered the computing room because that was the one they knew a bit more about: "Le pregunte a mi compañero y mas o menos me explico, por eso pude realizar la actividad", "Entrando yo no sabia ni que es lo que tenia que hacer, y ya despues mis compañeros me explicaron... asi pude trabajar", "Me fui directo a computo porque crei que era lo mas facil", "Me copie de lo que estaba haciendo un compañero y realice el mismo ejercicio".

I found out that being in the SAC as an observer was somehow difficult for students and also for the teacher because they could not avoid asking questions. This time, although students were informed in advance that I was only going to be at the SAC as an observer, while they worked on their own, three students asked for help when they had a technical problem. Three different students also asked if they had to write a report card or if what they had selected was a good choice. Thus, I did not feel comfortable to say "I don't know" or "don't talk to me". This fact reflected that the majority of them (about 60%) students felt unconfident to carry out independent activities. Some possible reasons are that they are unfamiliar with the SAC or that they are used to carrying out tasks under the teacher's supervision. As a result, this observation supported the idea that teacher's intervention is required from students to guide them in their individual tasks in the SAC.

FEELINGS TOWARDS INDEPENDENT WORK

Working without the help of the teacher made most students feel insecure, basically because they needed the guide this very first time they were working. They also felt disoriented because it was the first time they had to work in the Self Access Center or because there was so much material that they did not know what to select and where to look for it. They wrote in the questionnaire: "A veces necesitamos guia de donde buscarlo
Besides, the interview showed that students felt bad, strange, disoriented and uncomfortable because they needed someone to help them or orient them: "me hizo falta alguien que me guiara". Because it is not the same as working with a teacher: "Me sentí extraña porque no es lo mismo que estar con un maestro que te explique... no sabía qué hacer... yo necesito que me digan que hacer". Because it was frustrating not to know what to do: "No me sentí muy bien, si me gusto trabajar solo pero se siente feo no saber como empezar o a donde ir", "Me sentí extraño porque fue algo nuevo para mí. No sabía qué hacer con tanto material que había. Estaba desorientado", "Ahorita no me gusto, no estoy listo, aunque si me gusta el Ingles".

Conversely, the interview also showed that they felt good, in general because that was a way in which they could work alone and sometimes it is necessary to work in that way: "Me sentí bien trabajar solo, siento que a veces es necesario trabajar así". Because it is an appropriate way to learn: "Me sentí bien, creo que es una buena manera de aprender", "Me sentí bien, me gusto trabajar solo porque esta muy tranquilo". And because that is a way to encourage them to work alone due to the fact that they consider independent work as a challenge: "Me sentí bien porque aprendí que si puedo trabajar sola y que si soy responsable".

WAYS TO IMPROVE THEIR INDEPENDENT WORK

Students thought there was still a lot of work to do in order to have better results in their practice. They mentioned that some ways of improving their own work were to go more often in order to have more practice and in order to get familiar with the organization of the center, that some help from the teacher might facilitate their activities. They said in the questionnaire: "Es necesario estar yendo varias veces al SAC para ampliar..."
conocimientos”, “Con un poco de ayuda del maestro podría hacer más rápidas las cosas”.
Some other ideas to improve their independent work were mentioned in the interview. They suggested more practice, to work in collaboration with a partner and check more exercises: “Tengo que seguir yendo ahí porque como es la primera vez, pues uno entra bien desorientado”, “Podría ir en compañía de un compañero para que me oriente, y si hay dudas, los dos ayudamos, aparte, hay que ir todos los días”, “Tengo que entrar y revisar más ejercicios, sin pisas y tranquilamente para buscar eficientemente”, “Debo ir mas seguido, ir yo sola y tomar el reto para no depender de los demás”.

STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF WHAT THE TEACHER’S ROLE SHOULD BE

With regards to the role of the teacher to help them have more productive results, students suggested the teacher needed to work as a guide in terms of the selection of material. In the questionnaire they mentioned that they needed some kind of orientation to tell them what activities to do and where: “Lo que necesité fue que me orientara acerca del material”, “Que diera los temas”, “Ordenar a todos los alumnos en cuanto a que unos se van al audio, otros cómputo, etc.”. They needed the teacher to work as a guide, to tell them what their needs are and also that they could feel someone was physically close to them, in case they had any trouble or question when working in the Self Access Center: “Que la maestra fuera con nosotros por si tenemos dudas”. As an observer to see what their problems were, and based on that, set some tasks and tell them what topics to check: “Que en lo que ella observara que estamos mal nos lo hiciera saber”. And as an organizer to send them to a different area and thus prevent them from working in the same one.

During the interview they suggested that the teacher should tell them what to do: “Quisiera que el maestro nos diga que temas podemos consultar, que es lo básico, y ya nosotros dedicarnos a realizarlos”. They also suggested that the teacher should go with them to the Self Access Center: “Piense que tendría que ir más con nosotros... solo al principio”. They added that she should guide them and tell them what topics to check: “Que vea el tema que necesitamos practicar y decimos donde esta para que ahorita que no sabemos
trabajar, podamos aprender más rápido”, “Que me dijera más o menos que temas puedo ver y donde puedo encontrar cada uno”, “Que me mande a hacer más ejercicios para reforzar un tema de clase”. Finally, they commented that she should tell them what their mistakes or weaknesses are and thus suggest some material: “Que me dijera que me hace falta, en que estoy mal, o a que área necesito ir”.

TASK II

For this second stage actions for students were planned based on taking into account / taking into consideration the difficulties that they faced when they worked at the Self Access Center for the first time. They worked on specific tasks designed for them in order to guide them in their process towards autonomy, and make a link between the tasks students were expected to do at the SAC and the topics reviewed in the classroom. The information provided influenced the decisions to take in designing the Third Task.

THE SELF ACCESS CENTER

ACTIVITIES STUDENTS DID AT THE SAC

During this week students selected two options to work on at the Self Access Center because they had to work on more than one task. More than a half of the students did a worksheet either in the reading, the video or the listening area. This shows some similarities with the results in the first cycle where most students worked on a worksheet, although not at the very beginning of the activity. Almost the third part of them used books or dictionaries, and the rest worked on a computer combining it with other areas. This is the reason why it was considered that they were making an effective use of the materials. Additionally, in the interview they mentioned that they had done more activities than in the first week. They did different activities in areas such as video, computing, audio, grammar and reading, which shows that they were trying to know and explore different kinds of materials to practice.
Another interesting aspect to consider was the difficulties that students faced finding the material that they needed to work. Three (20%) students still had problems finding their material, mainly at the beginning, because the material was not in the place where it should have been. In the questionnaire they said: "Al principio no encontraba el material"; "No lo encontre, estaba en una carpeta diferente". However, this time twelve students (about 80%) said they did not find any difficulties due to the fact that they already knew what to do and where to find the material: "Porque ya sabia que área y que material utilizar"; "Porque nos dio instrucciones la maestra de dónde encontrarlo"; "Ya tenía el trabajo asignado"; "Porque ya sabia lo que iba a hacer". Another reason was that when they knew what to do, it was easier to locate the material because it was all well organized: "Porque el material esta bien acomodado"; "Porque todo va por numeración y código". Some other comments were that working alone was not difficult because they do it all the time and that it was also a matter of practice: "Por lo regular siempre trabajo solo"; "Solo era cuestión de acoplarme y saber en donde se encontraba todo el material". The fact that most students did not have problems in finding their material reflected that they took advantage of the teacher's recommendation not just to know what to do and what topics to check, but also to learn how and where to find the material needed.

In the interview a third part of the students reported some problems. Some were related to the material because some cassettes did not work and the videos were damaged. Another problem was related to the vocabulary that they did not understand. Besides, a few students still did not know the codes in the areas to locate the material. The following comments were taken from the interview: "Tuve problemas con el material que estaba en el SAC porque los casetes no funcionaban"; "El video no se veia y el casete no se podía reproducir"; "Tuve problemas con el vocabulario, porque no lo entendía"; "Tuve problemas porque no entendí el tema que estaba checando"; "Me confundí todavía en los códigos de los materiales (WRI - GRA - VID -, etc.)".
ADVANTAGES OF WORKING AT THE SAC ACCORDING TO STUDENTS

Results from the questionnaire suggest that working at the Self Access Center helped students to reinforce and to practice the topics checked in class using English in different situations. They commented the following: “Aprendí que aquí puedo practicar lo que me hace falta reforzar en clase”, “Aprendí que los temas los puedo checar en cualquier área, la que mas me guste o me convenga”. The Center also helped them to learn how to work on their own in an independent way and reflect on what implies to pay attention to what they needed: “Aprendí a trabajar sola”; “A poner más atención en lo que me falló y a avocarme más en eso”; “Aprendí que cuando uno lo hace sola, aprende mas, ya que no está copiándose de lo que hacen los demás”. They also said that the Center gave them the opportunity to know how it was organized “Aprendí a utilizar el material correctamente”. These comments suggest that students were learning more than just a topic. They were learning to learn.

Besides, in the interview students commented that some of the advantages of working at the SAC that they found were that they were able to practice, they could learn how to be more autonomous: “Nos da práctica y nos ayuda a ser más autónomos”; “Nos enseña a ser más autodidactas”; “Aprendí como trabajar en el SAC, como encontrar los materiales”. The experience that students had based on their problems helped them to improve their level of English: “Es bueno porque trabaje basado en mis problemas y así mejora mi aprendizaje de Inglés”.

WAYS TO IMPROVE THEIR INDEPENDENT WORK

There were, however, still many aspects that students thought they needed to reinforce in their individual work at the Self Access Center. They suggested more practice, more time to work and more material or activities to carry out. Some comments from the questionnaire are: “Podría mejorar mi trabajo en el SAC trabajando más”; “Que me mandaran mas tiempo”; “Que el maestro dejara más trabajo”.
They also suggested that using learning strategies and organizing their work might be key elements to improve their work and learning. In the questionnaire two of them said: “Creo que necesito organizarme más”; “Pues necesito utilizar más las estrategias para así poder aprovechar más el material”. The results reflected that students were starting to be aware of how to work and learn better taking into account learning strategies and also ways of organizing themselves. In the interview they said that they needed to go to the SAC more often to practice more: “Pues yo creo que necesito más práctica para poderme acoplar al trabajo del SAC”; “Tengo que practicar más porque solo así voy a entender más como trabajar en el SAC y a buscar todo mi material”. In addition, students considered that the teacher needed to give them more work to do in order to become more familiar with the activities to carry out in the Self Access Center and to become more independent little by little: “Me gustaría que la maestra nos diera más trabajo que hacer porque ella sabe que material es el bueno”; “Pues es un poco de práctica y que la maestra me siguiera ayudando un poco, así yo sola voy aprendiendo y luego ya podría ir yo sola”.

STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF THE TEACHER’S ROLE

Working alone implies working without the presence of the teacher. However, this time students said that they felt oriented and they could organize better as if they were working with the teacher because of the guidance they received. In the questionnaire they said: “La maestra ya había dicho que hacer”; “Ya sabía que temas ver y estudiar”; “La maestra me asignó el trabajo y yo lo realicé como en clase”; “Porque ya nos había dicho que hacer y por donde empezar”. It was good to see that this time students seemed to have felt more comfortable and that the guidance helped them work better. However, there was still one student who felt lost when working alone due to the fact that he was not familiar with the material yet. In this second task the role of the teacher was to recommend and guide students, which made them feel more confident when working alone. This task allowed students to start being aware of how they could lead their own activities in further tasks.

The interview suggested that students perceived the teacher as an facilitator because she oriented them on where to find the materials and gave the activities for each student to
work at the Self Success Center based on what they needed and on their personal learning styles: "Me orientó sobre donde se encontraba el material. Ademáis me dio a conocer las estrategias que me podían ayudar a trabajar mejor y también con los estilos de aprendizaje", "Me dijo que hacer y asi supe exactamente que actividades realizar. Ademáis se baso en lo que yo necesitaba aprender y en mis estilos, que son lo que desarrollo mas, mi preferencia"; As a guide because she showed students where to find the material: "Nos asigno diferente tarea en distintas áreas basado en mis estilos"; "Me señalo donde encontrar el material, donde buscarlo y nos oriento en como trabajar porque cada ejercicio conlleva una hoja de trabajo". And as an informer because she provided students with information about metacognitive strategies that may have helped them to have more effective results in their practice: "Nos dio actividades basadas en mis estilos"; "Nos hizo un test y nos fue dando trabajo de acuerdo a lo que nos gustaba, a mis estilos"; "Viendo mis estilos ella nos ayudo a localizar en que podíamos trabajar mejor pero también lo que nos falta utilizar un poco mas".

FEELINGS TOWARDS INDEPENDENT WORK

Students said that they felt good about the given task due to the fact that they enjoyed working on what they like. Besides, in this task they knew in advance what they were going to do. The fact of knowing what to do before going to the SAC gave students the opportunity to organize themselves. They stated in the questionnaire: "Así supe lo que iba a hacer desde un día antes y me organice"; "Es bueno saber que hacer porque de esa manera ya llego directo a trabajar y no me hago bolas con tanto material que hay". However, some students felt disoriented when working alone because they still did not know where to find the material. One student expressed: "Todavía no aprendo a visualizar bien donde están las cosas".

During the interview students said that this work made them feel good, comfortable and confident because they already knew what to do and this gave them the opportunity to feel more relaxed and to feel that they were learning how to work in an independent way: "Me sentí a gusto porque me sentí orientada al saber donde encontrar mi material"; "Me sentí
muy seguro porque ya sabia qué hacer, de esta manera centre mi concentración en mi actividad y no en buscar material"; “Tengo mas seguridad porque sabia exactamente que iba a hacer y eso te da confianza”; “Me sentí mas relajada porque ya estoy aprendiendo y entendiendo como trabajar de manera independiente. Ya se que si puedo trabajar así”; “Aprendí a manejar mejor el material del SAC. A ser más autónoma”. These results made me think that one problem students faced when working alone at the Self Access Center is related to the way the material is arranged because it is all new for them. However, the fact of feeling more comfortable with the assigned material reflected some progress in their work because they could concentrate directly on the activity, without wasting time looking for it and without feeling the anxiety of not knowing what to do.

ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER IN STUDENTS' INDEPENDENT WORK:

THE ROLE OF LEARNING STYLES

By the time students were working for the second time, they were already aware of their own learning styles and they were provided with information about some metacognitive strategies they could use at the center. The questionnaire shows that all of them agreed on the fact that knowing about learning styles was of considerable importance to their work at the Self Access Center due to the fact that they refer to their preferences to learn and that facilitates their learning. Students also considered the styles as a factor that facilitated the activities they carried out and made the activities easier for them: "Los estilos facilitan nuestro desempeño"; "Porque nos dio el área donde se nos hace mas fácil aprender".

Knowing about learning styles gave some students the opportunity to discover that they had two or three styles. Thus, they knew the reason why they had certain abilities to learn English, why they preferred to work in a specific area of the SAC more than in another, and what material would be more appropriate according to their styles. This experience was also useful for the teacher to know in what area in the SAC they might work better. During the interview, five students said: “Basado en eso, cada quien se dio cuenta, o sea,
usted se dio cuenta...a qué alumno pertenece y qué área le gusta más trabajar"; "Con esto la maestra se da cuenta en qué área nos sentimos mejor y podemos trabajar a gusto"; "Ya sabía que me gustaba pero es bueno saber bien donde estoy apta para trabajar, en mis preferencias"; "Estoy de acuerdo con el resultado del test y me gustó trabajar así porque es lo que me gusta y es bueno saberlo"; "Sirven para trabajar en lo que me gusta para tener más práctica en lo que se me facilita y desarrollar más mi estilo".

Besides, the information also allowed the teacher to know what style students did not belong to in order to recommend more material to develop these areas. This happened to students who did activities that did not correspond to their preferences. A student who was visual said: "Me gustó trabajar en cómputo y video. En dónde sí muy poco fue acá el de listening". This could have happened because this student was a visual learner. However, this student was given the activity as an exploratory work to develop another skill.

THE ROLE OF METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES IN STUDENT’S SELF ACCESS WORK

With regards to strategies, about fourteen students (a little more then 90%) reported using strategies in the SAC. Many of these students used more than one strategy (see Figure 1). The most common strategies were "paying attention" and "organizing". The data was mainly taken from the interview because it reflected more relevant information about this element, where twelve students mentioned that paying attention helped them to concentrate on one topic or activity at a time: "Poner atención porque, si no pones atención, pues, igual y lo estás viendo y... nada más lo vez, y ya... si nada más cuando va una así a... sentarse y... y nada más asi a... a ver, no, no, este, detalladamente, pues, no sirve de nada"; "Poniendo atención a las imágenes para así ir escuchando, y relacionando y enfocarme más...". Ten students out of fourteen also said that they used the "organizing" strategy to select which activity to do first and to have control of the time they would spend on each activity: "La de la organización porque... como eran muchos temas no me iba a dar chance de hacerlo en una misma clase... entonces vi dos, el día de ayer vi lo de gramática y el día de hoy vi lo de computación"; "Organicé el tiempo y planeé qué actividad iba primero".
However, the field notes reflect that all of them used the 'self evaluation' strategy when they finished a worksheet, although almost no students mentioned they had used it. They used the answer key at the back of the worksheet to check their answer and thus evaluate their performance.

These strategies helped students in the organization, planning and evaluation of the activities they carried out in the Self Access Center. In this way they could learn how to work on their own in an independent way and with more productive results. Students thought that knowing about strategies and using them in an appropriate way helped them in the process of learning and being independent. Some comments in the interview were that using strategies in the Self Access Center had helped them in different ways: "Para poderme... orientar, tener... una planeación"; "Porque así ya me dan unos, tips o... para ver cómo puedo trabajar u organizar"; "me ayudaron mucho ahorita que fui al SAC, porque las lei primero para ver que era lo que se tenia que hacer en cada una de ellas y dependiendo de lo que me decían, pues también me... fui al área que... me
correspondía"; "Primero lei las estrategias, y ya dependiendo a lo... a donde me iba yo a dirigir, utilicé la... la que más... me servía"; "A observar, a mejorar en lo que estamos haciendo, a lo que vamos a hacer".

TASK III

For this cycle actions for students were planned considering not only their learning styles but also their linguistic needs. The interest was, at this point, to identify how they had progressed in their individual work, how they had progressed in the use of material at The Center, what strategies they had used when they worked at the Self Access Center, why they used them, and what problems they had had. It was also interesting to know about students’ perceptions of the process and how they defined the teacher’s role in their autonomy development process of becoming more independent.

THE SELF ACCESS CENTER

ACTIVITIES THAT STUDENTS DID AT THE SAC

The objective of the task was basically to work on the weaknesses students had and let them reinforce previous topics. At this stage many students worked on more than one task. The majority used a worksheet. However, this time they checked more books than in the previous stage in order to find extra information about a topic. They reviewed some topics of previous units which were not clear for them, and reinforced a skill they were having problems with.

PROBLEMS THAT STUDENTS FACED

In this task three students (20%) said that they had problems to find the material. Extracts from the questionnaire: "Tuve un poco de dificultad para encontrar el libro de Grammar Dimensions 1"; "Porque estaba incorrecto el código de la tarea que me asignaron"; "No encontré el casete en listening y me tuve que ir a lectura". During my observations I could
notice that they did not spend much time looking for material and when they had problems they took the decision to move to a different area or do something different. They mentioned in the questionnaire that it was not difficult to find the material because they had more practice now: "Porque como ya había entrado en otras ocasiones, ya se donde se encuentran los materiales", "Porque me base o busque rápidamente la codificación". Students felt more familiar with the material as well: "Estoy mas orientado que la vez anterior". They also mentioned that the teacher had told them where to find the material: "Porque la maestra nos dijo que material utilizar y en que área", "Porque la maestra señalo el material y fue fácil encontrarlo".

The field notes revealed that after ten to twelve minutes, all of them were working, concentrating and having control of what they were doing. They were taking advantage of the material to learn the language, although this time most of the students reviewed or reinforced the topics and skills they had had problems with in previous units.

FEELINGS TOWARDS INDEPENDENT WORK

Individual work gave students the opportunity to develop their sense of responsibility and independence. In the questionnaire they wrote: "El trabajo autónomo nos enseña a ser más independientes"; "Solos nos hacemos responsables de nuestras propias cosas"; "Está bien para que día a día nos hagamos más responsables". Their progress was also reflected in the way they were aware of their learning and learning problems in the process of autonomy: "Es un poco difícil pero bueno para uno y tener un poco de auto estudio"; "Aprendí que nos podemos valer por nosotros mismos aunque a veces no queremos trabajar solos pero es mejor"; "Aprendí que yo también lo puedo hacer bien y hasta mejor que los demás sin su ayuda"; "Aprendí que las cosas son fáciles si tienes la seguridad de poder lograrlas".

Similarly, in the interview they mentioned that they felt good, more confident and aware of what they needed: "Tengo mas confianza porque se lo que voy a hacer"; "Me siento mas segura porque tengo mi material que voy a checar"; "Siento que soy mas consciente
porque se me hizo más fácil darme cuenta de lo que me fallaba, no solo abordar un tema cualquiera". The way students were progressing in their individual work was closely related to how they had learned to use the material at the center.

**HOW TO OVERCOME DIFFICULTIES**

Students worked to overcome the problems they faced at the beginning to find their materials in the Self Sccess Center and to decide what to do. They mentioned in the questionnaire that practice and the teacher's orientation made their work easier: "Porque ya se hacerlo y al principio me sentía un poco desorientado"; Me voy haciendo autónomo y ya no tengo tantas dudas como antes"; "De varias veces de entrar al SAC ya se lo que tengo que hacer y además porque el maestro nos proporciona el trabajo a realizar"; "Con el material que nos da la maestra se lo que tengo que hacer y se me hace más fácil". They considered the teacher's recommendation as a help to make their work at the SAC more effective. They felt oriented because the tasks designed to guide students were based on what each of them needed, on their weaknesses in terms of topics and skills. These tasks allowed students to be aware of the factors considered by the teacher to make their individual work more productive: "Básicamente me ayuda la maestra, ella observó en que estaba fallando y así me proporciono mi trabajo"; "Proporcionándome material de apoyo para guiarne y para saber que hacer"; "Me ayudó explicándome las estrategias para el aprendizaje y abordando los temas que me fallaban"; "Señaló las actividades y una vez teniéndolas me fue fácil, también porque nos proporciono unas estrategias y nos fue diciendo en que consistía cada una".

**PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENT'S PROGRESS IN SELF ACCESS USE**

Student's individual work showed some progress since the majority of them did not have difficulties working alone in this task. One of the reasons they gave in the questionnaire was that knowing what to do in advance gave them confidence to work alone: "Sabía qué buscaba y donde". They also argued that the tasks had guided them and allowed them to look for specific materials in specific areas: "Ya entendí donde debo buscar mi material
Another reason they gave in the interview was that they were learning and getting familiar with the material and the way it was arranged: “Ya aprendí más”. They mentioned that they had also learned to work better because they learned about strategies and were more aware of their needs: “Siento que si avancé algo porque aprendí a trabajar mejor y a reconocer mis errores”; “Bueno, aprendí a utilizar las estrategias para así aprovechar mejor el material y los temas que estaba checando”; “Siento que si he sacado provecho de mi trabajo porque reviso temas que necesito entender mejor y también temas de unidades anteriores que me falta reforzar”.

STUDENT’S PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHER’S ROLE

Based on what the teacher did in order to guide students in their process of becoming more autonomous, students considered that the teacher had a very important role. From their comments in the questionnaire, four main roles were deduced. The comments suggest that they perceived the teacher as an observer: “Su papel esta muy bien, nos enseña la clase en el salón y luego nos observa en que fallamos y nos proporciona trabajo para el SAC”. Students also considered the teacher as a guide: “Porque nos dice como trabajar en el SAC”. As an advisor: “Nos aclara las dudas que tenemos”, “Porque es buena, sobre todo al detectar nuestras deficiencias y orientamos a como y donde trabajar”. And as a monitor: “Es muy importante debido a que nos va checando, dando el trabajo y diciendo que hacer y esto nos ayuda para que vayamos tomando confianza con los materiales que disponemos”.

Besides, they considered the teacher as a key element to improve their autonomous work: “Tal vez asistiendo mucho o poco pero también se necesita del maestro para las dudas y otras cosas mas”; “Que un asesor nos pueda ayudar en el SAC, auxiliándonos en los materiales que no podemos resolver o las dudas que tengamos”; “Ir mas seguido al SAC
y que la maestra nos de más trabajo"; "Que la maestra siga con esta estrategia de trabajo".

The interview reflected that students also considered the teacher as an organizer because she classified students according to the topics they needed to reinforce; "La maestra nos organizó y nos clasificó de acuerdo a los temas en los que íbamos mal y nos dio actividades para ayudarnos". As a resource because she gave us the material to check: "Nos apoyo para saber que hacer, te orienta"; "Nos dio toda la guía de qué hacer y en dónde basado en nuestras fallas". As a guide because she oriented students on what to do and showed them how to look for their material: "Nos ayuda y es bueno porque nos enseña a saber trabajar, a como buscar las actividades y los materiales". And as a monitor because she observed what problems students had to give them the appropriate work to do: "Nos ayuda proporcionando materia para poder así aprender más basándose en lo que mas se me dificulta", "Me dio los temas y me ayudo a identificar en que estoy mal para así poder trabajar en esto".

METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES IN THE WORK AT THE SAC

With regard to strategies, almost all students (more than 90%) said in the questionnaire that they had used some of them when they worked at the Self Access Center. The strategies they used, as shown in Figure 2 below, were summarizing and making connection with known material, organizing, planning goals and objectives, paying attention and self-evaluating. Three students also included some others like translating into Spanish and repeating. They mentioned that it was important to know about them because they helped them to facilitate the tasks: "Las estrategias me ayudaron para hacer más fáciles mis actividades"; "Para responder con más seguridad los ejercicios". Students also said that the strategies had helped them to have a goal and objective in each activity they carried out: "Para prepararme y tener una meta y un fin". In general, to improve the way they were learning and have better results: "Para mejorar mi forma de aprendizaje"; "Para aprovechar el tiempo en el SAC y además para enriquecer mi aprendizaje".
strategies showed that they were learning about strategies and their importance for individual work in theory and practice.

**TASK IV**

The main point in this task was to observe the way students set the tasks themselves. It was important to see how much they had learned during the process, what aspects they took into consideration to select the material and why they chose these aspects. The product of this task showed how effective teacher guidance was, how consciousness raising influenced students decisions and the practice they had on their own during the whole process.

**FEELINGS TOWARDS INDEPENDENT WORK**

With regard to autonomous work, results suggest that students learned to work alone, to plan and to choose their material individually, and started to feel more confident. In the questionnaire they said: “Aprendí a realizar mis trabajos de manera individual”; “A buscar mi propio material, a ser más autónomo”; “Que es fácil mientras que esta bien planeado”; “A utilizar y escoger los materiales individualmente”; “Que entre mas practica tengamos al trabajar solos, iremos mejorando”; “Es bueno para ir tomando decisiones sobre nuestro trabajo”. The way students felt working individually was related to how they had progressed in the autonomous work.

In the questionnaire, all of them noticed some progress since they did not have as many problems as at the beginning to decide how to work and in which area. Besides, this time they were aware of what aspects to consider in order to select the materials: “Porque ya se utilizar los materiales correctamente en cada área del SAC”; “Ya casi no pregunto donde encontrar mi material”; “Porque se hace más fácil realizar mis actividades”; “Porque se lo que no tengo muy claro”; “Como trabajar solo, como abordar un tema, como organizarme”; “Porque ya sabemos sobre como escoger un tema”; “Porque ya puedo encontrar más fácilmente el material y cual me puede ser de mas ayuda”. Some
comments in the interview were similar because they considered they were learning to manage that material at the Self Access Center and to be more independent: “Siento que estoy aprendiendo a trabajar solo”; “Estoy aprendiendo a ser más independiente”; “Estoy avanzando porque ya se localizar el material y ya se que tengo problemas en algo y que tengo que trabajar en eso”.

This time students said that they had faced some kind of difficulty because the material was not located in the correct place, because it did not exist any more or because the audio or video were in bad conditions. However, they asked for help when needed or looked for a different activity to take advantage of the time they spent at the Center. Regarding the problem of the materials that did not exist any more, students were asked to report them to the SAC staff so that they could replace the materials.

CRITERIA THAT STUDENTS USED TO SELECT THE MATERIAL

To select the Self Access Center area and the material, students took into consideration their language difficulties and weaknesses, which they identified by means of their self evaluations. In the questionnaire they mentioned the following: “Me basé en mis necesidades, es decir, lo que no me había quedado muy claro”. They also took into consideration the topics they needed to review in order to clarify some doubts: “En mis dudas específicas y lo que no le entiendo” “En lo que me hacia falta repasar para complementar lo que ya conocía”; “En los temas en los que creo que no he comprendido al 100%”.

Also, students said that they had selected different areas for each activity based on their preferences. That is, on their learning styles and on the areas they needed to reinforce. In the questionnaire they said that they wanted to feel comfortable in the area they chose: “Son en las que puedo trabajar mejor y me siento a gusto”; They also wanted to have more options to check a topic: “Porque siento que en esa área puedo escoger más material”; “Porque siento que contienen más información y son más sencillas”. To reinforce the area where they had problems: “Porque es donde mas se me dificulta”;
"Unas porque me sentía cómodo y otras para reforzarlas". And to learn how to work in the different areas: "Para tener otra forma de aprender"; "Para no estar en una sola área".

The interview also revealed that the students' selection of material was based on what they thought they needed to learn better or reinforce: "Me base en lo que no comprendía bien y en el área que se me facilitaba más"; "Fui dándome cuenta que es lo que me faltaba reforzar"; on the topics they did not understand well in class: "Me base en los temas que me fallaban y en los que tenía todavía duda, que no los tenés bien claros"; "Me base en mis dudas; "En lo que me hacia falta, en lo que me dio dificultad entender en clase"; and also on some extra topics they wanted to check: "En lo que se me dificulta pero también en lo que quiero investigar un poco más".

**FEELING TOWARDS THE SELECTION OF ACTIVITIES**

The questionnaire revealed that when students selected their activities and worked on their own they experienced two different feelings. On the one hand, 60% of the students felt good and comfortable because they were becoming more familiar with the material in the SAC, because they could recognize their weaknesses and select their material based on that, and because selecting the material by themselves was a way to learn how to be more autonomous: "Me sentí muy bien porque ya tengo una noción de utilizar los materiales en el SACI"; "Me sentí muy bien porque me doy cuenta de lo que me hace falta repasar"; "Me sentí muy bien, ya que busco lo que me planteo (lo que siento que me falla)"; "Bien, no tenía ningún tipo de presión"; "me sentí bien porque es una forma de aprender a ser un poco mas autónomo". Similarly, 20 % of the students said that they had felt good because they had had a lot of practice. They were starting to feel familiar with the material when they worked alone. They were already aware of what they needed to do: "A gusto pues como ya lo hemos hecho varias veces se me facilitó"; "Bien porque creo que estábamos conscientes de los temas a trabajar"; "Ya me estoy acostumbrando".

On the other hand, 20% of them felt confused and insecure because there was plenty of material that they could not choose easily. One student said that he felt a lot of
responsibility because he had to choose the appropriate material according to what he needed: "Me sentí un poco indeciso ya que había material en casi todas las áreas"; "Pues de alguna forma resolver mis problemas es como una responsabilidad"; "Como era la primera vez estaba un poco confundido".

The interview also showed that the majority of them (about 80%) felt good because they felt they were progressing in their individual work: "Me sentí bien porque senti que estoy adelantando, ya se reconocer en que estoy mal y cómo le puedo hacer para remediarlo"; "He progresado, aunque todavía me hace falta seguir practicando". They were learning to organize, plan and take decisions: "Ya planeo y, tomo decisiones"; "Me sentí bien porque ya se como seleccionar mi trabajo". And they were also learning to take more advantage of their work: "Es mejor el trabajo individual que en equipo porque trabajas en lo que a ti te hace falta. Aprendes a ser mas autónomo, estoy menos presionado y trabajo mejor organizado". However, there were three students (about 20%) who felt the work was complicated, that they needed more practice and that they felt a lot of responsibility. They said: "Ahora que lo hice todo yo solito se me hizo un poco complicado y si cuesta trabajo"; "No me adapto todavía muy bien, pero estoy aprendiendo a trabajar solo. Siento la responsabilidad de hacerlo bien. Ser autónoma es responsabilidad".

METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES IN SELF ACCESS WORK

The strategies seemed to have helped students to work individually in a more effective way. The questionnaire revealed that most of them made use of one or more strategies to organize themselves: "Vamos con más organización y concentración sobre los temas a trabajar"; to concentrate on one activity at a time: "A seguir una sola rutina"; to work in a more effective way: "Para tener un mejor desempeño y hacer el trabajo más fácil"; to understand a topic better: "En entender y progresar en el estudio"; and to take advantage of the time they spent at the Self Access Center: "Me ayudan a aprovechar mejor el tiempo en el SAC".
The metacognitive strategies most commonly used, as shown in Figure 3 below, were summarizing and making connections with already known material, paying attention, organizing, setting goals and objectives, planning and self-evaluating. Extracts from the interview: "Utilice organización, planteando metas y objetivos, tomando notas y auto evaluación. Me ayudaron a tratar mejor un tema para no llegar y hacer lo que se me ocurra y que me pueda organizar mejor"; "Utilice organización, poniendo atención al material que me sirvió para enfocarme a una sola actividad. Estas estrategias me ayudaron a entender más el tema. También utilicé poniendo atención, resumiendo, haciendo conexión y planeando, que me ayuda a organizarme mejor"; "Yo utilicé planeando, para organizar mi tiempo y mis actividades, también utilicé resolver problemas"; "Yo utilicé poniendo atencion, planeando y autoevaluando. Me ayudaron para facilitar mi trabajo".

The questionnaire showed that only 20% of the students used self evaluation. However, in the interview almost all of them (more than 90%) reported using this strategy to check their answers and plan more activities to work on the problem they still had: "Autoevaluando que me sirvió para saber como voy y planeando que me ayudo a saber que es lo que voy a hacer primero"; "Autoevaluando me ayudo a ver los problemas que todavía tenia y ver como voy avanzando en mi aprendizaje y mi progreso"; "Yo utilicé autoevaluar, para corroborar si había entendido el tema, ya que me da el resultado del ejercicio"; "Autoevaluando me ayudo para reafirmar si estoy bien o si estoy equivocado, y si estoy equivocado pues corregirme y aprender lo que es correcto".

Students also used some other strategies like analyzing, taking notes and translating. The fact that students selected the material and decided what to do showed that all students were using the strategies of planning and organizing: "Planear me ayudo porque así pienso desde antes que voy a hacer y no a la mera hora".
objetivos"; “Pondré más esfuerzo y ser más autónoma”; “De la misma forma pero utilizando las estrategias con más frecuencia”.

In the interview students also said that they need to continue planning: “Debo seguir haciendo algo como esto, planear con anticipación”; “Planear qué temas y organizarlo para que yo sepa en qué estoy mal”; to organize their work and their time: “Debo dedicar más tiempo, organizando mi trabajo y también mi tiempo para trabajar tranquilamente”; to work on their difficulties: “Darme cuenta en qué estoy mal y poder remediarlo”; to go to the SAC more often: “Yendo más seguido, trabajando más, planeando y organizándome”; “Ir constantemente...”; and sometimes to receive some help from the teacher: “A veces la ayuda del maestro para seleccionar mis actividades. Trabajar en lo que se me hace más difícil y utilizando estrategias de planeación”.

FINAL TASK

For this final task students were divided into three teams based on the three different learning styles they belonged to. Each of the teams worked at the Self Access Center in an area or areas that corresponded to their learning styles so that they could check the existing material. During this team work they had to demonstrate that they had learned how to manage the material in the Center by means of a pathway they had to create. This was a pathway for units 8 and 9 of the course, which were the ones they had not checked yet. Once they had their group pathway, they shared their information with the rest of their teams so that everybody could have the same information. This activity aimed at helping students to locate the materials easily at the SAC, being this one of the initial problems. In this way they only reported what materials existed so that they could make use of them to practice topics checked in class.

STUDENT’S CONCEPT OF AUTONOMY

Students provided their own concept of autonomy. The answers to the questionnaire revealed that they perceive autonomy as individual and independent work: “Es trabajar
independientemente”; “Es una forma individual, independiente”. The ability to learn with little or no help: “Es toda persona capaz de adquirir conocimientos sin la necesidad de ser guiado”; “Hacer las cosas unos mismo sin ayuda de nadie”; “Poder trabajar por si misma con un poco de ayuda”; “Es una forma de desarrollarnos para poder trabajar solos”. The capacity to decide what to do based on their own needs: “Es valerse por si mismo y tener seguridad para escoger lo que necesito”.

This idea showed some similarities with their initial concept of autonomy in which they defined it as the activities or the individual work they carry out on their own, taking decisions with responsibility. However, I could notice that their last concept was more elaborated in the sense that now they considered autonomy as the individual process they carry out with responsibility, with little or no help, based on their personal needs. This showed that the process through which students had passed allowed them to realize that they may need some help, they need to be aware of their needs and they need to be responsible for what they do.

ADVANTAGES OF WORKING AT THE SAC

The results suggest that the work at the Self Access Center helped students to understand the topics seen in class better. Students considered The Center as a different way to learn In the questionnaire they mentioned: “Trabajas de una forma diferente mejorando tu desempeño en una forma autónoma y mejor y así que uno busque y aclare sus dudas individualmente”. They also consider the SAC as a practice center to review the topics in class: “Repasaba lo que me fallaba”; “Enriquece nuestro conocimiento y aprendizaje”; “Asistía para estudiar los temas que veíamos en clase y no me quedaban muy claros”; “En el SAC reforzaba el aprendizaje de los temas de clase”. The SAC was also regarded as a source of information to expand on topics: “Ahí los temas vienen de una forma más desarrollada”; “Ibamos adelantando temas y repasando lo ya visto”; “Trae más ejemplos y actividades que se complementan con las vistas en clase”. Thus, all students agreed on the fact that it was important to combine the class with work at the Self Access Center to improve the learning process: “Siento que se complementan uno con
PROBLEMS THAT STUDENTS FACED AT THE SAC

Some of the difficulties the majority of students faced when they started to work individually were to select the material, to find their material, to learn how to use the pathways or to work alone. They mentioned the following problems: “Cómo seleccionar mi material”; “No encontrar el material o no saber donde buscarlo”; “No saber manejar las rutas, no saber que hacer”; “En la elección del material y el encontrarlo al principio”; “Solo tuve al inicio por no tener experiencia”; “Simplemente que a veces no tenemos iniciativa y no nos dan ganas de trabajar solos”.

WHAT STUDENTS DID AND LEARNED DURING THE AUTONOMY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS TO BECOME MORE AUTONOMOUS

Students gave opinions about their own activities to make their work more productive during the process. The questionnaire revealed that during the process they followed the teacher’s instructions and advice: “Segui todas las indicaciones que el maestro nos dio y yendo mas a practicar”, “Seguir los consejos de la profesora”. They focused on their own needs to select their material: “Traté de enfocarme en los temas que no comprendía y reforzarlos”. They organized their work and time: “Hice una buena organización”, “Mejorar mi organización y desempeño”, “Aprendí a organizarme”. They took their own decisions: “Tomar mis propias decisiones, ver mi avance en el aprendizaje”. They used strategies and worked at the SAC often: “Anotaba todo en una libreta y usaba las estrategias”, “Aprendí a planearme metas y mejor organización”. Two students also mentioned that something they still needed to do in order to improve their individual work was to devote more time to work at the Self Access Center and to set more tasks to practise the language.
FEELINGS TOWARDS THE WHOLE PROCESS

With regards to the process of learning how to work at the Self Access Center on their own in an individual way 20% of the students mentioned that it had been complicated because they had no idea of what a SAC was or how to work there. They said the following in the questionnaire: “No tenía idea de cómo era el SAC”; “No sabía de qué se trataba”; “Al principio no sabía utilizar la hoja de trabajo y conforme transcurrió el curso fui perdiendo la inseguridad”. In contrast, a great part of students (40%) said that this process was not complicated because of the teacher guidance and support: “Porque la maestra nos dio seguridad”; “Me hizo sentir capaz de realizar las cosas que me proponga”; “Con eso me siento más segura de lo que quiero”; “La maestra en los primeros días nos fue guiando y diciendo cómo trabajar en el SAC”; “La maestra desde un principio nos dio instrucciones”; “El maestro nos estuvo apoyando cuando lo necesitaba”. Besides, although at the beginning, when they started to take their own decisions and select their own material to work at the Self Access Center, a considerable part of students felt nervous, insecure, disoriented or strange, they learned how to do things on their own with experience as they were becoming familiar with Self Access work: “De esa forma aprendimos a ser autónomos y a hacer las cosas solos”; “Al principio tuve dificultad pero después obtuve experiencia”; “Cada vez fui adaptándome un poco más”; “Porque aprendí a desarrollar habilidades”. This showed that learning how to work in an individual way was a gradual process, as the scaffolding process suggests, in which both, teacher and students have important roles (Bruner, 1975; Verna Lange, 1983).

FEELINGS TOWARDS INDEPENDENT WORK

With regards to student’s autonomous work, all of them felt they had made some progress. Some of the reasons given by students in the questionnaire were that now they can work more easily and faster than before: “Ahora realizo todo con mucha más rapidez, sencillez, facilidad y me gusta hacerlo”; they are starting to work individually: “Antes todo lo hacía en grupo y ahora de alguna manera ya puedo trabajar sola”; they have already learned about strategies: “Aprendí las técnicas, cómo usarlas y estudiar”; they know the
material and where to find it: “Ahora puedo escoger que material utilizar y en que área”; “He aprendido como trabajar con el material disponible, como sacarle el mejor provecho”; “Ya se utilizar las hojas de trabajo que era lo que se me dificultaba”.

Besides, this progress allowed students to have a clearer idea of what a Self Access Center was. They defined it as a way to reinforce their knowledge of the language and help them clarify their doubts: “Es una ayuda para que los alumnos refuercen sus conocimientos o despejen sus dudas”; as a place to practice and have feedback on their work: “Lugar donde pones en práctica y retroalimentas lo aprendido en clase”; as a way of learning to learn: “Es el aprender, practicar y se autónomo”; “Una forma de aprender muy buena porque tiene varias formas de aprender”; “Un trabajo individual”; “Un área para aprender de forma autónoma, para que uno mejore, ya no de forma guiada, sino autodidacta, enfocándose a lo que nos gusta, y no solo eso, tratando con el material que no nos gusta tanto ara así mejorar en estas áreas”; “El sistema que nos lleva al trabajo individual para aprender usando nuestras propias herramientas y conocimiento”; and as a place where they could learn something extra: “Es como una institución extra para ampliar tus conocimientos”.

At the end of the process a great percentage of students felt that now they could do their work easily because the teacher had helped them and prepared them to work on their own. Besides, working alone made them feel comfortable and confident. Extracts from the questionnaire: “Porque el maestro me enseño a trabajar solo”; “Porque la maestra nos preparó para ser autónomos, con o sin la presencia de ella”; “Porque aprendi a trabajar en el SAC”; “Me siento seguro y con confianza”; “Porque ya sé trabajar”; “Porque uno decide sus temas y podemos tocar temas atrasados y actuales”; “Así aprendo un poco más y pongo más atención”.

64
THE ROLE OF STYLES AND METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES IN SELF-ACCESS WORK

In the selection of materials almost all students considered that knowing about learning styles and strategies had helped them a lot. The styles helped them because they gave them the opportunity to know about their preferences and also about their weaknesses. In the questionnaire they said: “Con esto la maestra y nosotros mismos nos dimos cuenta en que área nos sentimos mas a gusto y en donde podíamos aprender sin dificultades”; “Distinguí a que enfocarme y en que fallaba”; “Es una forma de saber como vamos a trabajar y como queremos trabajar dependiendo de las características que tengamos para aprender”; “Para trabajar con los estilos que casi no se nos dan”; “Porque me basaba en ellos para poder seleccionar con mayor facilidad mis áreas de trabajo y poder elaborar más rápido mis trabajos”.

Besides, knowing about strategies was also of great importance because students used them as an aid to have better organization: “De alguna manera te vas haciendo una idea para organizarte”; “Porque así concretaba mis temas y al seleccionarlos, los aprendía mejor”; “Porque nos ayudaron al mejor desempeño dentro del SAC”; “Nos dieron las herramientas para trabajar mejor”; “Para planear cómo debo de trabajar en el SAC”; “Para poder llevar el orden y aprender mejor”; “Porque también las podemos llevar a cabo en otras experiencias”.

The strategies that students said that they had learned during the course were paying attention, organizing, setting goals and objectives, summarizing, taking notes, and self evaluating, as shown in Figure 4 below. These strategies helped students have a better organization and plan of their work. The questionnaire revealed the following information: “Para mejorar mis conocimientos en el idioma”; “Para tener un mejor desempeño en el CADI”; “Para organizarme, ahorrarme tiempo”; “Para mejorar no solo en la escuela sino también en otras áreas”; “Para llevar un control de mis errores y proyectarlos a la práctica”; “Para tener una mejor planeación del trabajo que se iba a realizar".
STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE TEACHER'S ROLE

Students were guided through the course in the selection of their material. Answers from the questionnaire suggested that four students (a little more than 25%) preferred the teacher to set the tasks because she was a guide and a resource in case they had problems: "Porque sabe que actividades son las que nos pueden ayudar más, porque hay unas que son importantes"; "Cuando lo hago yo me confundo un poco"; "Porque sabemos que hacer, pero no es lo esencial". Five other students (about 35%) mentioned that they felt better when they chose their material to work: "Cuando ella nos los daba estaba bien, pero al escogerlos tú mismo tenías la posibilidad de adquirir un tema atrasado y poderlo comprender mejor"; "Ya se en lo que estoy deficiente"; "Así yo mismo aclaro mis dudas"; "Porque de esa manera yo puedo elegir lo que yo siento que me hace falta". The rest of the students (40%) felt comfortable in both ways: "Porque aprendo bien de ambas formas"; "Porque ya no me cuesta trabajo buscar lo que necesito"; "Porque la maestra nos da de acuerdo a las necesidades de cada uno y uno también elije de acuerdo a esas necesidades".
The answers to the questionnaire suggest that the teacher played an important role in making the individual work more productive. She guided students in their individual work based on individual problems and needs, provided students with information about strategies, and showed students how to make use of the pathways to select the materials. In the questionnaire students said: “Nos proporciono unas estrategias para mejorar la búsqueda y manejo de material”; “Nos fue guiando y diciendo como trabajar dándonos el material y diciéndonos a que área ir”; “Me ayudo a utilizar las rutas para trabajar”; “Nos ayudo a organizar el material que ibamos a seleccionar y nos explico que hacer”; “Observar cuales eran nuestros problemas en algunos temas y buscar las necesidades de cada uno de nosotros para luego encargar tareas”; “Nos enseño a como saber elegir el material a estudiar”.

The presence of the teacher was important and her role in the students’ process of autonomy development was defined in the questionnaire as the person in charge of guiding students to work effectively: “Estuvo bien ya que aprendí a trabajar bien en el SAC”; “Que está muy bien porque primero nos daba el material que necesitábamos y para aprender a ser autónomos después nos dejó escoger el material”; as a guide and orienter: “Muy bueno, guía y orientador, amigo”; “Como un acompañante, un guía en nuestro aprendizaje”; “Era la persona encargada de guiarnos por el camino correcto para poder trabajar con eficiencia”; as a friend: “Se portó como una amiga con nosotros porque nos trato bien y siempre trato de ayudamos y darnos animo para aprender”; as a resource: “Era un apoyo para nosotros”; as a counselor: “Cuando teníamos alguna duda ella nos explicaba”; and as an instructor: “Me iba instruyendo”. These comments showed that students were aware of the teacher guidance and support and that they took advantage of that.

PERSONAL PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS AS MORE AUTONOMOUS LEARNERS

Regarding the concept of autonomy, the majority of the students (more than 80%) considered themselves more autonomous. The reasons they gave for considering themselves more autonomous students were because they knew how to work individually:
"Se conc tratar el tema, estudiarlos, analizarlos y avocarme a ellos de una manera en que los comprenda". They were able to decide what to do: "Yo decido lo que voy a hacer". They could select their own material without any help from the teacher and solve their own problems: "Ya soy capaz de realizar, buscar, preguntar las dudas por mí mismo de acuerdo a las necesidades"; "Puedo buscar material sin la ayuda del maestro, y ya se como hacerle para cuando tengo problemas porque ya se donde buscar mas información, mas diccionarios, o algo así."

About 20% of the students did not consider themselves autonomous because they thought that they needed more practice and more support: "No porque no sepa las base y todo pero creo que no me siento capaz de poder tomar un curso autónomo, pero tampoco lo descartaría de poder tomarlo"; "Tal vez necesito aunque sea un poco de ayuda"; "Siento que todavía me falta aprender un poco más para ser autónomo".

There was a difference between the students who considered themselves as more autonomous and the students who would probably take the second level of the course in the autonomous modality, in which they are expected to work on their own in a Self Access Center during the whole semester. Just a third part of the students said they would take the autonomous course because it would be a new experience for them or because they felt they were prepared to do it: "Ya estoy preparada para realizarlo"; "Tengo seguridad y de alguna manera pondré en práctica todo lo aprendido"; "Se que puedo trabajar yo sola, solamente que me den los temas"; "Quiero experimentar el inglés autónomo". The majority (about 80%) said that they still preferred classroom lessons because there they have a teacher to help them: "Creo que el conocimiento es mejor escolarizado y tener como ayuda el SAC y poder tener mayor información y conocimiento"; "Prefiero que un maestro me oriente y me enseñe"; "En ocasiones hay dudas difíciles de resolver y se necesita también del maestro"; "De alguna u otra manera me gusta estar en clase y me gusta estar en el SAC y de esa forma aprendo un poco más"; "De forma autónoma solo iría las horas que yo elijo, siento que no hay mucha responsabilidad, en cambio escolarizado tengo la responsabilidad de asistir al inglés diario". The fact that some students could take the second level of English in an
autonomous way may mean that they would like to have a different experience. However, it is important to know from their information how confident they felt and the willingness they had at deciding to do this on their own.
Chapter Five

Discussion

This section presents the main findings of the study in different categories: concept of autonomy, activities and areas at the sac, use of strategies and styles, perceptions of the teacher's role, problems students faced at the sac, students' roles, limitations, related studies, implications

STUDENTS CONCEPT OF AUTONOMY

The first time students worked at the Self Access Center on their own without the presence of the teacher they felt insecure. This experience influenced their concept of autonomy which involves two main aspects: the individual character of the activity and the need for responsibility. Students had a general idea of what autonomy referred to, which allowed them to make a connection to their individual work at the Self Access Center and understand the reasons for doing so.

It was interesting to find out that they did not show connection between their concept of autonomy and the practice in the Self Access Center. They defined autonomy as individual and independent work, without any help from others. However, in their practice at the SAC almost all of them tried to find some kind of help, either from a classmate or from their teacher, who was there as an observer. To this respect and based on their own definition of autonomy, they did not behave as autonomous students when they worked at the SAC for the first time.

Throughout the process it was found that student's concept of autonomy changed from the first definition. They started to consider that autonomy refers to the person who works with little or no help or to the fact of carrying out individual activities having the capacity to decide what to do. And then They started to consider more aspects such as styles, strategies, needs or weaknesses. This changing perception from students shows that the
process might have helped students to grow as learners. This also shows that the process to become more autonomous may have made them clarify the concept of autonomy through practice due to the fact that they seem to be more conscious of what an autonomous work is and what it implies.

Student's comments about themselves as autonomous learners at the end of the study showed that they do not consider themselves autonomous because they think that they need more practice and still more support. However, many of them demonstrated that they had reached a certain level of independence, which is what is required in this kind of course.

ACTIVITIES AND AREAS AT THE SAC

It is relevant to point out what students decided to do and what aspects they took into account in order to select the activities to work on individually. The main findings were that at the end students took advantage of what the teacher did in previous tasks taking into account their needs and preferences to select their material and areas at the SAC where to work. This shows that students were aware of what aspects to consider in order to work more effectively. The fact of having students go to the SAC should not be a matter of likes and dislikes. It needs to be considered a practice area where students can work on their own, where they can work based on their learning preferences, needs, weaknesses and strengths. Working at the Self Access Center, then, should be a matter of being aware of what students need to do, what areas they need to visit (whether to practice or reinforce), what material they need to check, what abilities or aspects of the language they need to reinforce. To do so, students would need to start knowing themselves better as learners and thus start taking control of their independent work.

Students showed some progress from the first task. They have demonstrated that they can learn how to use and find materials easily if they have their activities assigned. The first time they were at the SAC almost all of them selected a grammar activity to work on in the reading area. It was interesting to notice that many of them depended on a partner
or a friend and did exactly the same as other students. This reflects the lack of confidence to work alone and the lack of knowledge about the material. Some students preferred to work on the computers because they felt familiar with technology. Computers are tools that they use in their life to do homework, to chat, to use the net or other programs. Thus, students worked in this area because they considered it would be easier to work.

The progress and familiarity with the material that students started to have through the process allowed them to have a better organization of their work. They showed that they were learning to work without the presence of the teacher but with orientation and guidance, which may have helped them to make progress. They showed progress on independent work because knowing what to do in advance gave them confidence to work alone, and the guidance from the teacher allowed them to look for specific material to overcome their weaknesses.

The findings also show that students learned to work in more than one skill at the Self Access Center. Students started to be aware of their own progress in their process of autonomy. They showed that they had learned how to manage the materials in The Center in the different areas because the teacher facilitated their work by means of guidance, support and practice during the course. They were aware of their own progress in their autonomous work and learned which aspects to consider in order to work effectively. Students' work at the Self Access Center encouraged them to work independently. They also considered that combining their work at the SAC with the class was important for improving their level of English because they considered the Self Access Center as both a practice center and a source of information.

The problems students faced to work individually at the Self Access Center were basically two. The first was related to the Self Access Center material due to the fact that they were not familiar with the place and the way the material was arranged. However, practice during the process helped students to overcome this problem in a gradual manner. The second problem was related to the idea of working alone. Classroom students are used to working under supervision, to be receptors instead of actors in the process of learning.
This is the reason why working alone made them feel insecure and lost because they did not receive any help or because they did not have a person next to them to guide them.

In the subsequent tasks, although all of the students showed some progress, not all of them showed the same level of confidence and familiarity with the tasks and materials to work on individually. This may be because not all of them have the same capacity to work independently. Besides, the guidance from the teacher does not work at the same level for everyone. This means some students may feel uncomfortable with the teacher's guidance or recommendations because their sense of independence may be more developed. Some others may feel that they need more guidance or they may need more time to digest all the information given.

USE OF STRATEGIES AND STYLES

The findings suggest that students were aware of the importance of strategies and styles to be used in the individual work. The findings show that consciousness raising about the use of strategies was helpful for students because the data suggests that they were aware of what strategies to use at the Self Access Center and the reasons for using them. However, results from the data do not provide enough information to say that the strategies students used at the beginning were used in an effective way. An important factor to consider here is the practice students had between the first and the second task because the amount of time they spent at the SAC and the activities they carried out may have helped them to reinforce what they learned in the first task.

Students started to use more strategies with more familiarity in the subsequent activities. The most common were summarizing and making connections with other materials, organizing, planning goals and objectives, paying attention (on the activities they did or the information they checked), and self evaluating. These strategies were important for students due to the fact that they helped them have ideas of organization, selection of material and taking decisions. Raising awareness in students about the use of metacognitive strategies made them aware of what they could do to work more effectively
in their individual practice. The findings suggest that students realized that working in a more organized way, putting the strategies into practice, planning their activities, setting goals, and reviewing the topics they did not understand could help them to improve their individual work.

With regards to learning styles, the findings suggest that knowing about students' personal style was helpful to carry out independent activities because they were aware of their preferences. This contributed to their independent work because they were more conscious about what areas at the SAC were more appropriate for them. It was also important to notice what style students did not belong to due to the fact that it was a good opportunity for them to develop other abilities by exploring different areas at the SAC, which may have helped them to become more familiar with other materials at the SAC.

PERCEPTIONS OF THE TEACHER'S ROLE

Students suggested that there should be some guidance from the teacher to select their material and orient them on what activities to do, on what material to check, and to orient them on how they could carry the activities out. This indicates that students may need some intervention and support from the teacher the first time they work at a Self Access Center. They would first need to be taught how to work in order to have more productive results. This relates to the scaffolding idea in which they are expected to go step by step.

The problems learners faced since the beginning were basically to select their material, to learn how to use the pathways and to work alone. However, the guidance from the teacher helped them to overcome those problems. The teacher thus was considered as a planner, as an observer, as an advisor, as a monitor, as a counselor, as an instructor, as a resource, and as a friend. The teacher was then the one in charge of guiding students to work effectively. The most predominant definition of the teacher throughout the tasks was that of a guide for leading students in the tasks they needed to accomplish. Another role was as a planner for the tasks the teacher designed based on individual needs. The teacher was also an observer of every student in every task. She was also considered as
an advisor for giving students advice on their work and to solve problems. The role as a
monitor was given to her for supervising students individual work at the Self Access
Center. She was perceived as a counselor for assessing their individual work. She was
also an instructor for giving them instructions of what to do and how to do it. As a
resource, she gave special attention to students' personal needs, weaknesses, and
problems. And she was considered a friend for motivating students to feel confident
throughout the project. The definitions given show that the teacher's role was very
important in the process of learners becoming autonomous and that s/he should take
different roles when preparing students to work independently. Besides, students were
aware of the teacher's intervention and took advantage of it by following her advice and
focusing on their own needs to set their own tasks.

In fact, the main role of the teacher in this process was that of gradual help or guidance for
students from the second to the final task. She went from more to less intervention, which
might be considered a training process that helped students to be more independent.
Here she used the strategy of scaffolding in which students' responsibility was growing
with every task while the teacher diminishing. This scaffolding process implies that, to help
students become more autonomous, it is the teacher who first needs to be informed of
what autonomy is, how the Self Access Center should be considered, what could be the
appropriate material for students to work with, and how relevant the autonomous work is
for the English course among other aspects. If the expectation is to guide students in the
process of becoming autonomous, then the teacher needs to be informed and prepared to
provide effective guidance.

STUDENTS' ROLES

The process allowed students to be active participants of their own learning. In the first
stage they did not seem confident enough to do independent work without help. However,
during the study they started to have more practice and to be more aware of what they
needed in their autonomous work. They were explorers in the sense that the activities at
the SAC allowed them to become familiar with the areas and the materials. Students were
also observers as they paid attention to the aspects the teacher took into account to design the task. Thus, they started to be aware of their weaknesses, needs or learning styles in order to take consider them in their individual practice. Students showed analytical behaviour when they began to learn about strategies, learning styles and other factors. The most interesting was to see how they began to know the importance and use of these factors in the selection of materials and organization of their individual work, which shows that they developed a higher level of autonomy.

RELATED STUDIES

The findings of this study show some similarities with the findings in the study carried out by Chan (2001) who suggests that the teacher’ roles were those of resource person, instructor and facilitator. However, the study carried out by Chan shows that choosing learning tasks is one of learners' roles, while in the current study it was the teacher in charge of setting tasks for students as a guide in their autonomous work. Moreover, the chance to let students set their own tasks was not given to them until the last cycles of the project, so that they could have the opportunity to demonstrate the level of autonomous work they had reached.

This study also shows similarities with the study carried out by Catterall (1995) in Wallace (1998: 172). In this study the author suggests ways in which mechanisms for promoting learner autonomy have been incorporated into an English language program. This language program was designed with the explicit objective of encouraging learners to take responsibility for their language learning. In the current study the English program also seeks to foster students's individual work through a gradual process to achieve certain level of independence and autonomy.

LIMITATIONS

A crucial limitation was to consider students' concept of autonomy as part of their previous background. It was also wrong to consider that they had figured it out based on the
induction course to the SAC we had at the beginning of the course. Similarly, I was unable to determine from the data if in fact students had selected their activities and material based on what they liked and needed in the first stage. Another limitation was that the teacher was in the Self Access Center as an observer, in some cases, by the time students were practicing. This could have affected students' first impression because even when the teacher was there just as an observer, more than one student asked for help. The fact of having the teacher there while they were working might have made them feel somehow confident. The presence of the teacher when students carried out their individual work would have made them think they might be corrected. However, in this case there were no corrections due to the fact that that was not the purpose.

IMPLICATIONS

With further research into autonomy, it would be possible to plan actions of greater guidance to students toward their autonomous work. Besides, more teachers could be involved in a collaborative work and take part in students' process of becoming autonomous. The process would be a proposal by means of the implementation of tasks to encourage students and guide them into their individual work.

It may be necessary to point out that the purpose of the English course is to make students develop certain level of independence. In my experience, many teachers in my work place have taken for granted that students start the course as independent learners. We need to allow students to be informed, to be aware of their needs and their capabilities as independent students. These are considerations we as teachers in the same institution need to consider in order to have a standard procedure in which students can learn how to become more autonomous learners. The students' process to develop a certain level of autonomy needs to be implemented in beginning levels. It is motivating for teachers to find out that students can become more autonomous. This is the time for teachers to build the path for students to walk along. This is the time for teachers to allow students be active participants of their own learning process.
It could be argued that the students' process to develop a certain level of autonomy needs to be implemented in beginning levels.
Conclusion

The aim of the study was to report on the students' process of doing autonomous work at the SAC: a) on their ideas and feelings about autonomy and independent work, b) on SAC activities, problems and solutions, c) the role of learning styles and use of metacognitive strategies, and, d) student's role and the teacher's role. The data provided did not allow to make strong generalizations about the effects of teacher intervention in the development of student autonomy since it was a small-scale study carried out in only one group at the Language Center.

However, the study reveals that the tasks that these students were to carry out throughout the process helped them to reach a higher level of autonomy. During the process, students increased their sense of responsibility and learned to know themselves as learners. In other words, they learned about their weaknesses in the language, about the language skills to be improved, about what strategies to use in order to organize, about taking decisions about what to work and about evaluating their Self Access activities in an effective way. They also learned that the previous elements mentioned were of crucial importance for them to reach a higher level of independence or autonomy in the Self Access Center. This Center was considered by students as the practice area where they can work in an independent way. During the process I could notice that students took advantage of the Self Access use and the benefits were reflected in the improvement of their independent work. It was also observed that the Self Access Center is for students the ideal place for promoting and developing autonomy.

The study also reveals some teacher's roles which are necessary in this kind of scaffolding process. The roles are those of guide, counselor, orienter, resource, instructor, and friend. Students thought all of these were relevant in the process because they felt they needed help and support. They felt the comfort of having someone next to them, although not physically. Another role of the teacher was that of a planner for designing tasks for students based on scaffolding strategies, which goes from more to less guidance and in which the learners experience a higher level of difficulty, responsibility and
independence with every new task. The teacher's guidance was necessary to a certain extent. The intention was that learners could spend less time in the selection of their activities. It was also expected that students were more aware of what they were doing and why they were asked to do certain activities.

Besides, the study also reveals the perception of students about themselves as more autonomous students. The process helped students a great deal due to the fact that they were learning little by little, gradually in terms of difficulty, they could gain more responsibility to become more autonomous. The level of autonomy students reached reflected the effective work that they did at the Self Access Center. However, there are no signs of completely independent work from the learners until task four, in which they demonstrated a higher level of independence. Autonomy may be considered a process in which students are being prepared to work in an autonomous way. In that sense, it could be argued that at the end of the process students can be considered more autonomous than before this experience of working at the SAC.

The work that student did is not very common in the kind of courses that the University of Veracruz offers. They did a lot of work and demonstrated values such as responsibility, respect, work and punctuality, among others. This is the reason why it is worthwhile to provide students with more work and information than we usually have in our courses. It is useful for teachers at the Language Center to know more about the use of the Self Access Center, the resources which are available, the styles and strategies that may help students being more aware of what independent work implies. The idea is to make students more aware of the effective use of the resources, to let them develop abilities to learn and guide them towards autonomy, which could be beneficial not just for the learning of English but also for other subjects.
References


# APPENDIX I

## GUIDE FOR PERSONAL DIARY OF FIELD NOTES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observations during students work at CADI</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What students did to find their worksheets.</td>
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<tr>
<td>What students decided to do.</td>
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<tr>
<td>How many activities they did.</td>
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<td>What area or areas they concentrated on.</td>
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<td>How long they spent to find their material.</td>
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<td>How long they spent with each worksheet.</td>
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<td>How long they spent in each area</td>
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<td>What difficulties they faced.</td>
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<td>How often they looked for some help (from a teacher, an advisor, a partner,)</td>
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<td>How often they needed supporting material (dictionary)</td>
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<tr>
<td>How they behaved.</td>
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</table>

| Personal comments about constrains |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflections during students work at CADI</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflections after every task:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How effective raising awareness about styles and strategies was for students to carry out their activities?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Did students take into account the awareness to carry out the activities?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What did not work? Why?</td>
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<td>What was missing?</td>
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</table>
APPENDIX II

REPORTE DE BITACORAS/ SELF ACCESS LOG

Alumno: __________________________ Facultad: ___________ Matrícula: __

Horario: __________ Nivel: ________ Maestra: Anabel Gutiérrez Rodríguez

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>h</th>
<th>Unidad</th>
<th>Tema</th>
<th>Materia</th>
<th>Área</th>
<th>¿Alguna dificultad?</th>
<th>¿Qué aprendiste?</th>
<th>¿Cómo te sentiste?</th>
<th>Utilizaste alguna estrategia de aprendizaje?</th>
<th>Observaciones Generales</th>
<th>Firma</th>
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</table>

85
APPENDIX III

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS AFTER TASK ONE

Nombre: __________________________________________ Fecha: ___________

1. ¿Qué es la Autonomía para ti?
2. ¿Por qué crees que en este curso se te pida cumplir con trabajo en el CADI?
3. En esta semana, ¿qué actividades realizaste en el Centro, de Auto Acceso?
   Consulta de libros o diccionarios: ______ Resolver hoja de trabajo: ______
   Otros:
4. ¿Encontraste alguna dificultad para encontrar tu material?  Si _____  No _____
   Explica:
5. a. ¿Encontraste alguna dificultad al trabajar solo?  Si _____  No _____
   b. ¿Por qué?
6. ¿En qué te basaste para seleccionar tu material?
   En lo que me gusta _______  En lo que creo que me costó trabajo en clase ______
   En lo que siento que necesito _______  Otros:
7. a. ¿Cómo te sentiste trabajando sin la presencia del maestro?
      Inseguro: _____  Desorientado: ______  Igual que con la presencia del maestro: _____
      Mejor que cuando trabajo con el maestro: ______
      Explica por qué:
   b. ¿Recibiste algún tipo de ayuda por parte de algún maestro o compañero?
9. a. ¿Consideras que el trabajo en el CADI te ayudó en tu aprendizaje del idioma
     Inglés?  Si _____  No _____
     b. ¿De que manera?
10. ¿Cómo consideras que podrías mejorar tu trabajo en el CADI?
11. ¿Qué te gustaría que hiciera tu maestro para hacer que tu trabajo en CADI sea más eficiente?
APPENDIX IV

GUIDE TO INTERVIEW AFTER THE FIRST TASK

* ¿Cómo te llamas?
* ¿Qué carrera estudias?
* ¿Cuántas actividades realizaste en el Centro de auto Acces0?
* ¿Cuánto tiempo tardaste en cada actividad?
* ¿En qué áreas trabajaste?
* ¿Que dificultades tuviste para trabajar?
* ¿Las actividades que realizaste estuvieron relacionadas con los temas de clase??
* ¿Qué aprendiste del trabajo en CADI?
* ¿Cómo te sentiste al trabajar solo?
* ¿Descubriste algo nuevo en cuanto al trabajo individual?
* ¿Descubriste algo nuevo en cuanto a tu persona al momento de trabajar solo?
* ¿Qué te falto para trabajar mejor?
* ¿Planeas hacer algo diferente la próxima vez??
* ¿Qué piensas que el maestro debería hacer para ayudarte a trabajar mejor?
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Me gusta escuchar y discutir un trabajo con un compañero.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Podría aprender o revisar información efectivamente escuchando mi propia voz en casete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Prefiero aprender algo nuevo leyendo acerca de ello.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Frecuentemente escribo direcciones que alguien me da para no olvidarlas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Disfruto de los deportes y ejercicios.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Aprendo mejor cuando puedo ver nueva información en dibujos o en diagramas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Es muy fácil que visualice o dibuje cosas en mi mente.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Aprendo mejor cuando alguien me dice o me explica las cosas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Usualmente escribo las cosas para poder verlas nuevamente más tarde.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Estoy muy pendiente del ritmo de las sílabas en cada palabra que escucho en una conversación o en la música.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Tengo buena memoria para las palabras y melodías de viejas canciones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Me gusta participar en discusiones de pequeños grupos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Con frecuencia recuerdo tamaños, formas y colores de objetos cuando ya no están a la vista.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Frecuentemente repito en voz alta las direcciones que me dan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Disfruto trabajar usando las manos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Puedo recordar caras de actores, foros y otros detalles visuales de películas que he visto.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Frecuentemente uso mis manos y el movimiento de mi cuerpo cuando explico algo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Prefiero permanecer parado y trabajar en un pizarrón o sentado trabajando sobre papel.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Frecuentemente aprendo mejor si me levanto y camino alrededor cuando estudio.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Necesito de dibujos o diagramas para ayudarme a armar algún objeto.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Recuerdo mejor los objetos cuando los he tocado o he trabajado con ellos.</td>
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<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Aprendo mejor cuando veo a alguien más hacerlo primero.</td>
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<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Suelo jugar mucho con mis dedos o manos cuando estoy sentado.</td>
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<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Hablo un idioma extranjero.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Disfruto construyendo cosas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Puedo seguir la trama de una historia por la radio.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Disfruto reparando cosas en casa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Puedo entender información cuando la escucho en un casete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Soy bueno usando máquinas o herramientas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Es muy difícil permanecer sentado por largas horas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Disfruto actuando o haciendo pantomimas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>32. Puedo fácilmente visualizar figuras en los diseños.</td>
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<tr>
<td>33. Frecuentemente necesito de un receso para moverme.</td>
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<tr>
<td>34. Me gusta recitar o escribir poesía.</td>
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<tr>
<td>35. Usualmente puedo entender a la gente con diferentes acentos.</td>
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<tr>
<td>36. Puedo distinguir muchas entonaciones diferentes o diferentes melodías en la música.</td>
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<tr>
<td>37. Me gusta bailar o crear nuevos movimientos o pasos.</td>
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<tr>
<td>38. Disfruto de actividades que requieran coordinación física.</td>
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<tr>
<td>39. Es más fácil seguir direcciones escritas que orales.</td>
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<tr>
<td>40. Puedo reconocer fácilmente las diferencias entre sonidos similares.</td>
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<tr>
<td>41. Me gusta crear o usar ritmos para aprenderme las cosas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>42. Desearía que mis clases incluyeran actividades que se realicen con las manos.</td>
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<tr>
<td>43. Puedo responder rápidamente cuando 2 figuras geométricas son idénticas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>44. Las cosas que recuerdo mejor son las que he visto escritas o en dibujos.</td>
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<td>45. Sigo direcciones orales mejor que las escritas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>46. Podría aprender los nombres de 15 instrumentos médicos más fácilmente si los pudiera tocar o examinar.</td>
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<tr>
<td>47. Frecuentemente necesito decir cosas en voz alta para mí mismo para poder recordarlas después.</td>
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<tr>
<td>48. Puedo mirar figuras y copiarlas fácilmente sobre papel</td>
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<tr>
<td>49. Usualmente puedo leer un mapa sin dificultad</td>
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<tr>
<td>50. Puedo “oír” las palabras exactas de una persona y su tono de voz días después de que me ha hablado</td>
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<tr>
<td>51. Recuerdo mejor las direcciones cuando alguien me da ubicaciones, tales como edificios específicos y árboles.</td>
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<tr>
<td>52. Tengo buen ojo para los colores y las combinaciones</td>
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<tr>
<td>53. Me gusta pintar, dibujar o hacer esculturas</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>54. Puedo dibujar vividamente los detalles de una experiencia pasada significativa</td>
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EVALUACIÓN DE ESTILOS DE APRENDIZAJE.

Completa la siguiente información leyendo cada oración cuidadosamente. Marca SI, si la información se relaciona contigo siempre o la mayor parte del tiempo. Marca NO, si la información rara vez o nunca se relaciona contigo. Generalmente, tu primera respuesta rápida es la mejor.

Nombre: ________________________________


COGNITIVE STYLES RESULTS

Evaluando tu Perfil

1.- Ignora las respuestas NO. Trabaja sólo con las preguntas que tienen respuestas YES.

2.- Por cada respuesta YES, mira el número de la pregunta. Encuentra este número dentro del siguiente recuadro y enciércalo en un círculo.

3.- Cuando hayas terminado, no todos los números dentro de los siguientes cuadros estarán dentro de un círculo. Tus respuestas no serán muy parecidas a las de nadie más.

4.- Cuenta el número de círculos del recuadro “Visual” y escribe el total en el recuadro de Total. Haz lo mismo para el recuadro “Auditivo” y “Kinésico”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visual</th>
<th>Auditivo</th>
<th>Kinésico</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>3, 4, 6, 7</td>
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<td>47, 50</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analizando tu Resultado

1.- El promedio más alto indica el estilo de tu preferencia. El más bajo indica tu modalidad más débil.

2.- Si tus dos resultados más bajos son iguales o muy similares, ambas modalidades pueden ser de tu preferencia.

3.- Si tus tres resultados son idénticos, esto indica que has integrado las tres modalidades y puedes trabajar bien en cualquiera de las tres.

4.- El resultado de 10 o más alto, indica las modalidades que usas frecuentemente.

5.- El resultado de menos de 10 indica las modalidades que usas frecuentemente o no la usas. Para las modalidades de menos de 10, examina algunas posibles razones para estos resultados.

### APPENDIX VI

**ESTRATEGIAS PARA EL APRENDIZAJE DE UNA LENGUA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estrategias Indirectas</th>
<th>Estrategias Metacognitivas</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Centrando tu Aprendizaje.</strong></td>
<td><strong>B. Arreglando y planeando tu Aprendizaje</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resumiendo y Haciendo Conexión con Material ya Conocido</td>
<td>Organizando</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poniendo Atención</td>
<td>Planteando Metas y Objetivos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Auto-Evaluando</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Auto-Monitoreando.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### I. Estrategias Metacognitivas.

**Centrando tu Aprendizaje.**
Esta serie de tres estrategias ayuda al aprendiz a fijar su atención y energía en ciertas tareas, actividades, habilidades o materiales del idioma. El uso de estas estrategias provee un enfoque para el aprendizaje del idioma.

1. **Resumiendo y Haciendo Conexión con Material ya Conocido**
   *Resumir de manera comprensiva un concepto clave, principio o set de materiales en una actividad prometedora del idioma y asociarlo con lo que ya se conoce.* Esta estrategia puede ser cumplida de muchas maneras diferentes, pero frecuentemente es de ayuda seguir tres pasos: aprender el porqué se está realizando la actividad, construir el vocabulario necesario, y hacer la asociación (4).

2. **Poniendo Atención**
   *Decidir con anticipación poner atención en general a una tarea de aprendizaje del idioma e ignorar distractores (por medio de atención dirigida), y/o poner atención a aspectos específicos del idioma o a detalles de la situación (por medio de atención selectiva).*

**Arreglando y Planeando Tu Aprendizaje**
Este set contiene seis estrategias, las cuales ayudan al aprendiz a organizar y planear para que aproveche el aprendizaje del idioma. Estas estrategias tocan muchas áreas: informarse sobre el aprendizaje del idioma, organizar el horario y el medio ambiente,
ponerse metas y objetivos, considerar los propósitos de las actividades, planear las tareas, y buscar oportunidades para practicar el idioma.

1. Organizando
*Entender y usar condiciones relacionadas al aprendizaje optimo* del nuevo idioma; organizar nuestro propio horario, ambiente físico (por ejemplo el espacio, temperatura, sonido, luz), y libreta para el aprendizaje del idioma.

2. Planteando Metas y Objetivos.
*Plantear metas para el aprendizaje del idioma* incluyendo metas a largo plazo (como el estar I uso de idioma para conversaciones informales al final del año) y objetivos a corto plazo (como terminar la lectura de una historia corta para el Viernes).

**Evaluando tu aprendizaje**
En este set hay dos estrategias relacionadas, ambos auxiliando a los estudiantes a checar su desempeño del idioma. Una estrategia implica notar y aprender de implica evaluar el progreso general.

1. Auto Monitoreando.
*Identificar errores para entender o producir el nuevo idioma*, determinar cuáles son importantes (aquellos que causan seria confusión u ofensa), rastrear la fuente de errores importantes, y tratar de eliminar dichos errores.

2. Auto Evaluando.
*Evaluar el propio progreso* en el nuevo idioma, por ejemplo, checando si se esta leyendo mas rápido y entendiendo mas que hace I mes o 6 meses, o si se esta entendiendo un gran porcentaje de cada conversación.


Boston, Massachusetts: Heinle & Heinle Publishers
APPENDIX VII

QUESTIONNAIRE GIVEN TO STUDENTS AFTER TASK TWO

Nombre: __________________________ Fecha: __________

1. En esta semana, ¿qué actividades realizaste en el Centro de Auto Acceso? Consulta de libros o diccionarios: ______ Resolver hoja de trabajo: ______ Otros:____
2. ¿Cómo decidiste trabajar en esta área?
3. ¿En qué te basaste para seleccionar el material?
4. ¿Encontraste alguna dificultad para encontrar tu material? Si _____ No ____ Explica:
5. ¿Encontraste alguna dificultad al trabajar solo? Si _____ No ____ ¿Por qué?
6. a. ¿Cómo te sentiste trabajando sin la presencia del maestro? Inseguro: _____ Desorientado: ______ Igual que con la presencia del maestro:____ Mejor que cuando trabajo con el maestro: ______ Otros:
b. Explica por qué:
7. a. ¿Recibiste algún tipo de ayuda por parte de algún maestro o compañero? Si _____ No ____
b. Si la respuesta es Si, ¿qué tipo de ayuda recibiste?
8. a. ¿Consideras que el trabajo en el CADI te ayudó en tu aprendizaje del idioma Inglés? Si _____ No ____
b. ¿Si la respuesta es Si, de que manera te ayudó?
9. ¿Qué aprendiste de esta actividad/experiencia?
b. Explica por qué:
11. ¿Cómo consideras que podrías mejorar tu trabajo en el CADI?
12. ¿Qué hizo tu maestro para hacer que tu trabajo en CADI fuera más eficiente?
13. ¿Consideras que fue importante tomar en cuenta los estilos de aprendizaje? Si _____ No ____
b. Explica por qué:
14. ¿Consideras que fue importante saber acerca de estrategias de aprendizaje? Si _____ No ____
b. Explica por qué:
15. ¿Utilizaste alguna estrategia de aprendizaje en esta sesión en el CADI?
APPENDIX VIII

GUIDE TO INTERVIEW AFTER THE SECOND TASK

* ¿Cómo te llamas?
* ¿Qué carrera estudias?
* ¿Qué actividades realizaste en el CADI?
* ¿Cuánto tiempo tardaste en cada actividad?
* ¿En qué áreas del CADI trabajaste?
* ¿Las actividades estuvieron relacionadas con los temas de clase?
* ¿Qué aprendiste del trama o de los temas que trabajaste?
* ¿Qué aprendiste en cuanto al trabajo en el CADI, al manejo del material y de la organización del material en el CADI?
* ¿Cómo te sentiste al realizar tus actividades?
* ¿Cómo te sentiste al trabajar solo?
* ¿Qué dificultades tuviste al trabajar solo?
* ¿De que manera te ayudo el maestro en tu trabajo individual?
* ¿En que se basó la maestra para asignarte las actividades?
* ¿Estas de acuerdo con el estilo de aprendizaje que dio como resultado en el test?
* ¿Qué estrategias utilizaste?
* ¿Para que te sirvieron / en que te ayudaron?
* ¿Qué crees que necesites para mejorar tu trabajo?
APPENDIX IX

QUESTIONNAIRE TO STUDENTS AFTER TASK THREE

Nombre: ____________________________ Fecha: ____________

1. En esta semana, ¿qué actividades realizaste en el Centro de Auto Acceso?
   Consulta de libros o diccionarios: _____ Resolver hoja de trabajo: _____ Otros: ______

2. ¿Encontraste alguna dificultad para encontrar tu material?
   Si _____ No ____
   Explica:

3. ¿Encontraste alguna dificultad al trabajar solo?
   Si _____ No ____
   ¿Por qué?

4. a. Después de trabajar solo varias ocasiones, cómo te sentiste trabajando sin la presencia del maestro?
   Seguro: _____ Inseguro: _____ Desorientado: ______
   Igual que con la presencia del maestro: _____ Mejor que cuando trabajo con el maestro: ______
   Otros:
   b. Explica por qué:

5. ¿Cómo te ayudó tu maestro para hacer que tu trabajo en CADI fuera más eficiente?

6. ¿Cómo definirías el papel del maestro en tu proceso de aprender a trabajar en CADI?

7. a. ¿Cómo te sentiste con la tarea asignada?
   b. Explica por qué:

8. a. ¿Recibiste algún tipo de ayuda por parte de algún maestro o compañero?
   Si _____ No _____
   b. Si la respuesta es Sí, ¿qué tipo de ayuda recibiste?

9. a. ¿Consideras que el trabajo en el CADI te ayudó en tu aprendizaje del idioma Inglés?
   Si _____ No _____
   b. Si la respuesta es Sí, qué aprendiste de nuevo?

10. ¿Qué aprendiste de en cuanto al trabajo individual o autónomo en esta actividad?

11. a. ¿Utilizaste alguna estrategia de aprendizaje en esta sesión en el CADI?
   Si _____ No _____
   b. Si la respuesta es Sí, menciona cual o cuales:

12. ¿Para qué te sirvieron?

13. ¿Cómo consideras que podrías mejorar tu trabajo individual en el CADI?

14. ¿Qué deberías tomar en cuenta para poder trabajar de manera independiente, sin ayuda de nadie?
APPENDIX X
GUIDE TO INTERVIEW FOR THE THIRD TASK

* ¿Cómo te llamas?
* ¿Qué carrera estudias?
* ¿Cuántas actividades realizaste?
* ¿Cuánto tiempo te tardaste en cada una de las actividades?
* ¿En qué área o áreas trabajaste?
* ¿Tuviste algún problema?
* ¿Cómo te sentiste al trabajar por tu cuenta?
* ¿Cómo te sentiste en cuanto al trabajo individual?
* ¿De qué manera te ayudo tu maestra a trabajar mejor en CADI?
* ¿En qué se baso para proporcionarte las actividades?
* ¿Te sirvieron las recomendaciones del maestro para poder trabajar por tu cuenta?
* ¿De qué manera?
* ¿Fueron productivas para ti estas actividades?
* ¿Qué estrategias de aprendizaje utilizaste?
* ¿Te ayudaron de alguna manera?
* ¿Qué aprendiste en cuanto al trabajo individual?
* ¿Qué crees que deberías hacer tu mismo para trabajar de manera independiente in ayuda del maestro?
APPENDIX XI

QUESTIONNAIRE TO STUDENTS AFTER TASK FOUR

Nombre: ____________________________________________________ Fecha: ____________

1. En esta semana, ¿qué actividades realizaste en el Centro de Auto Acceso?
   Consulta de libros/diccionarios: ______ Resolver hoja de trabajo: ______ Otros: ______

2. ¿En qué te basaste para seleccionar tu material?

3. ¿Por qué seleccionaste esta área o estas áreas?

4. ¿Cómo te sentiste al escoger tú mismo tu trabajo de CADI?

5. ¿Cómo te sentiste al trabajar solo?

6. ¿Qué aprendiste de esta actividad/ experiencia en cuanto al trabajo individual o autónomo?

7. ¿Qué aprendiste en cuanto a los temas de la materia de Inglés?

8. ¿Qué tipo de ayuda recibiste por parte de tu maestro de clase al seleccionar tu material?

9. a. ¿Encontraste alguna dificultad para encontrar tu material? Si _____ No _____
   b. Si la respuesta es Sí, ¿qué hiciste para resolver el problema?

10. ¿Recibiste algún tipo de ayuda por parte de algún maestro o compañero dentro del CADI?
    Si _____ No _____

   b. Si la respuesta es Sí, ¿qué tipo de ayuda recibiste?

11. a. ¿Utilizaste alguna estrategia de aprendizaje en esta sesión en el CADI? Si _____ No _____
    b. Si la respuesta es Sí, menciona cual o cuales:

12. ¿De qué manera te ayudaron las estrategias al trabajar en el CADI?

13. ¿Consideran que has progresado en tu proceso de aprendizaje hacia la autonomía?
    Si _____ No _____

   Explica:

14. ¿Cómo definirías el papel del maestro en tu proceso de aprender a trabajar en CADI?

15. ¿Qué te hace falta hacer a ti mismo para mejorar tu trabajo en el CADI?

16. ¿Cómo vas a trabajar en CADI de ahora en adelante?

98
APPENDIX XII

GUIDE TO INTERVIEW AFTER THE FOURTH TASK

* ¿Cómo te llamas?
* ¿Qué carrera estudias?
* ¿Cuántas actividades realizaste en el CADI?
* ¿Cuánto tiempo te tardaste en cada actividad?
* ¿Tuviste algún tipo de problema para encontrar tu material o para trabajar?
* ¿Cómo lo resolviste?
* ¿Cómo te sentiste al seleccionar tu propio material / al tomar tus propias decisiones?
* ¿En qué te basaste para seleccionar tu material / en que aspectos tomaste en cuenta?
* ¿Cómo te sentiste trabajando solo?
* ¿Qué aprendiste en cuanto al trabajo en el CADI?
* ¿Qué aprendiste en cuanto a los temas?
* ¿Qué estrategia de aprendizaje utilizaste?
* ¿De qué manera te ayudaron las estrategias en tu trabajo autónomo?
* ¿Consideras que has mejorado en cuanto al trabajo autónomo?
* ¿Por qué?
* ¿Qué necesitas hacer para mejorar tu trabajo independiente?
* ¿Cómo piensas trabajar de ahora en adelante?
Este pequeño escrito que está elaborado con el fin de hacer de una forma más sencilla y rápida nuestro estudio y labor en el CADI, para tomar menos tiempo en buscar el material que se va a consultar o tratar, sin importar que el que lo consulte sea de tipo autónomo o escolarizado. (Este trabajo solo integra las áreas de video, vocabulario, lectura y computo de la unidad 8)

**VIDEO**
- Vid 004 ocupaciones
- Vid 021 Do y Does
- Vid 033 Ocupaciones

**VOCABULARIO**
- Voc 066* ocupaciones
- Voc 098p ocupaciones
- Voc 044* ocupaciones
- Voc 045p ocupaciones
- Voc 010 ocupaciones
- Voc 088 ocupaciones
- Voc 015 ocupaciones
- Voc 102 ocupaciones
- Voc 138 ocupaciones

**Reading**
- Read 097p presente simple
- Read 066p presente simple
- Read 021p presente simple
- Read 007* presente afirmativo
- Read 013p presente negativo

**Computo**
- NOPD
- NEW INTERCHANGE
- VIVA LINGUA
- DISCO DE APOYO QUE PROPORcionA EL LIBRO
- CRI 019
Este pequeño escrito que está elaborado con el fin de hacer de una forma más sencilla y rápida nuestro estudio y labor en el CADI, para tomar menos tiempo en buscar el material que se va a consultar o tratar, sin importar que el que lo consulte sea de tipo autónomo o escolarizado. (Este trabajo solo integra las áreas de video, vocabulario, lectura y computo de la unidad 9)

**VIDEO**

- V1d 097 comida
- V1d 081 comida
- V1d 008 comida
- V1d 027 rutinas y Verbos de frecuencia

**VOCABULARIO**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voc 151p</th>
<th>frutas y verduras</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voc 157p</td>
<td>comida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voc 001p</td>
<td>comida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voc 126p</td>
<td>adv. De frecuencia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voc 128p</td>
<td>frutas y verduras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voc 073p</td>
<td>alimentos</td>
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<tr>
<td>Voc 078p</td>
<td>alimentos</td>
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<tr>
<td>Voc 081p</td>
<td>alimentos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voc 137p</td>
<td>envasados</td>
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<td>Voc 139p</td>
<td>alimentos en general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voc 140p</td>
<td>alimentos y bebidas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reading**

- Read 114p Some y any
- Read 115p some y any
- Read 098p adverbios de frecuencia
- Read 014p Some y any
- Read 014p alimentos

**Computo**

- NOPD
- NEW INTERCHANGE
- VIVA LINGUA
**KINESTHETIC LEARNERS**

**Angles 1**  
**unidad 8**

**ESTAS AQLGUNAS DE LAS HOJAS DE TRABAJO QUE SE PUEDE UTILIZAR PARA REFORZAR ESTOS TEMAS.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRAMATICA</th>
<th>COMPUTO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRESENTE SIMPLE</td>
<td>CD NEW INTERCHANGE INTRO</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CD 008 (LAS VEGAS/TRUCK STOP/EX 1,2,3)</td>
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<td>CD 15 (LECCION 1/PAGINAS 4,6,7,10,13,15)</td>
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<td>LECCION 2/PAGINAS 3,4,5,6,7,9,10,12,13</td>
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</table>

**LIBROS DE CONSULTA**

- **ESSENTIAL GRAMMAR IN USE – RAYMOND MURPHY**
- **NEW INTERCHANGE – JACK RICHARDS**

*A*= PARA APRENDER SOBRE EL TEMA  
*P*= PARA PRACTICAR EL TEMA
Ingles 1  unidad 9

ESTAS AQLGUNAS DE LAS HOJAS DE TRABAJO QUE SE PUEDE UTILIZAR PARA REFORZAR ESTOS TEMAS.

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<th>COMPUTO</th>
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<td>TODA LA UNIDAD CRI 1019 (DISCO 2UNIDAD 9) ALIMENTOS/SOME ANY: CRI 008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRA 060 A, GRA 057 AP.</td>
<td>NEW YORK/CHINA TOWN/EXI) VEGETABLES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRA 058 AP, GRA 059 AP.</td>
<td>NEW YORK/CHINA TOWN/EXI) FRUITS</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRA 062 AP, GRA 063 AP.</td>
<td>NEW YORK/CHINA TOWN/EXI) SOME ANY</td>
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<td>GRA 075 A, GRA 117 P.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRA 126 A, GRA 169 A.</td>
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<td>GRA 155 P.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A = PARA APRENDER SOBRE EL TEMA
P = PARA PRACTICAR EL TEMA
APPENDIX XIV

FINAL QUESTIONNAIRE TO STUDENTS AFTER THE WHOLE PROJECT

Nombre. __________________________________________ Fecha: _____________

1. ¿Cómo te sentiste a lo largo de todo el proyecto?

2. a. ¿Fue complicado el proceso de aprender a trabajar en el CADI de manera individual? Si: _____ No: _____
   b. ¿Por qué?

3. Menciona algunas dificultades a las que te enfrentaste al trabajar solo

4. ¿Qué aprendiste de esta experiencia?

5. ¿Te gustó la manera en que fuiste aprendiendo a conocer cómo trabajar en el CADI?

6. ¿Qué faltó para que tu aprendizaje fuera más efectivo?

7. ¿Qué hizo tu maestro para hacer que tu trabajo en CADI fuera más eficiente?

8. ¿Qué hiciste tú para que tu trabajo en CADI fuera más eficiente?

9. ¿Fue importante la presencia del maestro en este proceso de aprender a trabajar en CADI? Si: _____ No: _____
   b. ¿Por qué?

10. ¿Cómo definirías el rol del maestro en tu proceso de aprender a trabajar en CADI?

11. ¿Qué aprendiste en cuanto al trabajo individual o autónomo?

12. ¿Cómo te sentiste al empezar a tomar tus propias decisiones en la selección de tu trabajo de CADI?

13. a. ¿El uso del CADI te ayudó a entender mejor los temas de clase y conocer temas nuevos? Si: _____ No: _____
   b. ¿Por qué?

14. ¿Por qué crees que es importante combinar el trabajo de clase con el trabajo de CADI?

15. a. ¿Consideras que fue importante tomar en cuenta los estilos de aprendizaje para trabajar en CADI? Si: _____ No: _____
   b. Explica por qué:

16. a. ¿Consideras que fue importante saber acerca de estrategias de aprendizaje? Si: _____ No: _____
   b. Explica por qué:

17. ¿Qué estrategias de aprendizaje aprendiste a utilizar?
18. ¿Para qué te ayudaron?

19. ¿Consideras que has progresado en tu proceso de aprendizaje hacia la autonomía?
   Si: _____    No: _____
   b. Explica:

20. a. ¿Cómo te sientes trabajando sin la presencia del maestro?
    Inseguro: _____    Desorientado: _____    Igual que con la presencia del maestro: _____
    Mejor que con la presencia del maestro: _____    Otros: _______________________________
    b. ¿Por qué?

21. ¿Cómo te sientes trabajando solo?    

22. ¿Cómo consideras que podrías mejorar tu trabajo autónomo en el CADI?

23. a. ¿Te sientes mejor cuando el maestro te da los temas para checar en el CADI o cuando los seleccionas tú mismo?
    b. ¿Por qué?

24. ¿Cuál es tu concepto de CADI?

25. ¿Cuál es tu concepto de autonomía?

26. a. ¿Te consideras un alumno autónomo?    Si: _____    No: _____
    b. ¿Por qué?

27. a. ¿Te gustaría llevar la experiencia de Inglés II de manera autónoma el próximo semestre?
    Si: _____    No: _____
    ¿Por qué?