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**INSTITUTO DE POSTGRADOS- FORUM**  
**RESUMEN ANALÍTICO DE INVESTIGACIÓN (R.A.I)**

No	VARIABLES	DESCRIPCIÓN DE LA VARIABLE
1	<b>NOMBRE DEL POSTGRADO</b>	Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés para el Aprendizaje Autodirigido
2	<b>TÍTULO DEL PROYECTO</b>	Promoting learner generated error repair on preposition and preposition combinations through indirect written feedback and self-directed learning
3	<b>AUTOR(es)</b>	Clara Marcela Niño Rosas
4	<b>AÑO Y MES</b>	2013 - Junio
5	<b>NOMBRE DEL ASESOR(a)</b>	Paul Rees Geraint - Jermaine McDougald
6	<b>DESCRIPCIÓN O ABSTRACT</b>	This study is the result of an 18-week inquiry made with A1 students of English at a private university setting in Bogota, Colombia. Through the purposeful instruction of prepositions, learning strategies, and promotion of student independence and self-direction. The study aimed to measuring students' learning of prepositions by collecting data from their writing assignments, and to establishing their self-directedness gains through Linkert scales with precise learning behavior descriptions and semi-structured interviews. The study shows that a few gains can be made in self-direction and self-monitoring through the implementation of learning and self-direction strategies, as an isolated L2 teaching practice, though a wide consensus among the language teaching staff will produce ampler, more expedited results
7	<b>PALABRAS CLAVES</b>	Written corrective feedback, prepositions, learner-generated error repair, self-directed learning
8	<b>SECTOR ECONÓMICO AL QUE PERTENECE EL PROYECTO</b>	Educativo
9	<b>TIPO DE ESTUDIO</b>	Investigación de aula
10	<b>OBJETIVO GENERAL</b>	Effect of a combination of indirect written feedback and self-directed learning promotion on learner's use of English prepositions.
11	<b>OBJETIVOS ESPECÍFICOS</b>	To investigate if indirect writing feedback produce effective results on error monitoring and repair in regard to the use of prepositions and preposition combinations; To investigate if the promotion of available resources for independent and self-directed learning cause positive outcomes in learner-generated error repair in written production.
12	<b>RESUMEN GENERAL</b>	18-week inquiry about A1 students of English at a private university in Bogota, Colombia; students were instructed in prepositions, learning strategies, and self-direction in order to measure their learning of prepositions. By collecting data from their writing assignments, Linkert scales and semi-structured interviews, the study shows that a few gains can be made in the learning objectives if implemented as an isolated L2 teaching practice.
13	<b>CONCLUSIONES.</b>	The research span of a semester in order to carry out this research project was not enough to get more results. The data delineate a decrease in the number of errors in prepositions and some progress in the learners' initiative to find information by themselves. The results indicate that longer effort in both directions have to be made to obtain expected outcomes.
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Promoting learner generated error repair on preposition and preposition combinations  
through indirect written feedback and self-directed learning

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\*Jermaine McDougald

Research Report submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Master in English Language Teaching for Self– Directed Learning

March, 2013



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PREPOSITION COMBINATIONS  
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### Abstract

This study is the result of an 18-week inquiry made with A1 students of English at a private university setting in Bogota, Colombia. Through the purposeful instruction of prepositions, learning strategies, and promotion of student independence and self-direction. The study aimed to measuring students' learning of prepositions by collecting data from their writing assignments, and to establishing their self-directedness gains through Linkert scales with precise learning behavior descriptions and semi-structured interviews. The study shows that a few gains can be made in self-direction and self-monitoring through the implementation of learning and self-direction strategies, as an isolated L2 teaching practice, though a wide consensus among the language teaching staff will produce ampler, more expedited results.

### Resumen

Este estudio es el resultado de una investigación llevada a cabo en 18 semanas de clase con estudiantes de inglés de nivel pre-intermedio en un contexto universitario en la ciudad de Bogotá, Colombia. A través de la instrucción intencionada de preposiciones, estrategias de aprendizaje y la promoción de la independencia y auto-dirección de los estudiantes, el estudio tuvo como intención la medición del aprendizaje de las preposiciones en inglés por parte de los estudiantes a través de los datos recolectados de sus tareas de composición de texto, así como el lograr establecer sus logros en auto-dirección por medio de escalas de medición de conductas precisas y entrevistas semi-estructuradas. El estudio muestra que solamente unos cuantos logros pueden lograrse en auto-dirección y auto-monitoreo a través de la implementación de estrategias, como estrategia aislada en la enseñanza de un segundo idioma, aunque con un consenso amplio en el cuerpo docente, se pueden producir resultados más amplios y expeditos.

### Declaration

I hereby declare that my research report entitled:  
Promoting learner generated error repair on preposition and preposition combinations  
through indirect written feedback and self-directed learning

- is the result of my own work.
- declares which is the outcome of work done as specified in the text;
- is neither substantially the same as nor contains substantial portions of any similar work submitted or that is being concurrently submitted for any degree or diploma or other qualification at the Universidad de La Sabana or any other university or similar institution except as declared and specified in the text;
- complies with the word limits and other requirements stipulated by the Research Subcommittee of the Department of Languages and Cultures;
- has been submitted by or on the required submission date.

Date: February 28th, 2013

Signature: CLARA M. XIMO D.-

### RESEARCH REPORT REQUIREMENTS

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. Introduction

An aspect of classroom interaction that raises a lot of interest and debate among ESL teachers is that of writing feedback. How do we deal with errors in a meaningful way and even more, how do we instill the correction into the learners' minds? At present both of these questions seem unanswered.

This matter is of great importance for teachers and for students, as repair of prepositions may become one of the turning points in the acquisition of this, one of the major concerns in English acquisition. Many times as teachers, we feel that we are correcting the same errors with the same students in a never-ending process. According to Chodorow et al. (2010), prepositions “account for 20-50% of all grammar and usage errors...[...] and are so difficult to learn because of variability in their usage [...], which is often hard even for native English speakers.” (p.420).

### 1.1 Factors that may cause the problem

The lack of positive outcomes in the speaking and writing assessment in learner output may hide three possible factors hindering the effectiveness of corrective writing feedback, and that we prompt here:

1. Teacher correction to written production is not sufficient or not clear; or not paid attention to by students;
2. Teacher advocacy of what is expected from learners is not clear or plentiful;
3. Promotion of learner autonomy, self-correction, and awareness of language forms is scarce.

As cited earlier by Chodorow et al. (2010), prepositions is one of the problematic concerns in English acquisition; this is a matter of great importance, as its solution implies more effectiveness in writing results, more satisfaction in students, and ultimately, better instruction quality. There is a great interest among the public in

general, and especially among young adults, in getting better performance in the English language. These groups are always looking for the best institutions where they can learn it.

In the case of the researcher of this study, it would be a rewarding aspect of my career to see that some of my students can benefit from the feedback on prepositions and realize the difference between the ideal forms and their own *interlanguage*.

## 1.2 Research population and time

The study was directed at two groups of university learners of A1 level (experimental and control groups), ages 18-25, over one academic semester, 18 weeks. A1 level was chosen based on the researcher's teaching experience, as she believed that this range of language competence would possibly benefit more learning prepositions. Basic levels are rather concerned about assimilating the general English structures; they might possibly find prepositions and prepositional phrases somehow burdensome and not get much benefit from them. On the other hand, upper level students may find this aspect of language rather easy, and might not find this subject of much interest.

In this respect, literature was reviewed to help make the selection of the level. Many documents matched the search 'teaching English prepositions to speakers of other languages', but few of them state the level of instruction, or follow studies measuring the effectiveness of teaching techniques; on the contrary, these projects address the effects of L1 over L2 acquisition of prepositions, preposition polysemy, or the effects of Data-Driven Learning over upper levels

- Wu (2009) employs a cognitive approach to the description of preposition polysemy of 'in' and 'over' to describe this feature, and doesn't make use of any English learners at all. Oller et al. (1971) explored the cloze technique to measure non-native speakers of English.
- Rankin et al. (2011) studied marginal prepositions and L1 influence over L2 acquisition of prepositions; the population selected for this study already had B2 competence level.

- Koosha, M. et al (2006) studied the effectiveness of Data-Driven Learning over prepositions, if these effects are different across the different learning EFL levels, and to what extent Iranian students' knowledge of preposition collocations is influenced by L1.
- Jiménez, R. (1996) describes the patterns of difficulty and variability in the incorrect use of English prepositions in 290 written compositions made by third year students of ESL in three state secondary schools in Spain, ages 16-19; it does not state the competence level.

Learner groups from these studies follow a competency-based curriculum of 6 hours per week to improve their communicative skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, in order to fulfill one of their programs' requirements, to achieve B2 competence level in English to be able to graduate.

The instilled interest in self-correction and self-monitoring would have a great impact on learners of all talents and capacities, as they would drive their own learning to more successful outcomes, not only in tests, but in their own professional lives.

### 1.3 Research question

What effect does a combination of indirect written feedback and self-directed<sup>1</sup> learning promotion have on learner's use of English prepositions?

### 1.4 Question aims

ESL learners at beginner and pre-intermediate levels write employing the forms of their speech production, taken from printed resources –these forms afterwards are, either combined with their L1, or misunderstood, or fossilized, or all the three. In other words, and according to the researcher's experience, learners express themselves in writing, making the errors they usually make when speaking, being them expressions of misunderstandings of accurate language, or old errors learned in previous stages, or L1 interference. The feedback given by the teacher has to do mainly with correction of forms, plus the formal writing repair of spelling, punctuation and

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<sup>1</sup> Self-Directed Learning, as we have seen in the Literature Review, is a broad concept that embraces a wide range of behaviors related to instructors and learners. This project has employed a number of teacher strategies to promote student self-direction from different resources, as expressed there.



capitalization. In our Spanish-speaking context, the main resource for language learning is the printed word, even over recordings or videos, which may not be fully understood, and which in many cases need the relationship between what's heard and the actual form of the words already existing in the learners' minds. Perhaps due to the differences between the English and Spanish forms of writing the spoken word, Spanish-speaking learners find it rather difficult to begin understanding spoken English without the help of a printed reference. Therefore, the aim is to close the circle: the learner receives input mainly from printed words or through the listening of recordings or videos, which in turn have new vocabulary or expressions, which are studied in print; then he uses the new forms and recycles them through exercises – again printed matter, through speaking and writing activities, where he will show the adaptations –interlanguage—s/he has made in his brain. At this stage of learning, comes the corrective feedback –written, as well as oral–, to tell the student back, again through printed matter, the language ideal forms, which will –that is the object of the research— nurture his written as well as his or her oral production, and give him or her tools to enrich himself or herself independently.

In the case of this study, the aim was to make the learner see and consult the instruction about prepositions several times: at first, during instruction, when drilling them, when using them in speaking tasks, when making a first draft in a writing assignment, and when making second writing versions. This allows for plenty of language recycling opportunities for the learner to finally acquire prepositions and prepositional combinations in a meaningful manner.

Finally, the implementation of corrective feedback over written production is an indication to the learner that his or her output needs improvement; the instructor's role resided in pointing at the errors, giving an explanation, and directing the learners' attention to the resources available to eliminate them in order to foster initiative towards more independent and self-directed study ways.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

Literature was reviewed in search for information about:

### 2.1 Prepositions and teaching prepositions

According to Celentano (2012),

“The word preposition is a part of speech which does not vary by changed endings –by, in, to, for, and from. It is usually placed before a noun, or its equivalent, forming a prepositional phrase, and showing the relation to a verb or an adjective as ‘a girl from the village’... A preposition is usually placed before its object..., but in certain cases it follows its object... Prepositions have a function in English rather than a clear meaning of their own. In some cases, the meaning of a sentence can still be understood even if the prepositions are missing... For your English to be natural and effective, you need to be able to select the right preposition. One of the most common mistakes in English is the wrong use of prepositions.”

The New York Hunter College web page defines the word ‘preposition’ as,

“a connecting word showing the relation of a noun or a noun substitute to some other word in the sentence... (...) Over ninety percent of preposition usage involves these nine prepositions:

**with    at    by    to    in    for    from    of    on**

[Prepositions] can be used interchangeably, are often combined with verbs to create phrasal verbs, and a single preposition can be used to express different ideas. [...] Prepositions are used to express a number of relationships, including time, location, manner, means, quantity, purpose and state or condition. [...] [Prepositions are also used] with certain verbs, adjectives, and idiomatic expressions. [...] The most efficient method of study is to familiarize [oneself] with prepositions and prepositional phrases through practice and memorization. The bilingual student, who often seems to find preposition usage one of the most difficult parts of the English language.”

In another study paper, Essberger (2012) reported about 150 prepositions in the English language. Another author, Saint-Dizier (2006) states that,

“In general, prepositions introduce a relation between two entities or sets of entities. The first entity is often a kind of external argument while the second one is headed by the preposition... In general, a preposition assigns a thematic role to its ‘object’ argument... There are only about 50 prepositions in English (for other languages there is not always a consensus on what a preposition is, e.g. vs. prepositional compounds. Here is a fairly complete list: aboard, about above, across, after, against, along, amid, among, anti, around, as, at, before, behind, below, beneath, beside, besides, between, beyond, by, despite, down, during, except, excepting, excluding, following, for from, in, inside, into, like, near, of, off, on, onto, opposite, outside, over, past, per, plus, round, save, since, than, through, to, toward, towards, under, underneath, unlike, until, up, upon, versus, via, with, within, without.” (Saint Dizier, 2006) p.3.

On the matter of how to teach prepositions and prepositional combinations, Boquist (2009) proposes Evans and Tyler’s (2005) Cognitive Linguistics-semantic networks, by using mind maps, diagrams and pictures to illustrate preposition meanings, technique specifically intended to cover prepositions of place, time, and movement. This strategy is also used in course books like Evans & Dolley’s *Upstream Pre-Intermediate* (2004), but for the purposes of this project, Boquist’s examples give perfect complement to the text book used in the classes where the current study took place.

In regard to the methods to teach prepositions in ESL/EFL contexts, literature has proved to be quite scarce; not enough classroom research has been conducted about such piece of instruction. After exhaustive research over databases, journals, and printed production, a researcher can find more information in web pages devoted to explanation and exercises on EFL Preposition Combinations (see these online resources in the Reference section), but certainly these sites only have brief explanations and most of them non-contextualized. As a result of the scarce resources and synthetic explanations these web pages offer, inductive, form- and meaning-focused preposition instruction was conducted in this study, through combination clusters or preposition collocations, similarly to what is generally done with vocabulary, likewise closely adhered in meaning to main unit themes, and in order for learners to make use of them in speaking and writing tasks.

## 2.2 Research conducted on written feedback and prepositions

Bitchener et al. (2005) conducted a study of three types of feedback: a. direct, explicit written feedback and student-researcher 5-minute individual conferences; b. direct, explicit feedback only; and c. no corrective feedback. These techniques were applied to three types of error: prepositions, past simple tense, and the definite article; learners had no previous instruction in this respect, and the researcher applied what was stated in the course syllabus. This study is the only one found about corrective feedback on prepositions, and produced slight improvement when employing strategy - a.-; about this specific matter, the author says,

“For prepositions, the average accuracy performance did not vary according to the type of feedback provided. However, when we examined whether there was an effect for the interaction of feedback type and time, the ANOVA test revealed a significant difference across the four writing times. (...) ...group one (receiving both written and conference feedback) performed differently across the four times to the other two groups and most noticeably so between weeks 8 and 12.” (Bitchener et al.,2005), p.199.

There is another study on articles and prepositions, which certainly facilitates the task of correction: Chodorow et al. (2010) directs our attention to two online evaluation services –the *Criterion online writing evaluation service by ETS*, and the *Microsoft Research ESL assistant*. This online service is currently discontinued; nevertheless, the ESL correction feature makes part of downloadable Microsoft Silverlight™. According to the study, *Criterion* marks, corrects and feedbacks up to 90% of user preposition errors in academic writing. This system, however, is available only for organizations due to the high cost; upon registration, the system provides instructor and student access.

## 2.3 Effective forms of writing repair

In regard to the third theme, effective forms or writing repair, and in general terms, Brookhart (2008), Ferris (2003, 2004, 2006), Hyland & Hyland (2006), Liu (2008), Oxford (2002), Russel & Spada (2006), give tips and strategies for giving comments directly on student work, being the teacher responsible for the students' learning,

considering clarity, specificity, conceptual feedback, and tone. Feedback which communicates respect for the student as a learner and an agent, and one which inspires thought, curiosity or wondering; in other words, giving full feedback without lecturing or commanding the learner about “what to do, and without assuming that teacher feedback is the last word or last expert opinion (p.34)”

A study by Evans et al. (2010) asserts that consequential error correction is manageable, meaningful, timely, and constant; and it reflects what learners need most, as demonstrated by what they have produced. These four features constitute what the authors call Dynamic Feedback. The first two point to decreasing the volume of comments on many types of errors on the one hand, and on the other, to making students engage in positive changes on their work by reasoning on their errors (Ferris, 2006; and Wiggins, 1999).

Using this technique, Hartshorn (2008) came to statistically prove that corrective feedback is quite effective, provided that the features of manageability, meaningfulness, promptness and persistence are taken into account.

The research carried out by Bitchener (2005) mentioned above, studied different types of feedback given to learners. The author comes to the conclusion and recommends the use of a combination of full direct and metalinguistic written feedback plus the same effort in face-to-face encounters with learners. For the author, these results proved effective in teaching simple past tense and the use of definite and indefinite articles. However, the strategy proved less useful with prepositions because, according to the author, they are “less treatable, less rule-governed features”.

Also, Ellis et al. (2008) used a quasi-experimental approach to study Japanese learners of English to verify their acquisition of the use of articles to express first and second mention, through focused and unfocused feedback. Unfortunately, the study did not come to definite conclusions about the effectiveness of corrective feedback.

In conclusion, as for the third theme of this study, effectiveness of corrective feedback, this study would agree with Evans et al. 2010, p.447, who say that, “...we find it difficult if not impossible to identify anything that is learned without feedback,”

and with this in mind, we implemented an indirect Dynamic Feedback in the project to inspect the results of instruction in prepositions, together with two other target language categories, in order to follow the principles of manageability, meaningfulness, promptness and persistence proposed by Evans et al.:

- **Manageability** refers to the number of categories to be covered in each piece of writing; the authors argue that more than three categories will result in learner discouragement about self correction and loss of interest in writing feedback.
- **Meaningfulness** refers to the learners' understanding why the feedback is given and how they are to use it; also, to the teachers' understanding learner competence language level when dealing with corrective feedback, and its promotion for learners to make positive changes with it.
- **Promptness** refers to the minimum amount of time lapsed between learner writing and teacher feedback.
- **Persistence** is the steady, constant feedback given to learners over an extended period of time.

For the purposes of this study, it is important to clarify that we will use the term '**Indirect Feedback**' as error pointing and meaningful (Evans et al., 2010) metalinguistic correction, linked to independent study prompts and references, as shown in Appendix 1, Indirect Feedback Sample.

## **2.4 Promoting Self-directed or Autonomous Learning and writing feedback.**

According to many authors, the concept of SDL is nontraditional (Knowles, 1975; Brookfield, 1986; Caffarella, 1993; Benson, 2001). It states that this perspective sees learning under learner's own direction; learners themselves are responsible for organizing their studies, objectives, resources, and assessment. This way, the study is tailored based upon the individual learner's needs. This implies that the student has acquired autonomy and there are plenty of resources for his or her self-directed study.

There is growing evidence that people who take initiative, learn more, much better and much more profoundly and permanently.

A comparison made by Fisher et al. (2001) makes a good description of the traditional teaching/learning model and this one, based on autonomy:

The pedagogical learner prefers to learn in highly structured situations such as lectures and tutorials. Conversely, the andragogical learner prefers to take responsibility for meeting his or her own learning needs. The continuum of teacher-versus self-direction can be described in terms of the amount of control the learner has over their learning and the amount of freedom given to them to evaluate their learning needs and to implement strategies to achieve their learning goals.

SDL happens when students have the control over the learning objectives and the means of learning; this is what and how they will learn. The ideal picture of self-directed learners shows: students who are responsible for their learning process, who self-manage and self-monitor, who collaborate with teachers and peers, who develop specific knowledge and the ability to transfer that knowledge to new situations, and who keep motivation and will on their efforts (Abdullah, 2001). Students then create their own tasks organized as problem solving projects, or personal questions of interest. Their internal incentives (self-esteem, desire to achieve, urge to grow, satisfaction of accomplishment, the need to know and curiosity) drive them to use already acquired strategies oriented towards the finding of what he or she is looking for (Abkahorn, 2008).

Learner strategies play a very important role in achieving self-direction. Abhakorn (2008) suggests that these can be learned through formal instruction and repeated practicing, and through the process of scaffolding (Chamot and O'Malley, 1994), in which the teacher facilitates learners the choice of personally relevant strategies in second language learning and use. Teachers become then, facilitators, advisors, partners and consultants by making their students reflect on what they want to achieve, what strategies they should use, what results they are getting, how they feel; a complete learner-centered approach. Strategy training should be integrated into regular L2 activities for a long period of time, and students should have plenty of

opportunities for strategy training during language classes (Oxford, 1994); they should be taught through explanations, handouts, brainstorming, and materials for reference and home study, so as they can be used in other and future language tasks beyond a class. Among the privileged learning strategies are collaboration among students, reflection on learning, monitoring and self-assessment.

According to Grow (1996), the key competencies reside in the understanding of the differences between traditional teaching and learning and self-directed learning on one hand, and collaboratively working with others and selecting strategies skillfully, on the other. He proposes a 4-stage model of learner/teacher interaction: Stage 1 dependent learner/authority, coach; Stage 2: interested student/motivator and guide; Stage 3: involved learner/facilitator; Stage 4: self-directed learner/consultant, delegator.

Song & Hill (2007) cite different scholars who have presented diverse perspectives on SDL. Some see it as a process of organizing the instruction (Harrison, 1978), by paying special attention to learner autonomy over the instructional process; others look at it as a personal attribute (Guglielmino, 1977; Kasworm, 1988); or a virtue present in individuals who can assume moral, emotional and intellectual autonomy (Candy, 1991):



<b>Perspectives</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Models</b>		
		<b>Candy (1991)</b>	<b>Brockett &amp; Hiemstra (1991)</b>	<b>Garrison (1997)</b>
<b>Personal Attribute</b>	Moral, emotional and intellectual management	Personal autonomy Self-management	Goal orientation (personal attribute)	Self-management (Use of resources) Motivation
<b>Process</b>	Learner autonomy over instruction	Learner control Autodidaxy	Process orientation (learner control)	Self-monitoring
<b>Context</b>	Environment where learning takes place	Self-direction is context-bound	Social context: role of institutions and policies	

**CHART 1**

*Perspectives on Self-Directed Learning.* Song & Hill (2007)

How to evaluate a learner's readiness for SDL? There are two instruments that have been widely used to assess a person's self-direction in learning: The Oddi Continuing Learning Inventory (Oddi, 1986) and the Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale, the SDLRS/LPA (Guglielmino, 1978), which can be applied with permission or purchase.

According to Boud (1988a), Dearden (1975), and Rogers (1983), the aim of inducing autonomy in students is to enable them to learn more effectively by choosing what they want, what their interests are, their plans and actions to achieve their goals independently of any pressure from others.

The text by Reinders (2010) offers clear instructions as to how teachers should prepare students on this new approach in the classroom. This article gathers theoretical constructs about autonomy to explain that autonomy, a social and political concept inherent to the Western Civilization has been developed as an ideal in education since the 1980's, and the even more common trend to studies on learner-centredness in education, 'good learners' and the features of self-motivation and proactivity that characterize them. The term 'autonomy', according to Reinders, has been mistaken for motivation, awareness, and interaction; and it has evolved into a learner centred way of teaching, where the learner is in control of his own learning (citing Fotos and Browne, 2004). Because learners possess different physical, emotional, mental, cognitive, and operational capacities and ways, they must be given a say about 'what', 'where', and 'how' (citing Benson & Nunan 2005, Lantolf & Pavlenko 2001, Fotos & Browne 1997). Reinders also emphasizes the urgent need for student preparation by teachers to adopt this new perspective in education, for

"...if learners are not trained for autonomy, no amount of surrounding them with resources will foster in them that capacity for active involvement and conscious choice, although it might appear to do so." (Hurd, 1998)

Now, taking into account written feedback, the work by Evans et al. (2010) mentioned formerly provides the elements to convey traditional writing corrective methodology towards a more modern approach. This study posits that the draft stages and portfolio writing are to be complemented by other comments made by the instructor which complete learner engagement in correcting writing tasks. This can be achieved by referring learners to other knowledge resources, or to other writing activities beyond the classroom, in the real world (e.g. forum participation in web pages of their interest, such as music, television, travel, environmental problems, lifestyles, shopping, celebrations, food and drink, sports, entertainment, technology,

and many more). This was in part the technique used in this study: the writing feedback contained references of books or exercises suggested by the teacher, which students could use to correct their writing assignments. Other references were given in regard to authentic reading material related to unit themes or songs containing the vocabulary or structures proposed in the course. Web forums were also suggested for the learners to participate giving their opinions about music, television, travel, environment, city life, shopping, lifestyles, celebrations, food and drink, sports, entertainment, and technology. Nevertheless, when asked about their participation in these forums, they felt they did not have the necessary language competence to take part in these activities.

Another way to promote autonomy and self-directed learning for writers is stated by Senra (2010) and Milton (2010), through the use of online software designed to monitor and give feedback to written work. Senra (2011) describes the *e-gramm*, an online program at Universidad de la Rioja in Spain –inaccessible, as it seems to be exclusive for that university’s community; Milton recommends the use of Check my Words and Mark my Words, two toolbars which can be installed in the Microsoft Word program, which give the EFL learner feedback and examples of how to correct what he/she is doing wrong in composition, plenty of examples of how to use that specific language, and other choices to learn more. Experimental learners used My Words’™ Check my Words®, which reportedly helped them do their writing activities with good results.

As for specific teaching strategies, Abdullah, M. (2001) indicates a series of specific strategies, some of which have been chosen to apply in this project, to suit its necessities and context:

- Giving learners participation in decision-making about some class activities.
- Advising learners to pursue their own interests so that learning becomes more meaningful.
- Allowing learners to explore ideas through peer discussions.

- Bringing real-life problems into the classroom for learners to work on.
- Modeling learning strategies, such as predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing, in order for students to develop the ability to use these strategies on their own.
- Allowing individual learners to approach a task in different ways using different strategies.

The study also employed literature by Rubin (2005 and 2008),

- Promoting the use of a journal for self-reflection and self-correction
- Promoting the use of task analysis

These two resources discuss the use of diaries by students to register their advances, as well as their problems in acquiring the new language, and help students understand the tasks they are commonly faced to by dividing the task into small units, which make progress flow more easily and attainably.

Regardless of the good things that can be said about self-directed learning, the benefits it will bring to the learner who possesses the qualities needed in his ventures, and the time employed in teaching the strategies to achieve this virtue, not all the learners' personality features and mental capacity seem to fit into this demanding model. As (Wiley 1983, p.182) expresses it, not everybody has 'the attitudes, abilities and personality characteristics necessary for self-directed learning'. The model can be developed up to a certain extent, depending on the person's characteristics, and self-directed learning readiness in one field of study does not indicate the same possibilities for a completely different one. Also, teachers must take into account that learners with low readiness experience high levels of anxiety when exposed to SDL projects, as evidence shows (Grow, 1991; Dyck, 1986; and Wiley, 1983; cited by Fisher et al., 2001). According to what Fisher et al.(2001) express, all data indicate that SDL readiness has to do directly with personal fields of interest, learning styles, and preferences.

## 2.5 Instruments

The literature reviewed took the researcher to Guglielmino (2012) and Fisher, King and Tague (2001). Guglielmino developed a self-direction readiness scale in 1978, and her web page displays some sample items the real scale employs. Fisher et al. created a scale to evaluate self-direction in nursing students, from which we took and adapted many questions. These two works gave us the basis to create the first readiness scale employed in this study, which we will call the Self-Direction Entry Readiness Scale. By the end of the data collection, the length of this scale was reconsidered, and was abbreviated to a more concrete one; in this study it was called the Self-Direction Exit Readiness Scale.

The same can be said for the surveys and personal interviews employed in this study. Very useful was the work by Nunan & Bailey (2009), from which we developed the questions and the type of interview. Likewise, the terms *semi-structured interview* and *triangulation* are employed in this study the same way and in the same sense as referred to by the work of Nunan & Bailey (2009).

### **3. Research Design and Implementation**

#### **3.1 Research type**

This is a quasi-experimental-qualitative-statistical type of research, according to Nunan and Bailey (2009). It combines qualitative data to explore learner knowledge, behaviors and perceptions before and after process; it collected a great amount of statistical data in order to organize 28 series of errors made on prepositions; and it integrated an experimental and a control group to make comparisons and help make conclusions. Both groups were exposed to surveys and tests, but only the experimental one has been applied specific instruction and repair techniques.

#### **3.2 Data collection procedures**

As mentioned above, the research project has been applied to two groups of university learners of pre-intermediate level for an academic semester period. Appendices 23 and 24 display the research consents by both, the university and the students involved in the research process.

The study covered the following steps:

1. Both groups received a first questionnaire –Entry survey called in this project-- in Spanish about current learner behavior on writing to be answered anonymously. The versions appearing in Appendices 2, 6, and 7 are English translations of the Spanish original.
2. Both groups answered self-direction readiness scales –specific questionnaire organized as a Linkert scale, as explained above, prepared for this study, which were applied at the beginning, as well as at the end of the process. These readiness scales were applied in Spanish; Appendices 11-18 contain the translated questions into English.

The Exit Readiness Scale employed, as explained above in the term operationalization section, is a modified, version of the scale employed at the beginning of the process; it focuses more accurately on the behaviors inherent to self-direction behaviors in language learning than the first readiness scale. This

last set of 20 questions were grouped into three important characteristics exhibited by self-directed learners: intrinsic motivation, responsibility for own learning, and actions taken to process advancement (SOTL, 2012). The questions employed in both scales appear in Appendices 11 and 15.

3. Both groups answered a contextualized entry test about preposition usage in the form of a gap-fill test, where learners had to fill out blanks with prepositions (Brown, 2004). This process was intended to estimate the accuracy of learners use of prepositions. This test categorized prepositions and its results were turned into graphic form.

The reality of the large number of prepositions in the English language (Essberger, 2012) has forced this study to make a selection of some most common ones in order to handle a manageable number related to the language competence level, to the course contents, and to future feasibility of data. Only 17 prepositions have been chosen, including the ones cited by the New York Hunter College (1999): *about, across, at, behind, by, down, for, from, in, into, of, on, out, over, through, till, and to*; errors made by learners in other prepositions were categorized as 'other'. Appendix 3 shows the tests employed.

4. Twenty-two writing pieces were collected from the experimental group, across the period of study. These assignments were received by the teacher via email, and corrected back to students the same way. For research purposes, each piece of writing had an estimate of errors made on prepositions specified by categories and number of errors across the 18-week process. Appendix 4 shows a sample sheet of data collection of a single assignment.
5. Indirect corrective feedback was given on each piece of 120-180-word writing in the experimental group and sent via email using the MS Microsoft Word blue highlight, underline, and uppercase letter tools in order to indirectly correct, rephrase, give feedback to learners with a score and references to be consulted by them. This procedure was carried out across eight weeks, with three writing tasks per week, for a total of 24 pieces of writing corrected for each student. The

control group did not make use of any of these sources, as the aim here was to estimate the difference in preposition use between the two groups. Appendix 1 shows the typical feedback given on student assignment.

6. A final contextualized exit test about preposition usage was applied in both, the experimental and control groups. In the first case, this exit test was taken into account together with the other 25 estimates made across the process, which have depicted a tendency presented in graphic form. Appendix 5 contains the exit test employed.

In order to contrast the results for both groups, the series derived from the entry and exit tests helped come to conclusions about the process. Appendix 19 shows this contrast of the entry test in graphic form; Appendix 20 shows the contrast results for the exit test.

7. Both groups received a Spanish-version of the exit survey about their behavior about writing at the end of the process, and their feelings on prepositions as well.

Answers given by learners to each of the surveys were tabulated, in order to make comparisons between the two results and draw conclusions about learner behavior in writing feedback. This survey has also produced results about learner self-direction, as three of the survey items asked specifically about this matter. Appendix 6 shows the exit survey employed.

8. The series collected from 24 writing pieces and 2 tests provided a semester long statistical trend of the experimental group about the gains in knowledge of prepositions and their results were depicted graphically. An online journal was created for the experimental group in order to promote learner strategy reflection; a way to measure the effects of this strategy was the amount of posts during the research period. Appendix 9 shows the number of errors collected from each assignment and a graphic depicting the process.

9. A final semi-structured interview was designed to listen to each of the participants about their process. These interviews were administered in Spanish;



see Appendix 21 for translation of these questions into English. This final interview had the express aim to contrasting its answers to the ones given in the Exit Readiness Scale. The questions asked in this interview are directly related to the scale, and the question order is the same as in the interview. The questions were fewer, but the clarity or ambiguity of the answers were contrasted with the choices made in the readiness scale in order to make clearer and more reliable conclusions.

Data collected at the end of the process:

- Four surveys: two entry and exit surveys about learner behavior on writing activities for each group, as well as statistic templates with their information.
- Four tests on prepositions –two for each group—were categorized, counted, and depicted in graphic form.
- Twenty-four official estimates of errors, from which a poll was made across the semester to track learning evolution of prepositions during the period.
- Fourteen transcriptions of semi-structured interviews conducted with the experimental group participants; only twelve learners could be interviewed the very last week of classes before the final exam, as the remaining five participants had important final reports and presentations to do that week, and did not attend English sessions.

## 4. Results and Data Analysis

### 4.1 Entry probing tools

Statistical accounts were made about entry surveys over learner behaviors in relation to writing feedback, perceptions about their knowledge of prepositions, and actual knowledge of these particles of the English language, and which results we will examine and discuss below. For practical purposes, the real questions have been abbreviated in all the graphics; real questions asked can be seen in the appendices at the end of this document.

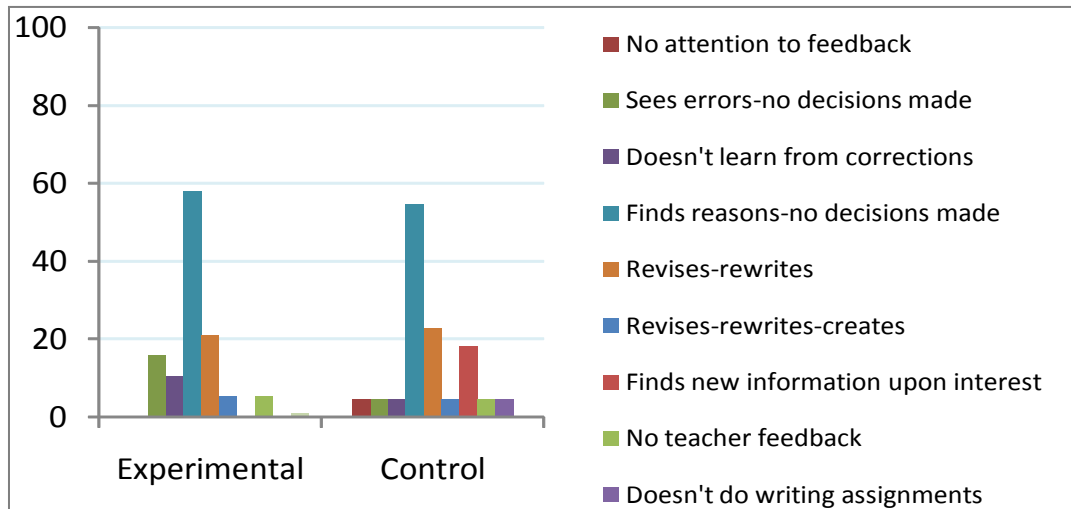
#### 4.1.1 Entry learner behavior survey on writing feedback

Table 1 and Graphic 1 show the results of 9 out of the 12 questions of the Entry Survey, which inspected student behavior towards writing feedback in both, the experimental and control groups.

	<b>Experimental</b>	<b>Control</b>
<b>Behavior Descriptors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>No attention to feedback</b>	0.0	4.5
<b>Sees errors-no decisions made about errors</b>	15.8	4.5
<b>Doesn't learn from corrections</b>	10.5	4.5
<b>Finds reasons – no decisions made about errors</b>	57.9	54.5
<b>Revises and rewrites</b>	21.1	22.7
<b>Finds new information upon interest</b>	5.3	4.5
<b>No teacher feedback</b>	0.0	18.2
<b>Does not do writing assignments</b>	5.3	4.5
	.0.	4.5

*TABLE 1*

*Entry Survey – Experimental and Control Groups*



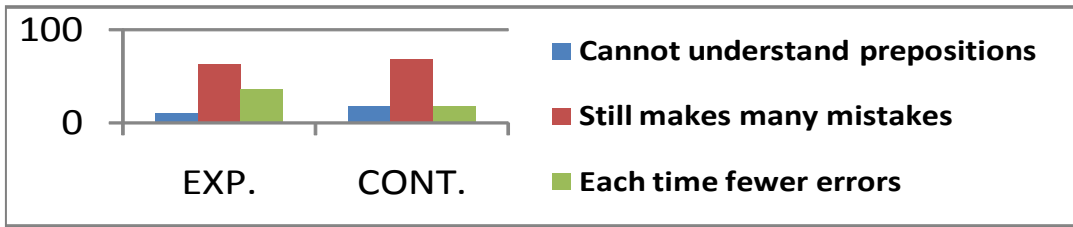
**GRAPHIC 1**  
*Entry Survey – Experimental and Control Groups*

Most of the students in both groups pay some attention to feedback, but over half of both groups state that they do not take any decisions as to nurture from it. Only a few students (21%) stated that they rewrote their assignments, and only a very low percentage (5%) declared writing new examples about writing feedback, and likewise, a very low percentage declared not doing writing assignments. Also, as many as 18% of learners in the control group stated finding new information related to personal interests, as a vehicle to practice the language. In general terms, the statistic results yielded similar data related to both groups of learners, exception made about learners from the control group who declared using new information resources based on their interest.

As for the second part of this survey, specifically related to learner perceptions about prepositions, Table 2 and Graphic 2 show the results:

Question no.		Experimental	Control
10	Cannot understand prepositions	10.5	18.2
11	Still makes many mistakes	63.2	68.2
12	Each time makes fewer errors	36.8	18.2

**TABLE 2**  
*Entry Survey Contrast - Learner Perceptions on Preposition*



**GRAPHIC 2**  
*Entry Survey Contrast*  
*Learner Perceptions on Preposition*

In regard to the initial students’ perceptions about prepositions, over the half part of the two groups declare that they make many mistakes using these language particles; around ¼ of the students of both groups are positive about their use of this aspect of language; and around another 25% of both groups have negative perceptions about prepositions.

**4.1.2 Self-direction readiness scale**



**GRAPHIC 3**  
*Self-Direction Readiness Scale – Experimental and Control Groups*

Graphic 3 shows that in general terms, and speaking about their personal values and self-esteem, students of both groups ranked over 80%. We will examine these results by percentages:

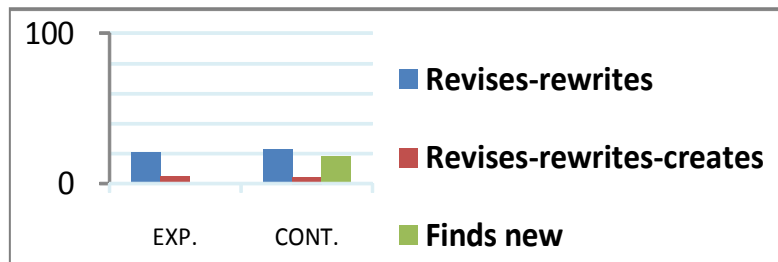
- The highest scores, related to personal values reveals that the students have acquired personal values, and their self-esteem is high. The table also shows that students are willing to employ available learning resources, are positive about their learning process, and are willing to learn the language.
- Still high, yet not as strong as general perception indicators, the rank shows that their perceptions about self-discipline, own learning responsibility, personal motivation towards new knowledge, and learning from errors are not well-settled in learners' personalities.
- The 70% range reveals the perceived needs of these groups of learners: not enough abilities to find information, need for better language learning strategies, not very good results in English across time, and low motivation over English learning tasks.
- Perhaps due to low motivation, both groups of learners show in their lower percentages (69-60%) that as much as about 35% do not devote specific time to do their English homework, or pay much attention to their assignments for better results. What is more, they do not direct their own learning processes, analyze new language learned, or evaluate their progress in the language. Notwithstanding, this rounded number to 35%, the Graphic falls lower if we examine the self-direction questions asked in the behavior survey of (i.), which shows percentages much below that Graphic in regard to writing feedback, and which are displayed in Table 3 and Graphic 4. Around 22% of the learners rewrite their assignments, and only around 5% (one student in each group) creates new examples to consolidate the correction. More positive, yet still very low, is the interest to find new information (no students in the experimental group, and 18% in the control group).

		<b>Experimental</b>	<b>Control</b>
<b>Entry</b>	Revises and rewrites	21.1	22.7
<b>Survey</b>	Revises, rewrites and creates new	5.3	4.5
	Finds new information	0.0	18.2

TABLE 3

*Self-Directed Learning Survey Contrast – Experimental and Control Groups*

- The average self-direction readiness appears to be in this initial chart at a scant 76.2%, which besides what has been said above, indicates that these two groups of young adult university students are still on their pathway to settle this adulthood characteristic. Similar results can be observed in Table 3 and its corresponding Graphic 4.



Graphic 4

*Self-Directed Learning Survey Contrast – Experimental and Control Groups*

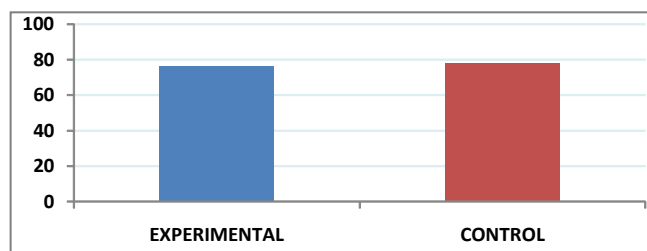
#### 4.1.3 Preposition knowledge test

<b>Groups</b>	<b>Possible number of errors</b>	<b>Number of errors made</b>	<b>Percentage of errors</b>
<b>Experimental</b>	950	726	76.42
<b>Control</b>	1100	861	78.27

TABLE 4

*Preposition Knowledge Test Results – Experimental and Control Groups*

Graphic 5 below shows the graphical representation of these figures:



GRAPHIC 5

*Preposition Knowledge Test Results – Experimental and Control Groups*

In reference to Entry tests, it was found that both groups of learners made a high percentage of errors, as expected at their level of competence. Table 4 and Graphic 5 show similar results for both groups. The possible number of errors is given in relation to the number of questions asked and the number of students taking the tests: 50 questions about prepositions, given to 19 learners in the experimental group, and 22 in the control one.

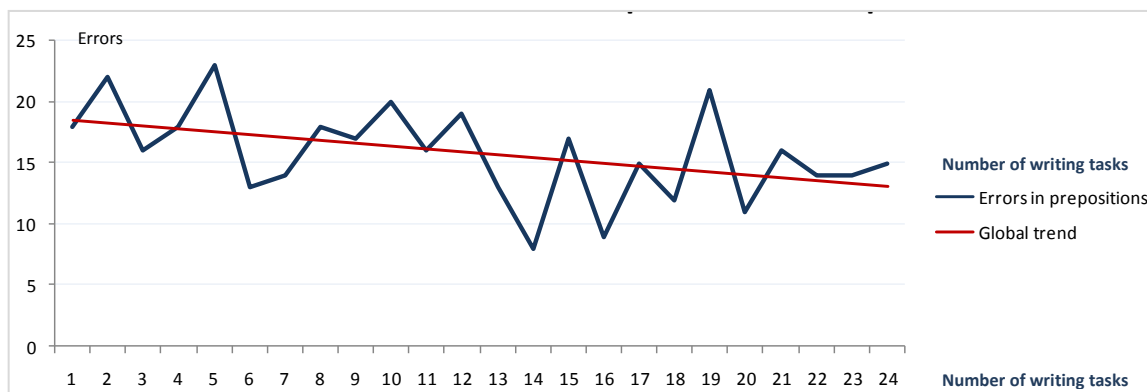
## 4.2 Experimental stage

During the *treatment* phase, the study focused on indirect writing feedback to twenty-four 120-180-word assignments, suggesting learners check web pages with further explanation about their errors and complete exercises; the feedback also recommended their rewriting and uploading on an electronic journal created for the group. The purpose of the journal was to create a space for the learners to reflect on their learning process, and a place where they could correct their writing errors. The students were informed that no extra credits would be given in their marks for correcting their work post-feedback. Appendix 9 contains a typical feedback email.

Additionally, data were collected for each preposition error on Microsoft Excel templates, with which all calculations and graphics were made:

Across-time Process																								
Task No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Error nr.	18	22	16	18	23	13	14	18	17	20	16	19	13	8	17	9	15	12	21	11	16	14	14	15

*TABLE 5*  
*Across Time Results – Experimental Group*



**GRAPHIC 7**  
*Across Time Results – Experimental Group*

Appendix 4 contains a sample sheet of data collection; Graphic 7 shows the graphic the software depicted across the period of study, during which a gradual, slow descent in the number of errors in prepositions has taken place, from around 20 errors at the beginning of the process, to around 13 at the end.

### 4.3 Exit research devices

The final stage of project employed similar probing tools to those used at the entry stage: exit surveys about learner behavior towards writing feedback, as well as learner perceptions over preposition knowledge, end-of-process readiness scales, and prepositions tests. Additionally, a semi-structured interview was made with most of the students of the experimental group in order to help triangulate the information, enrich the discussion, and facilitate conclusions. This time, the number of students in both groups decreased to 16 students in the experimental group, and to 18 in the control group. The reduction in number in both groups is due to different college life circumstances: students dropped the course, or were out of town at the time of survey application, or were absent to classes during the last week of classes for academic reasons.

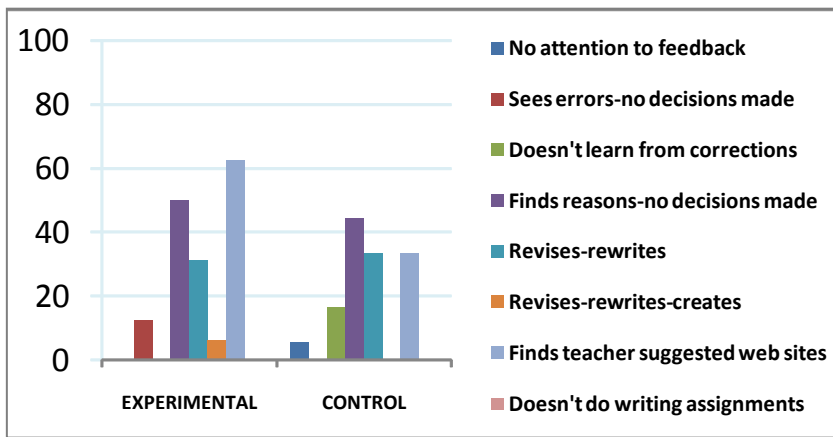
#### 4.3.1 Exit learner behavior survey on writing feedback

Table 6 and Graphic 8 show the results of 9 out of the 12 questions of the Exit Survey, intended for obtaining data about student behavior towards writing feedback in both groups.



Behavior descriptors	Percentages	
	Experimental	Control
No attention to feedback	0	5.6
Sees errors – no decisions made about them	12.5	0
Does not learn from corrections	0	16.7
Finds reasons - no decisions made about errors	50.0	44.4
Revises and rewrites	31.3	33.3
Revises, rewrites and creates new	6.3	0
Finds teacher suggested web sites	62.5	33.3
Does not do writing assignments	0	0

TABLE 6  
Exit Survey – Experimental and Control Groups



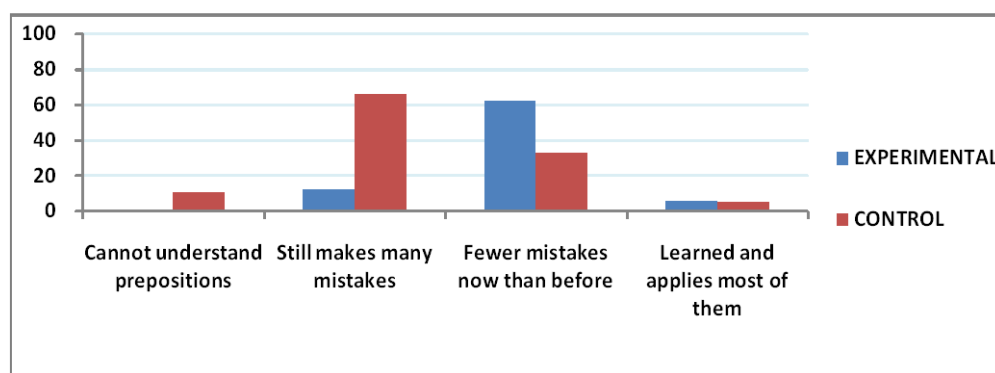
GRAPHIC 8  
Exit Survey – Experimental and Control Groups

According to the data displayed in Graphic 8, all students do their writing assignments, a low percentage pay no attention to writing feedback, as well as a low rate declaring their not learning from corrections. On the other hand, the Graphic shows that as much as around 32% in both groups do feedback revision and rewrite their assignments, but only a few students create new examples based on their feedback corrections. Another interesting figure in this graphic is that over half of learners in both groups declare that they look into their errors, but still do not decide to rewrite or make any further efforts to correct their writing assignments. Also, the graphic shows distance in the results of the two groups, about those who declare using teacher suggested web pages to find new information or exercises about their errors.

Results of questions 9-12 of this survey, inquiring about learner perceptions on prepositions, are displayed in Table 7 and Graphic 9:

Question #	Learner Perceptions	Experimental	Control
9	Cannot understand prepositions	0	11.1
10	Still makes many mistakes	12.5	66.7
11	Fewer mistakes now than before	62.5	33.3
12	Learned and applies most of them	6.3	5.6

**TABLE 6**  
*Exit Survey Contrast*  
*Learner Perceptions on Prepositions*

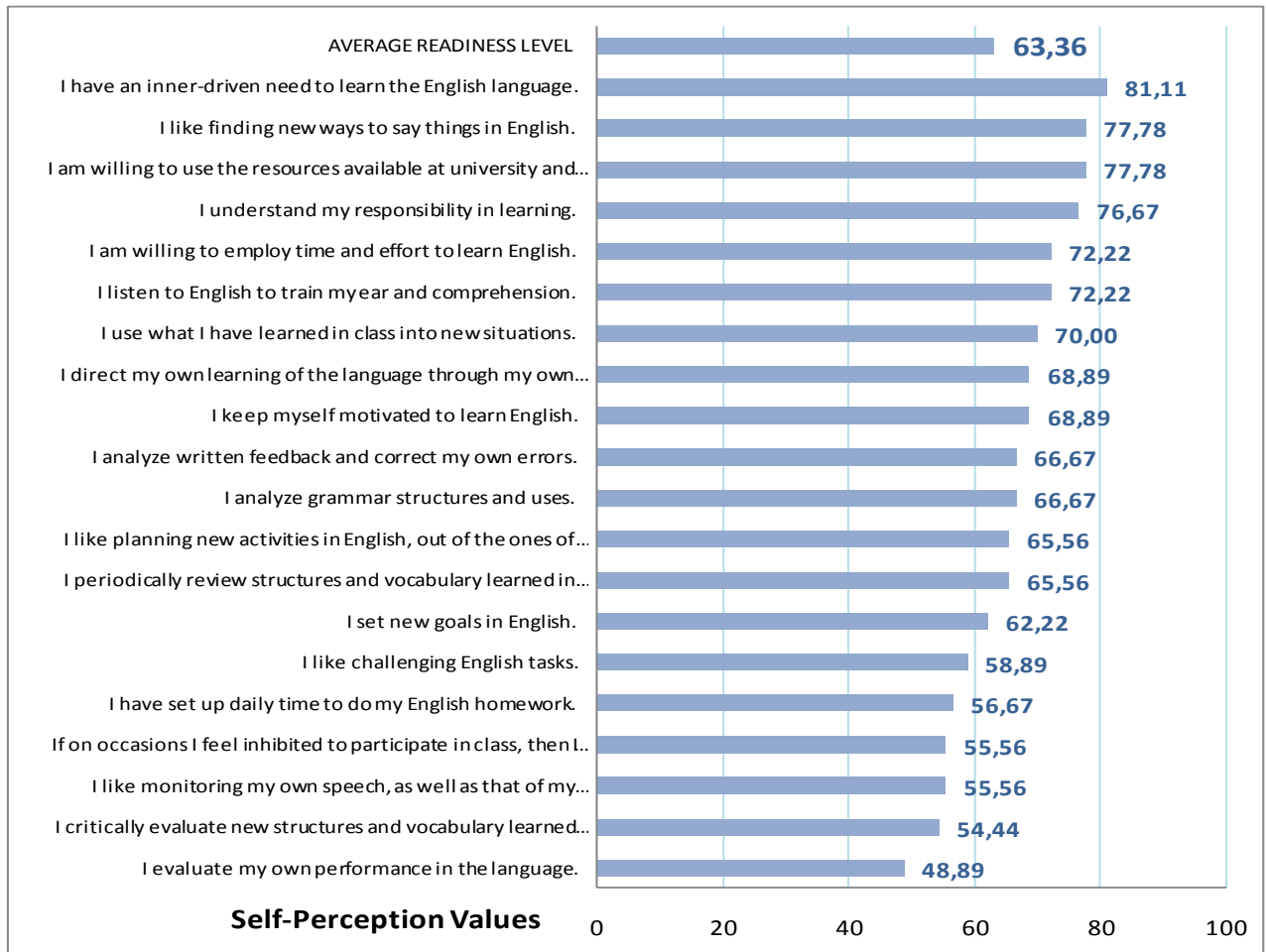


**GRAPHIC 9**  
*Exit Survey Contrast*  
*Learner Perceptions on Prepositions*

As much as two thirds of the learners from the experimental group perceive that they are making fewer errors now than before, and a low percentage declare that they have learned prepositions and apply most of them. The learners from the control group state that they still make a lot of preposition errors; a low percentage, the same as in the experimental group, declare to have learned the use of prepositions of the language course and apply most of them.

#### 4.3.2 Exit self-direction readiness scales

Graphic 10 shows the results of the Readiness Scale about the control Group. Here, the learners of the control group show their positive feelings toward the language, but figures begin to drop when being asked about their own responsibilities and efforts to learn it.

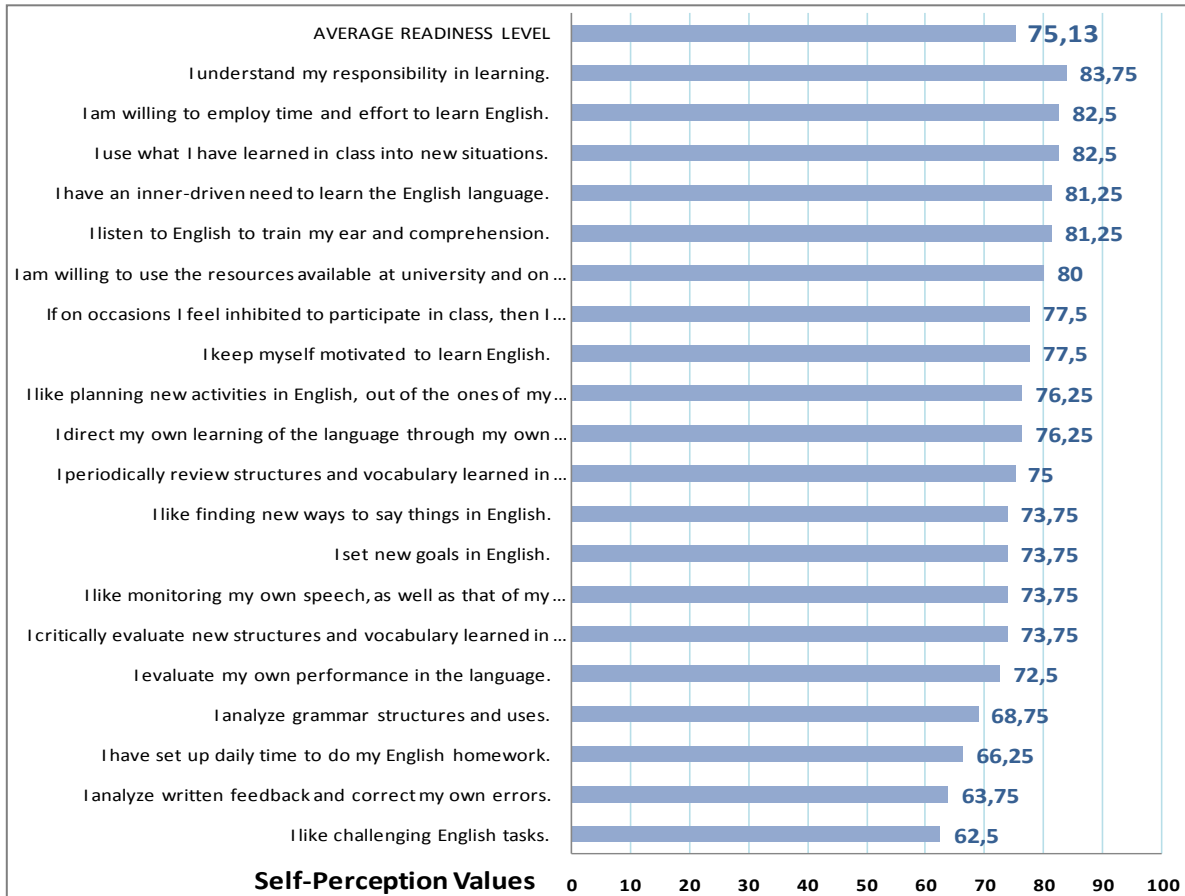


**GRAPHIC 10**  
*Exit Self-Direction Readiness Scale*  
*Control Group*

Around 30% of this group of students, are not completely convinced of their responsibility for their language learning: This high percentage leaves unattended important aspects that entail effort and dedication, such as directing their own learning process, analyzing their language errors, planning new activities in English, reviewing structures taught, and setting learning goals. Even more, in as much as about 40%, this group has not established English as part of daily routine or active home training in the language, and the 50% do not evaluate their performance.

Graphic 11 displays the results of the same tool for the experimental group. Here we see an average readiness level of 75,13%, with high scores in learner understanding of

own responsibility for learning, willingness to employ time and effort, and likes of language.



**GRAPHIC 11**  
*Exit Self-Direction Readiness Scale*  
*Experimental Group*

Lower figures in the range of 70-80% reveal that, between 25-30%, this group still needs more conviction about the benefits of home practice, self-motivation, free-time activities in English, personal learning direction, language goal setting, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. Even lower figures confirm what has just been said about the group’s scarce conviction of home practice.

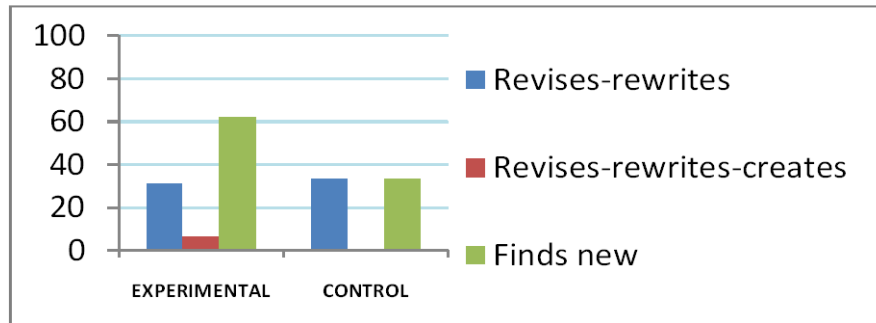
Complementing the readiness scale, the results of the exit survey have been taken up to give more lights into self-direction in reference to writing feedback:

Exit Survey	Percentages	
	Behaviors	
Revises and rewrites	Experimental	Control
	31.3	33.3

Revises, rewrites, and creates new	6.3	0
Finds new	62.5	33.3

TABLE 7

*Self-Directed Learning Survey Contrast – Experimental and Control Groups*



Graphic 12

*Self-Directed Learning Survey Contrast – Experimental and Control Groups*

Similar results for both groups are shown in Table 7 and Graphic 12, in regard to feedback revision and rewriting, rounding both groups a scarce 32%; likewise, rewriting and creation of new examples, 0-5%. These results confirm what has been said in this respect during the presentation of outcomes of the readiness scale. Most of the learners have not created spaces of self-improvement.

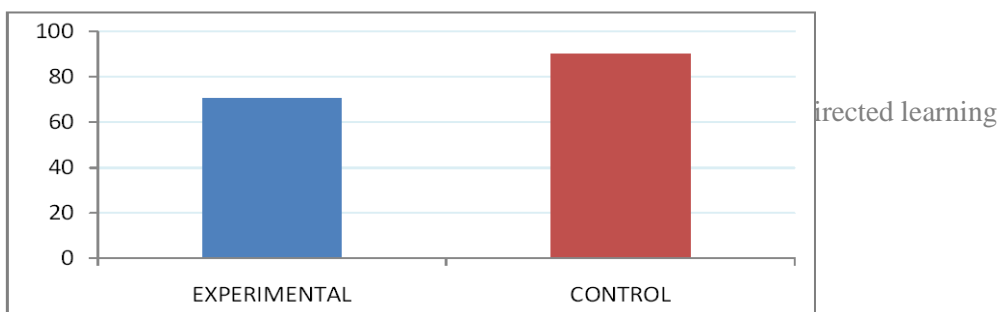
#### 4.3.3 The Preposition knowledge test

Table 8 and Graphic 13 contain the results of the exit test, to measure knowledge of prepositions:

Groups	Possible number of errors	Number of errors made	Percentage of errors
Experimental	800	566	70.75
Control	900	723	90.38

TABLE 8

*Preposition Knowledge Exit Test Results – Experimental and Control Groups*



**GRAPHIC 13**  
*Preposition Knowledge Exit Test Results – Experimental and Control Groups*

The possible number of errors in both groups was calculated by multiplying the number of students who took the test by the number of questions. That is, 50 questions by 16 students in the experimental group, and by 18 in the control group. The total errors made – 566 and 723 – yielded percentages calculated with respect to the total number of students and possible number of errors in each group. The blue and red blocks show that the experimental group made 70.7% of the possible errors in this group, while the control made 90.3%.

Graphics 1 and 8 above show that the main important features of the experimental group’s learner behavior towards writing feedback are still in force, those are: students continue to place great importance on the writing grade, looking at the errors they have made, yet not correcting them or creating new examples to reinforce their learning. Nevertheless, there has been progress in the descriptor ‘finds new information of interest’, soaring from 0 to 62.5%, which shows that teacher’s suggestions appealed the learners’ interests and, in a good proportion, the group checks web pages to help them improve their performance. This behavior does not seem to be directed to correct their writing assignments, but to find information or exercises about the feedback.

As for the Control group, the same can be said, except for the number of students who check teacher suggested web pages, behavior indicator which showed an increase of 15%.

In regard to learner perception about their knowledge of prepositions, Graphics 2 and 9 show that experimental students perceive themselves as having much better command over prepositions than at the beginning of the course, as well as than the students of the control group. This can be understood in regard to the various assignments in prepositions that experimental learners had to do along the course.

#### 4.4 Discussion

We will divide our discussion around three main foci of the study: the results in the learners' command of English prepositions, the students' behavior towards writing feedback, and their learning of self-direction strategies.

##### *Results in learners' command of English prepositions:*

Contrary to what experimental learners could positively declare about their perceptions on their knowledge of prepositions, test results indicate that real command of prepositions and preposition combinations learned during the course do not correspond. The initial test indicated high number of errors in both groups, slightly fewer in the experimental group: 76.4% (E) and 78.2% (C), that is to say that both groups had roughly the same preposition knowledge level. These figures remain very high in the exit test, contrary to initial expectations about the experimental group. 70.7% of the total number of errors represents a decrease of 7% in comparison to the initial test. This trend is confirmed in part by the 16.6% gradual fall of errors through the eighteen weeks, shown in Graphic 7.

In other words, the average of 70% errors in the exit exam is a failing grade, as well as a 16.7% of error decrease during the process; however, this figure represents an improvement in the command of English prepositions in the experimental group, results that are contrary to the ones given in the experimental group. The learners' positive perception about their command in prepositions can be explained by the number of tasks they did during the course, in which they either drilled prepositions, or were corrected in this aspect of language across the course. The experimental group itself had high expectations about their better command in this area, but the results show that the improvement is relatively low. This is the first main conclusion of the study; the reasons why they did not advanced as desired can be found in the elusive use of prepositions, about which we can advance the notion that prepositions might possibly be rather impervious to short-term instruction. Longer term studies might get better results.

##### *Students' behavior towards writing feedback:*

The figures and the interviews with the experimental learners show that they do not do much about their writing feedback; they do not rewrite their errors, and the least, they do not create new examples to reinforce their learning. When asked why they do not rewrite their writing assignments, one of the reasons is that many of them are taking a lot of subjects in their professional programs and do not have enough time to do the writing correction. They do not say it, but we could surmise that English is an optional subject, to which they do not dispense the same attention as to those fundamental to their program of study. Another reason they give is that they find rewriting as burdensome and do not see the point in sparing the time to correct their errors. It seems hard to believe that after a semester of constant awareness raising about one's own assertive actions towards language learning, the constant euphemistic answer during the interviews is that it was like a bit of a pain to rewrite because in the end grades would not gain anything, and their professional programmes normally give them a lot of work to do. In other words, when time comes to face learning challenges, they will not spare the time and effort; nevertheless, something positive has to be said here. The interviews show that they will employ their free time to download songs or watch films with English captions, which are activities that do not seem to be a burden for them; the same can be said about learners' sparing time to check language web pages, action reported also in the interviews.

Therefore, this is the second conclusion of the study: These university students will not devote more time than absolutely necessary to their writing process improvement if they are not given a compensation in terms of grades for their effort, among other things, because their studies take up a lot of their time.

*Students' learning of self-direction strategies:*

In regard to self-direction readiness in language learning, it can be said that the initial readiness scales show higher results than the exit scales. The latter asked specifically about language learning, which is our main study interest. Initially, both groups showed similar results, as they pointed their enthusiasm about learning, and the necessity for knowledge. However, after a semester of work, both groups of learners show that they are not as enthusiastic as in the beginning. The experimental group



shows higher figures than the control group and this may mean that they may have a higher regard about their responsibility in language learning. However, figures do not increase in part because they have not set specific goals for using English in the future, as the interviews revealed. Learners point that they see themselves studying in this language, but when asked to be specific about where or in what ways, they have not yet planned that future. Experimental group students are in the process of carrying out their undergraduate studies, but do not have a clear image of any uses of English in their lives, with some exceptions, however. A few students declared to have plans to do graduate studies or travel to English-speaking countries during or after finishing university in Colombia.

And definitely, extra work load does not appeal their attention, due to the reasons discussed above, their lack of time, and their not seeing the necessity to do more in their free time; as Alvarez and Zárate (2004) put it,

“an FL is just a class that allows learners to be promoted to another level or course, that is, it has only academic purposes. For this reason, the learning of a language is seen as a determined short term process that will finish with some institutional or national exams...”

Another important point in reference to self-direction readiness is that one semester is not enough to eradicate a common fixed attitude towards study and learning; if learners do not receive benefits in course scores, they will not devote their free time to do more work than what has been asked in order to not get a zero in their records. In general terms, the experimental group of learners still do not feel confident about their performance in English, as they reported fear of not being able to do a good job when participating in native-speaking communities on the web.

Another teaching strategy attempted to gain self-direction for learners was the use of an electronic journal, only taken advantage of by very few students, and not throughout the course. The purpose of this journal was to check additional materials used in class, enable students to reflect on their learning process, and upload their corrected versions of writing assignments. Once more, students did not take advantage of this tool. Appendix 8 displays the statistics of student use, which show the scanty

use given by the experimental group to their journal; many students did not even make a comment nor did they upload any of their assignments.

We can conclude that experimental students appear to be between stages 2 and 3 of Grow's (1996) scale; they are interested and sometimes fully involved, but still depend on the authority and guide of the teacher. One aspect that is indicative of this stage is self-evaluation: learners continue leaving evaluation of their performance in teacher hands; in this respect, interview responses were vague, as though this concept were new to them. Finally, following Wiley (1983), self-directed learning is a demanding approach which may not suit everybody or may not be applied in all fields of interest, learning styles, or preferences; we will add, not all the self-direction indicators evolve at the same speed.

To sum up, Regardless of the teacher and learners' high expectations about better command in prepositions, the test results are somehow discouraging after a semester of study. The different uses of prepositions and multiple combinations tend to confuse learners to the point to say that this area of language might be difficult to learn through instruction, even in conditions of explicit teaching, unless longer research periods with the same features are considered.

University learners in Colombia work for scores in their records, an attitude that will definitely take more than one semester to eradicate through Self-Directed Learning strategies. The real gains in this case are in the knowledge they obtained about how to find information in language learning on the web and a rise in responsibility awareness about their education. A generalized self-directed learning policy should be implemented in the context of this study, and for over a prolonged period of time, in order to get positive results in this regard.

## **5. Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications**

The study aimed at checking the effectiveness of the combination of two techniques over the learning of English prepositions through the feedback of writing assignments. A large amount of data was collected, which helped enrich the discussion and come to specific conclusions. Especially useful were the Exit Self-Direction Readiness Scale and the final interviews with participants, which elucidated many queries. The process appears to be an enriching one for both parts, the instructor and the students.

Nevertheless, the research span of a semester in order to carry out this research project was not enough to get more results. The data delineate a decrease in the number of errors in prepositions and some progress in the learners' initiative to find information by themselves, but the results indicate that longer effort in both directions have to be made to obtain expected outcomes.

As it is almost impossible to gather the same group of learners once again, it should be advised for the institution where it was applied, to hold other projects of the same characteristics, now aiming at other English language aspects and working the Self-Directed Learning strategies. Future studies of these characteristics should be made by teachers having the same groups, or at least, having some of the same students in a progression of two or three semesters. Also, a larger study can be made, which involves all teachers and students of an institution, in order to obtain the wanted positive results.

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Music: <http://www.music-discussion.com/groups/>

Television: <http://www.tv.com/general-tv-discussion/board/102/topics.html>

Travel: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/thorntree/forum.jspa?forumID=22&keywordid=235>

Environmental problems: <http://www.theenvironmentalproblemsite.org/forum/>

Life in big cities : <http://myurbanlife.com/opinion-playground/message-board/>

Shopping: <http://mysteryshopforum.com/>

Lifestyles: <http://www.lifestyleblock.co.nz/vforum/index.php>

Celebrations: <http://www.topix.com/forum/post/newthread>

Food and drink: <http://www.roadfood.com/Forums/>

Sports: <http://www.digitalhome.ca/forum/forumdisplay.php?f=160>

Entertainment: <http://www.toonzone.net/forums/forumdisplay.php?81-The-Entertainment-Board>

Gadgets and new technology:

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<http://english-learners.com/2010/01/verb-preposition-combinations-2.html>

English Page:

[http://www.englishpage.com/gerunds/adjective\\_prep\\_gerund\\_list.htm](http://www.englishpage.com/gerunds/adjective_prep_gerund_list.htm)

English Zone:

<http://english-zone.com/preps/vp-a.html>

Esl About:

[http://esl.about.com/od/grammarintermediate/a/adjective\\_prepositions\\_combos.htm](http://esl.about.com/od/grammarintermediate/a/adjective_prepositions_combos.htm)

<http://esl.about.com/od/advancedvocabulary/ss/verbplusprep.htm>

[http://esl.about.com/od/grammarintermediate/a/nouns\\_prepositions.htm](http://esl.about.com/od/grammarintermediate/a/nouns_prepositions.htm)

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<http://www.cat4mba.com/english-e-book/preposition-combinations>

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<http://www.ingilizcenet.com/yds/vocabulary/adjective-preposition-combinations.html>

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<http://palc.sd40.bc.ca/palc/classes/writingtutorial/earlymemory.htm>

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## Appendices

Appendices 1-24 show the actual tools applied and are presented here in the order they were used over the study. See this material in the following order:

- Appendix 1 – Indirect Feedback Sample
- Appendix 2 – Entry Survey
- Appendix 3 – Entry Test
- Appendix 4 – Proposition Category Template – Assignment 1
- Appendix 5 – Exit Test
- Appendix 6 – Exit Survey
- Appendix 7 – Entry-Exit Survey – Experimental Group – Contrasted Statistics
- Appendix 8 – Course Journal and Statistics of Student Use
- Appendix 9 – Proposition Category Template – Final Results
- Appendix 10 – Self-Directed Learning – Exit Survey – Contrast Results
- Appendix 11 – Self-Direction – Entry Readiness Scale
- Appendix 12 – Self-Direction Entry Readiness Scale – Control Group Graphic Results
- Appendix 13 – Self-Direction Entry Readiness Scale – Experimental Group Graphic Results
- Appendix 14 – Self-Direction Entry Readiness Scale – Contrast Results
- Appendix 15 – Self-Direction Exit Readiness Scale
- Appendix 16 – Self-Direction Exit Readiness Scale – Control Group Graphic Results
- Appendix 17 – Self-Direction Exit Readiness Scale – Experimental Group Graphic Results
- Appendix 18 - Self-Direction Exit Readiness Scale – Contrast Results
- Appendix 19 – Entry Test – Result Contrast
- Appendix 20 – Exit Test – Result Contrast
- Appendix 21 – End-of-Process Personal Interview Questionnaire
- Appendix 22 – Interview Transcript
- Appendix 23 – Institutional Permission for Research
- Appendix 24 – Experimental Group Participant Consent

## Appendix 1 – Indirect Feedback Sample

The screenshot shows a Gmail interface with a pink floral background. The email is from CLARA NIÑO to María José, dated Feb 9. The email body contains the following text:

Hi teacher i send you the hoework :D

**DONT FORGET TO SAY HELLO**

I **recieve** your e-mail, and don't worry about your situation I will help you!

Here's the **thing**, the best thing to do is say hello, this would mean that you are opening yourself and let your shy acts go out because **the don't** help you **to**.

A good idea could be TO make a party and invite all your neighbors and some friends. If you do this **PUNCTUATION IS MISSING HERE** you'll **to** some new friends and you can feel way better. These tips will be useful for you only if you trust in yourself.

Don't forget you were the most popular in **the** school and you were used to make **NG** friends. **I** know it's hard to do at first, but trust me, **it** will work! Good luck and let me know what **happens!** **THIS PART LOOKS LIKE COPIED**

Hugs,  
María José.

WELL, MARIA JOSÉ: YOUR TEXT IS A BIT DIFFICULT TO READ, IT DOESN'T HAVE A SALUTATION, THERE ARE MISTAKES IN PAST TENSE, THE SHY ACTS DON'T, A BAD USE OF QUANTIFIERS, PUNCTUATION, WILL GOT, THE USE OF ARTICLES, AND THE USE OF GERUNDS. REWRITE WITHOUT MISTAKES. 3.5

YOU CAN FIND INFO ABOUT QUANTIFIERS HERE:  
<http://www.ego4u.com/en/cram-up/vocabulary/much-many>  
<http://www.es-lounge.com/student/grammar/2q41-quantifiers-gap-fill.php>  
<http://www.grammarbank.com/quantifiers-grammar.html>

USE OF ARTICLES:  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/540/01/>  
[http://esl.about.com/od/thebasics/a/a\\_an\\_the.htm](http://esl.about.com/od/thebasics/a/a_an_the.htm)

2012/2/7 María José Hernández G <[majohernandez92@hotmail.com](mailto:majohernandez92@hotmail.com)>

The interface also shows a sidebar with navigation options (Compose, Inbox, etc.), a search bar, and a right-hand panel with advertisements for NYFA and Caribbean Last Min. Deals.

Appendix 2 Entry Survey.

**ENTRY SURVEY: STUDENT LEARNING BEHAVIOR**

Please check  the box that best represents your opinion:

When you receive composition scores from your teacher, you:

1. Look at the grade mark you received, but pay no attention to any comments made by your teacher.
2. Look at the errors you made, but make no decisions about them.
3. Look at the errors and the corrections but you don't learn from the corrections made by your teacher.
4. Find reasons why your sentences are marked as incorrect, but don't take steps to correct them.
5. Revise your paper and rewrite it without errors.
6. Revise your paper, rewrite it without errors and create other examples of your own trying to use the mistaken forms correctly.
7. Frequently look for information of your interest in English, in order to improve your language skills.
8. Your teachers rarely give you feedback about your writing assignment.
9. You don't regularly do writing assignments.

Specifically speaking about prepositions, you can say that,

10. You definitely cannot understand prepositions.
11. You still make many mistakes with prepositions.
12. Each time you make fewer mistakes using prepositions in your writing tasks.
13. You have definitely learned to apply many of them in your writing.

**ENTRY SURVEY: STUDENT LEARNING BEHAVIOR**

Please check  the box that best represents your opinion:

When you receive composition scores from your teacher, you:

1. Look at the grade mark you received, but pay no attention to any comments made by your teacher.
2. Look at the errors you made, but make no decisions about them.
3. Look at the errors and the corrections but you don't learn from the corrections made by your teacher.
4. Find reasons why your sentences are marked as incorrect, but don't take steps to correct them.
5. Revise your paper and rewrite it without errors.
6. Revise your paper, rewrite it without errors and create other examples of your own trying to use the mistaken forms correctly.
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Appendix 3 - Entry Test

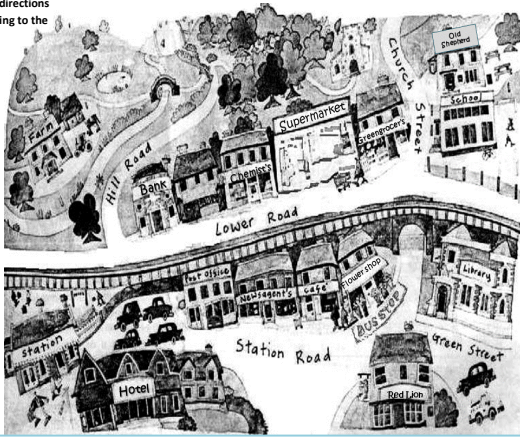
PREPOSITIONS – ENTRY TEST

Fill in the blanks of the following text by using prepositions. Write your answers in the spaces provided at the end.

A. At the department store

Daisy Look 1.\_\_\_\_ those cashmere sweaters 2.\_\_\_\_ there! Aren't they beautiful?  
 Jill Yeah, let's take a look... I like this gray turtleneck...  
 Daisy I think the light blue one would look better 3.\_\_\_\_ you. Why don't you try 4.\_\_\_\_ both?  
 Jill Yeah, right, but let's go to the dressing rooms together. What do you like 5.\_\_\_\_ here?  
 Daisy I love these tanks and these pants. I'll take these striped tank tops and these beige slim pants ...  
 Daisy I'll buy the pants and this top. How 6.\_\_\_\_ you?  
 Jill I can't buy the sweater. Look, it's worth \$350 and I don't have that kind 7.\_\_\_\_ money on me. I don't have my credit card here.  
 Daisy I do have mine here. I was going to pay 8.\_\_\_\_ cash, but I can pay 9.\_\_\_\_ credit card, no problem, you can pay me 10.\_\_\_\_ later.

B. Giving directions  
 According to the map,



You can have difficulties 46.\_\_\_\_ the management chain of command, which makes it hard 47.\_\_\_\_ get things done. The requirements 48.\_\_\_\_ get a job? Bachelor's degree, and either a master's or considerable work experience 49.\_\_\_\_ demonstrate your ability to design software and work collaboratively. No matter what position you may be applying 50.\_\_\_\_, a high quality Curriculum Vitae is always the first step.

Adapted from: [http://money.com.com/regainre/moneyimg/entrytest/2012/entrytest1.html#id=of\\_ib\\_0iv](http://money.com.com/regainre/moneyimg/entrytest/2012/entrytest1.html#id=of_ib_0iv)

1		11		21		31		41
2		12		22		32		42
3		13		23		33		43
4		14		24		34		44
5		15		25		35		45
6		16		26		36		46
7		17		27		37		47
8		18		28		38		48
9		19		29		39		49
10		20		30		40		50

The hotel is 11.\_\_\_\_ the car park.  
 The bank is 12.\_\_\_\_ the corner of Lower Road and Hill Road.  
 The Supermarket is 13.\_\_\_\_ the chemist's and the greengrocer's.  
 The Red Lion is 14.\_\_\_\_ the flower shop.  
 The Old Shepherd is 15.\_\_\_\_ the school.  
 From the farm to the church, go 16.\_\_\_\_ the bridge and 17.\_\_\_\_ the gate; then, take the road and walk 18.\_\_\_\_ the wood. When you come out of the wood, walk 19.\_\_\_\_ the path which gets 20.\_\_\_\_ the church.

A. Free time

I've got a lot to do in my free time. I'm interested 21.\_\_\_\_ sports and films, but I like music, too. Sometimes my friends and I go to have something to eat 22.\_\_\_\_ the shopping centers or somewhere fun. When we gather to see a video, we like action movies 23.\_\_\_\_ special effects. There's a video store 24.\_\_\_\_ my home that sells videos 25.\_\_\_\_ \$10. We share a pizza and then we can play cards or a board game. Some other times we go to the sports club to play basketball or volleyball. My girlfriend Jennie is very proud 26.\_\_\_\_ me because I always score the very last point to win. I think I am very good 27.\_\_\_\_ sports... All my family and friends congratulated me 28.\_\_\_\_ the basketball trophy my team won a couple of weeks ago. I was really satisfied 29.\_\_\_\_ the results. 30.\_\_\_\_ the beginning the team wasn't very good, but we've practiced a lot, and we've made a nice and very effective group. I also like music. I love rock bands and try to go to most of their concerts. I'm not an expert 31.\_\_\_\_ the matter, but I can tell you a lot 32.\_\_\_\_ many of the rock bands. One day, I heard the concert backstage, 33.\_\_\_\_ the band, I could meet the artists and the supporting group; it was really interesting.

B. Professional life

Software Architects

Like architects who design buildings, they create the design 34.\_\_\_\_ software engineers to follow -- and do programming too. Plus, architects are often called on to work with customers and product managers, and they serve as a link 35.\_\_\_\_ a company's tech and business staffs. The job is creatively challenging, and engineers with good people skills are liberated 36.\_\_\_\_ their screens. Salaries are generally higher than 37.\_\_\_\_ programmers, and one has more variety 38.\_\_\_\_ the day.  
 "Some days I'll focus 39.\_\_\_\_ product strategy, and other days I'll be coding down in the nerve of the system," says David Chaiken, 46, of Yahoo, whose everyday projects include helping this web giant adapt content 40.\_\_\_\_ its 600 million users and working long hours every day, 41.\_\_\_\_ 9 or 10 at night sometimes. Even though programming jobs are moving 42.\_\_\_\_ other spaces and continents, the face-to-face aspect 43.\_\_\_\_ this position helps cement local demand. I put together apps people actually use. So for me, the greatest joy comes 44.\_\_\_\_ seeing people use the product 45.\_\_\_\_ a way that makes their life better or makes it easier for them to do their job.



ENTRY TEST – ANSWER KEY

1. at	11. opposite	21. in	31. on	41. till
2. over	12. on	22. at	32. about	42. into
3. on	13. between	23. with	33. behind	43. of
4. on	14. opposite	24. near	34. for	44. from
5. from	15. behind	25. for	35. between	45. in
6. about	16. over	26. of	36. from	46. with
7. of	17. through/	27. at	37. for	47. to
8. in	across	28. on	38. along	48. to
9. by	18. through/	29. with	39. on	49. to
10. back	across	30. in	40. for	50. for
	19. down			
	20. to			

## Appendix 4 – Preposition Category Template – Sample sheet

### *Experimental Group –Assignment 1*

**Preposition Category Template**  
**EXPERIMENTAL GROUP - Assignment 1**

1. Errors made with the following prepositions:

about	across	at	behind	by	down	for	from	in	into	of	on	out	over	through	till	to	OTHER	Total
1		2		1		2	1	2	1	2	2					3	1	18

## Appendix 5 – Exit Test

Fill in the blanks of the following text by using prepositions. Write your answers in the spaces provided at the end.

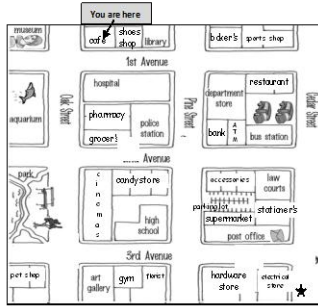
### A. Describing people:

Robin is such a nice woman. My friend Robin is very sensitive 1. \_\_\_ other people's needs; that's why everybody loves her. These days she's a bit worried 2. \_\_\_ her daughter. It happens that the girl is very careless 3. \_\_\_ her health. She's got a terrible cold because she's been walking in the rain with just a t-shirt on. Robin is very good 4. \_\_\_ languages, she speaks four! But she is also interested 5. \_\_\_ music, poetry and films.

### B. Towns:

Look at the map.

If you're at the café and need to go to the electrical shop, walk 6. \_\_\_ First Avenue towards Pine Street and turn right; then, walk two more blocks 7. \_\_\_ to 3rd Avenue. 8. \_\_\_ the corner of the post office, turn again, the electrical shop is 9. \_\_\_, at the end of the block, 10. \_\_\_ Cedar Street. When passing 11. \_\_\_ Second Avenue, be careful 12. \_\_\_ the traffic, which is very heavy on that corner. The department store, the police station and the bank are responsible 13. \_\_\_ the traffic jams there. It's pretty close, you can go 14. \_\_\_ foot, don't go 15. \_\_\_ car.



### C. Accidents at home:

Prevent your children 16. \_\_\_ serious injuries! Don't leave bottles of cleaning products or your medicines 17. \_\_\_ the reach of little kids, as they will drink or eat them. Save your kids 18. \_\_\_ diseases or death. Electricity: secure all power sockets with plastic coverings. You can install safety gates for stairs. This will help to keep children away 19. \_\_\_ this danger.

### D. Buying and selling:

In Paradise Department Store they don't take credit cards, that means that we have to pay 20. \_\_\_ cash. But they have beautiful imported goods 21. \_\_\_ sale. Now, if you want to buy something bigger, they have a credit department, so that you can pay 22. \_\_\_ credit. It's located 23. \_\_\_ Adams Boulevard and Madison Street.

### E. Celebrations:

Dear Fran,  
Congratulations 24. \_\_\_ your graduation as a psychologist! I wish you all the best 25. \_\_\_ your future career. Well done!  
Bill

### A. Restaurants:

I didn't like the restaurant very much. Our meal consisted 26. \_\_\_ a badly grilled steak with rice, followed 27. \_\_\_ apple juice. But that's not the worst, we had to wait 28. \_\_\_ hours and hours to be attended. Finally, when I complained 29. \_\_\_ the slow service, the manager of the restaurant himself came to wait 30. \_\_\_ us. He apologized at the end.

### B. Sports:

I am usually very proud 31. \_\_\_ my soccer team. But not this time; I was really dissatisfied 32. \_\_\_ their performance in the championship. The fans were angry 33. \_\_\_ many of the players, who didn't run enough to get the ball and control the game. In the future we expect an attitude similar 34. \_\_\_ what we saw in previous years. As usual, the stadium was crowded 35. \_\_\_ fans, to finally see that most of the games were won 36. \_\_\_ opposite teams.

### C. Films:

The latest *Mission Impossible* 2012, 37. \_\_\_ Tom Cruise and directed 38. \_\_\_ Brad Bird, has it all 39. \_\_\_ romance to adventure, action, and wonderful special effects. My sister convinced me to see the video. 40. \_\_\_ the beginning I thought it would be another episode of a series, but upon seeing the beginning, I watched it all. 41. \_\_\_ the end of the film, I wanted more action and special effects. I loved it. We rented the film 42. \_\_\_ only \$5.

### D. Using Technology:

Nowadays, there's a great demand 43. \_\_\_ gadgets of all types. However, although they represent more convenient ways to communicate with the world, they also imply difficulties 44. \_\_\_ new applications for people who aren't familiar with new items or for those who aren't experts 45. \_\_\_ gadgets. Another disadvantage 46. \_\_\_ these wonderful items is that gadget lovers have to make a choice 47. \_\_\_ surfing the web and paying attention to who's speaking to them. Also, downloading files—songs, books, or videos 48. \_\_\_ internet might cause problems to your gadget. They might contain viruses that are found 49. \_\_\_ the web. Do you agree 50. \_\_\_ me?

1	11	21	31	41
2	12	22	32	42
3	13	23	33	43
4	14	24	34	44
5	15	25	35	45
6	16	26	36	46
7	17	27	37	47
8	18	28	38	48
9	19	29	39	49
10	20	30	40	50

### EXIT TEST - ANSWER KEY

1. to	11. by	21. for	31. of	41. at
2. about	12. of	22. on	32. with	42. for
3. with	13. for	23. between	33. with	43. with
4. at	14. on	24. on	34. to	44. with
5. in	15. by	25. for	35. with	45. on
6. along	16. from	26. of	36. by	46. of
7. up	17. at	27. by	37. with	47. between
8. on	18. from	28. for	38. by	48. from
9. across	19. from	29. for	39. from	49. on
10. on	20. in	30. on	40. in	50. with

## Appendix 6 – Exit Survey

### EXIT SURVEY: STUDENT LEARNING BEHAVIOR

Please check  the box that best represents your opinion:

When you receive composition scores from your teacher, you:

1. Look at the grade mark you received, but pay no attention to any comments made by your teacher.
2. Look at the errors you made, but make no decisions about them.
3. Look at the errors and the corrections but you don't learn from the corrections made by your teacher.
4. Find reasons why your sentences are marked as incorrect, but don't take steps to correct them.
5. Revise your paper and rewrite it without errors.
6. Revise your paper, rewrite it without errors and create other examples of your own trying to use the mistaken forms correctly.
7. Employ the web page links given by your teacher in your feedback to help you correct your errors.
8. You don't regularly do writing assignments.

Specifically speaking about prepositions, you can say that,

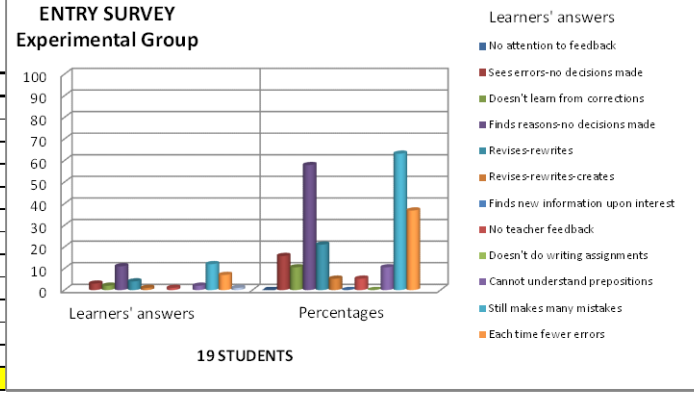
9. You definitely cannot understand prepositions.
10. You still make many mistakes with prepositions.
11. You make fewer mistakes now than at the start of the semester.
12. You have definitely learned to apply many of them in your writing.

## Appendix 7 – Entry-Exit Survey – Experimental Group

### Contrasted Statistics

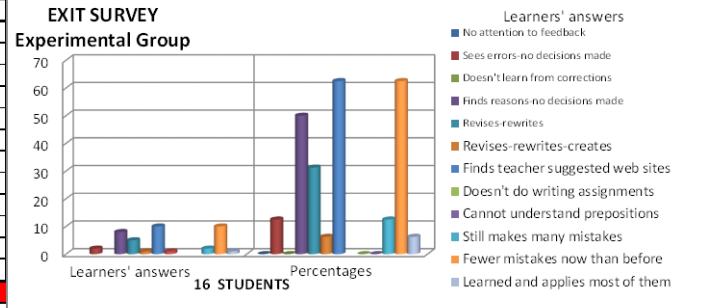
#### EXPERIMENTAL GROUP ENTRY SURVEY

Q.Nr.	Behavior descriptors	Answers	%
1	No attention to feedback		0,00
2	Sees errors-no decisions made	3	15,79
3	Doesn't learn from corrections	2	10,53
4	Finds reasons-no decisions made	11	57,89
5	Revises-rewrites	4	21,05
6	Revises-rewrites-creates	1	5,26
7	Finds new information upon interest		0,00
8	No teacher feedback	1	5,26
9	Doesn't do writing assignments		0,00
10	Cannot understand prepositions	2	10,53
11	Still makes many mistakes	12	63,16
12	Each time fewer errors	7	36,84
Number of students who answered the survey:		19	



#### EXPERIMENTAL GROUP EXIT SURVEY

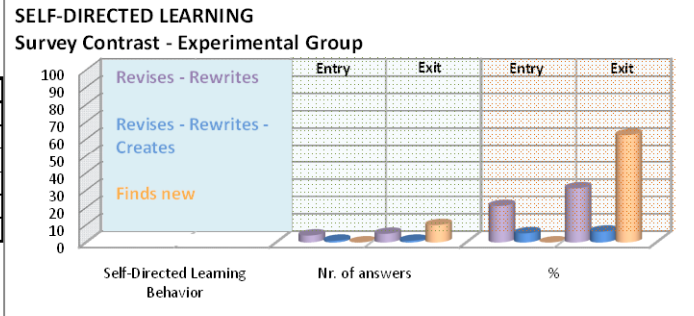
Q.Nr.	Behavior descriptors	Answers	%
1	No attention to feedback		0,00
2	Sees errors-no decisions made	2	12,50
3	Doesn't learn from corrections		0,00
4	Finds reasons-no decisions made	8	50,00
5	Revises-rewrites	5	31,25
6	Revises-rewrites-creates	1	6,25
7	Finds teacher suggested web sites	10	62,50
8	Doesn't do writing assignments		0,00
9	Cannot understand prepositions		0,00
10	Still makes many mistakes	2	12,50
11	Fewer mistakes now than before	10	62,50
12	Learned and applies most of them	1	6,25
Number of students who answered the survey:		16	



#### Self-Directed Learning Survey Contrast

##### ENTRY-EXIT STATISTICS EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

	Self-Directed Learning Behavior	Nr. of answers	%
Entry Survey	Revises-rewrites	4	21,05
	Revises-rewrites-creates	1	5,26
	Finds new	0	0,00
Exit Survey	Revises-rewrites	5	31,25
	Revises-rewrites-creates	1	6,25
	Finds new	10	62,50



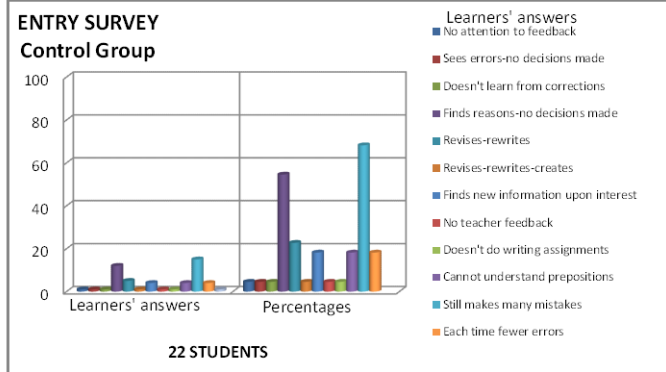


Appendix 7 (continued) - Entry-Exit Survey - Contrasted Statistics

Control Group

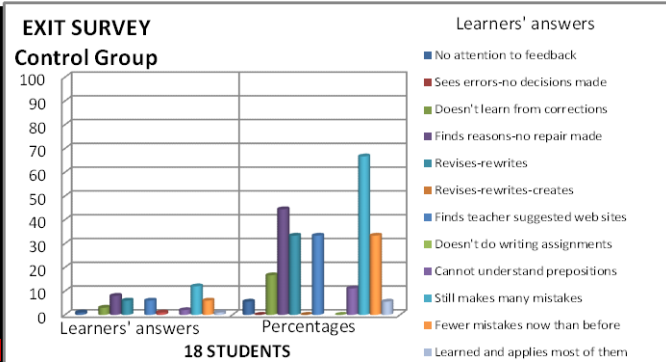
CONTROL GROUP  
ENTRY SURVEY

Q.Nr.	Behavior descriptors	Answers	%
1	No attention to feedback	1	4,55
2	Sees errors-no decisions made	1	4,55
3	Doesn't learn from corrections	1	4,55
4	Finds reasons-no decisions made	12	54,55
5	Revises-rewrites	5	22,73
6	Revises-rewrites-creates	1	4,55
7	Finds new information upon interest	4	18,18
8	No teacher feedback	1	4,55
9	Doesn't do writing assignments	1	4,55
10	Cannot understand prepositions	4	18,18
11	Still makes many mistakes	15	68,18
12	Each time fewer errors	4	18,18
Number of students who answered the survey:		22	



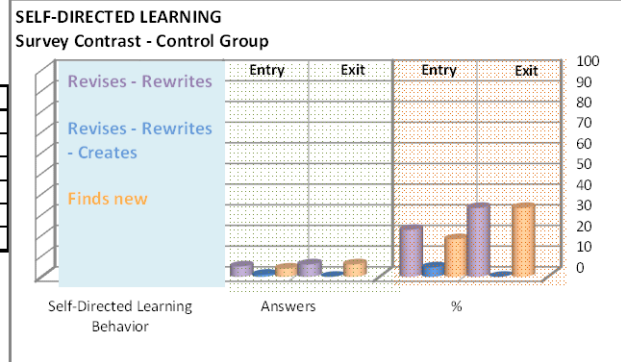
CONTROL GROUP  
EXIT SURVEY

Q.Nr.	Behavior descriptors	Answers	%
1	No attention to feedback	1	5,56
2	Sees errors-no decisions made		0,00
3	Doesn't learn from corrections	3	16,67
4	Finds reasons-no repair made	8	44,44
5	Revises-rewrites	6	33,33
6	Revises-rewrites-creates		0,00
7	Finds teacher suggested web sites	6	33,33
8	Doesn't do writing assignments		0,00
9	Cannot understand prepositions	2	11,11
10	Still makes many mistakes	12	66,67
11	Fewer mistakes now than before	6	33,33
12	Learned and applies most of them	1	5,56
Number of students who answered the survey:		18	



Self-Directed Learning Survey Contrast  
ENTRY-EXIT STATISTICS  
CONTROL GROUP

	Self-Directed Learning Behavior	Answers	%
ENTRY SURVEY	Revises-Rewrites	5	22,73
	Revises-Rewrites-Creates	1	4,55
	Finds new	4	18,18
EXIT SURVEY	Revises-Rewrites	6	33,33
	Revises-Rewrites-Creates	0	0,00
	Finds new	6	33,33



## Appendix 8 – Course Journal and Statistics of Student Use

**Our Journals 3 early-risers** Search this site

**Welcome!**

LEARNING STRATEGIES  
LEVEL 3 PROGRAM  
OUR MATERIALS

- Andrea del Castillo
- Andrea Galeano
- Angela Carrillo
- Catalina Cifuentes
- Catalina González
- Edgar Medellín
- Estefania Hernández
- Johana Ortega
- José Manuel Rincón
- Juanita Alvear
- Julián Avila
- Laura Cáceres
- Leidy Viviana Escobar
- Lina Maria Heredia
- Maira Suárez
- María Isabel Riveros
- Martha Calderón
- María Alejandra Molina
- María José Hernández
- Mónica Moreno
- Nandy Asprilla
- Sergio Córdoba
- Silvia Camila Prias
- Sylvia Osorio

▼ Z-trying out the site  
Final Grades

**Welcome!**

Hi, buddies! This is our blog for us to write our reflections on our classes. What do you think? Do you like it? Your teacher will post the class materials here for you to review them again after class. Then you look for your name on the right, and reflect on how you will learn the material studied. Also, you will write your second versions to your writing assignments, now without mistakes. If you have a problem, try to think and write about the solution, and talk to your teacher...

See you around!

**Embed gadget**

<https://sites.google.com/site/ourjournals3earlyrisers/home>

### Journal Entry Statistics - Students

FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY
14	1	13	0

## Appendix 9 – Typical Feedback Email

Maps Play YouTube News Gmail Documents Calendar More -

← → Move to Inbox More -

Alejandra Molina Piscilago Zoo, an adventure Piscilago is a park of colsubsidio, the people ho... Mar 9

CLARA NIÑO Mar 10  
to Alejandra

### Piscilago Zoo, an adventure

Piscilago is a park of colsubsidio, the people howWRONG WORD are registered can get into the park SPANGLISH\*, it depends on the benefits of the plan that colsubsidio offerWRONG CONJUGATION FOR SIMPLE PRESENT(-3) there. Piscilago park has a lot of swimming pools, big\*\* slides, extreme attractions, restaurants and a wonderful zoo that haveWRONG CONJUGATION FOR PRESENT SIMPLE(-3) a diversity of animals. In the zoo the animals are classified by mammals, birds, fish, amphibians and reptiles. There are lions, jaguars, pumas, titi monkeys, otters, monkeys, ant-eaterS, parrots, flamingos, macaws, crows, toucans, ducks, eagles, snakes, crocodiles, turtles and frogs. Sometimes the zoo has an otter's show and the people can enjoy e#WRONG USE OF PREPOSITION WITH THIS VERB that beautiful animal. Piscilago is located hWRONG PREPOSITION the kilometer 105, from Bogota on the way to Girardot,WRONG PUNCTUATION I recommend going and visiting the zoo that is fantastic and you are really enjoyWRONG COMBINATION OF VERBS and pass a funnyWRONG WORD time with your family.

\*REGISTERED PEOPLE CAN GET INTO THE PARK  
\*\*ADJECTIVES DON'T HAVE PLURAL FORM

Maria Alejandra Molina L.  
Alejandra. Nice job. Now, what you have to do is pay attention to conjugation; each mistake is -1, and conjugations -3. Look at the corrections and rewrite on your journal. 3.5  
Find info about:  
Capitalization:  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/592/1/>  
<http://esl.about.com/od/grammarintermediate/a/capitalization.htm>

Simple present tense:  
[http://www.eslgold.com/grammar/simple\\_present.html](http://www.eslgold.com/grammar/simple_present.html)  
<http://a4esl.org/q/h/lb/psv.html>  
<http://www.learnenglishfeelgood.com/verbs-simple-present2.pdf>  
<http://www.learnenglishfeelgood.com/verbs-simple-present1.pdf>

Adjectives:  
[http://esl.about.com/od/grammarforbeginners/a/adjective\\_use.htm](http://esl.about.com/od/grammarforbeginners/a/adjective_use.htm)  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/537/01/>  
[http://www.grammar-quizzes.com/adj\\_nounmodifiers.html](http://www.grammar-quizzes.com/adj_nounmodifiers.html)

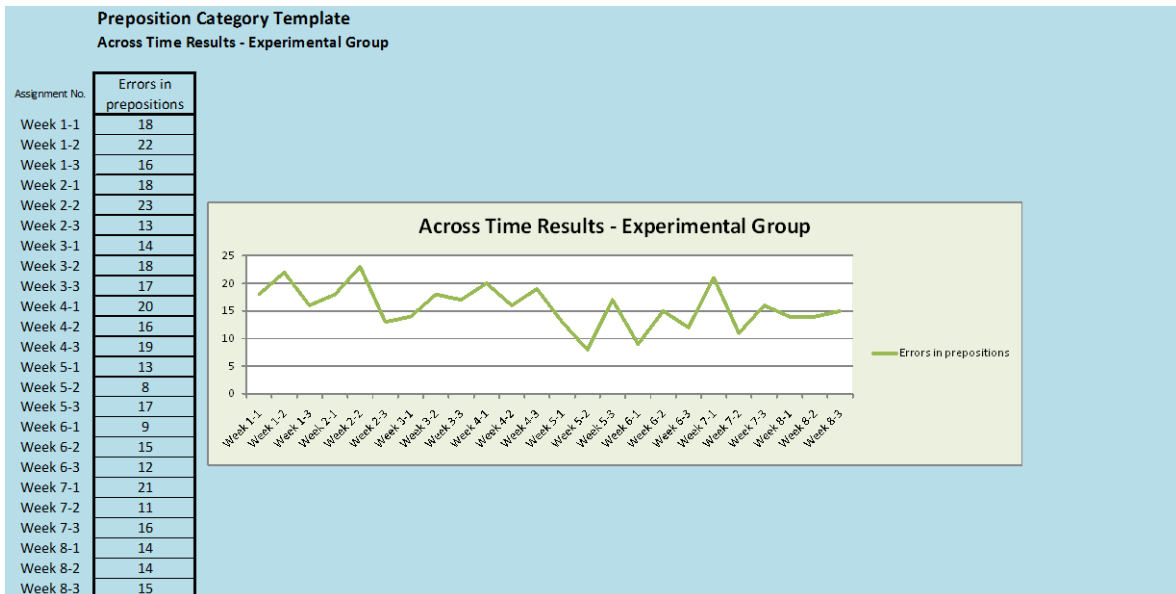
Prepositions:  
<http://www.ego4u.com/en/cram-up/grammar/prepositions>  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/594/01/>  
<http://www.betterenglish.org.ph/Parts%20of%20Speech/Prepositions%20discussion%20and%20interactive%20quizzes.htm>

Punctuation:  
<http://www.myenglishgrammar.com/englishLesson-11-punctuation.html>  
[http://www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/exercises/grammar/grammar\\_tutorial/page\\_55.htm](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/exercises/grammar/grammar_tutorial/page_55.htm)  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/exercises/3/16/14>

Fun/Funny:  
<http://www.usingenglish.com/forum/ask-teacher/11717-its-very-fun-its-very-funny.html>  
<http://profknick.wordpress.com/2007/06/25/the-difference-between-fun-and-funny/>  
<http://canada-esl.com/lessons/main/funny.html>

Click here to [Reply](#) or [Forward](#)

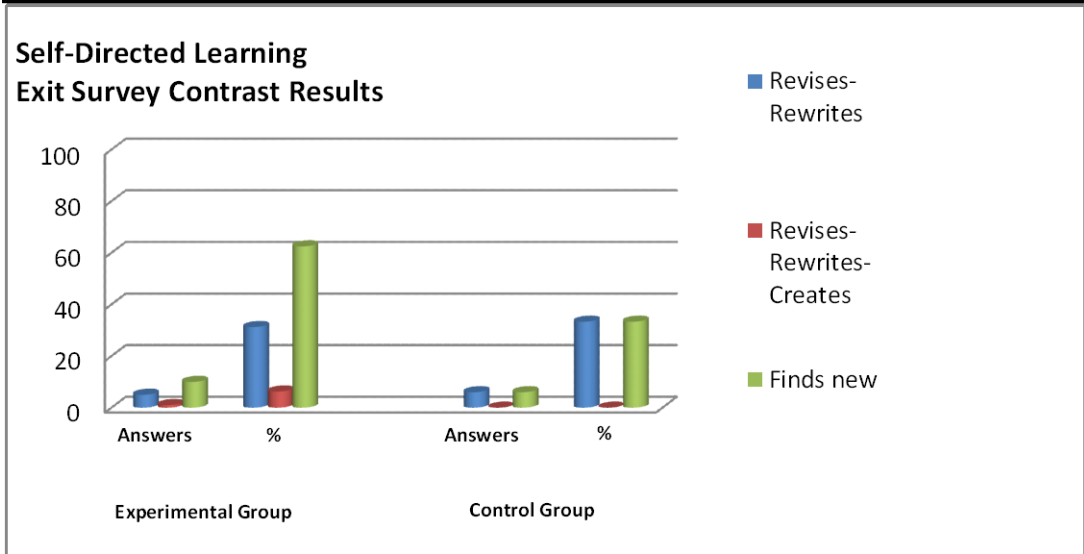
## Appendix 10 – Preposition Category Template – Final Results



## Appendix 11 – Self-Directed Learning – Exit Survey – Contrast Results

### SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING EXIT SURVEY CONTRAST RESULTS

	Experimental Group	%	Control Group	%
Revises-Rewrites	5	31,25	6	33,33
Revises-Rewrites-Creates	1	6,25	0	0
Finds new	10	62,5	6	33,33



## Appendix 12 – Self-Direction Entry Readiness Scale

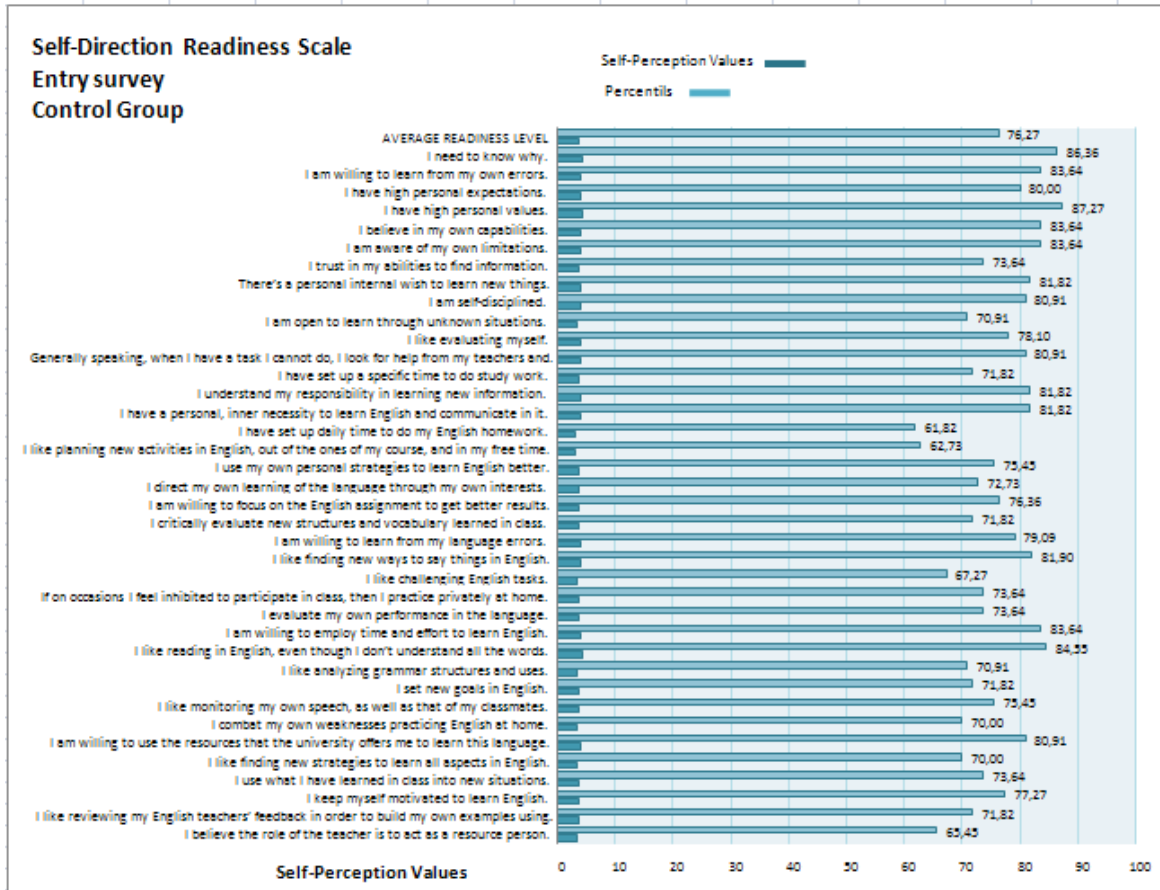
For each of the following behavior indicators, mark the number that best represents your opinion about your own English learning process:

5=True in most times      4=True, but not all the time      3=True, but only on occasions  
2=Rarely true      1=Never true.

	5	4	3	2	1
1. I need to know why.					
2. I am willing to learn from my own errors.					
3. I have high personal expectations.					
4. I have high personal values.					
5. I believe in my own capabilities.					
6. I am aware of my own limitations.					
7. I trust in my abilities to find information.					
8. There's a personal internal wish to learn new things.					
9. I am self-disciplined.					
10. I am open to learn through unknown situations.					
11. I like evaluating myself.					
12. Generally speaking, when I have a task I cannot do, I look for help from my teachers and classmates, or anybody who has the knowledge.					
13. I have set up a specific time to do study work.					
14. I understand my responsibility in learning new information.					
15. I have a personal, inner necessity to learn English and communicate in it.					
16. I have set up daily time to do my English homework.					
17. I like planning new activities in English, out of the ones of my course, and in my free time.					
18. I use my own personal strategies to learn English better.					
19. I direct my own learning of the language through my own interests.					
20. I am willing to focus on the English assignment to get better results.					
21. I critically evaluate new structures and vocabulary learned in class.					
22. I am willing to learn from my language errors.					
23. I like finding new ways to say things in English.					
24. I like challenging English tasks.					
25. If on occasions I feel inhibited to participate in class, then I practice privately at home.					
26. I evaluate my own performance in the language.					
27. I am willing to employ time and effort to learn English.					
28. I like reading in English, even though I don't understand all the words.					
29. I like analyzing grammar structures and uses.					
30. I set new goals in English.					
31. I like monitoring my own speech, as well as that of my classmates.					
32. I combat my own weaknesses practicing English at home.					
33. I am willing to use the resources that the university offers me to learn this language.					
34. I like finding new strategies to learn all aspects in English.					
35. I use what I have learned in class into new situations.					
36. I keep myself motivated to learn English.					
37. I like reviewing my English teachers' feedback in order to build my own examples using correct language.					
38. I believe the role of the teacher is to act as a resource person.					

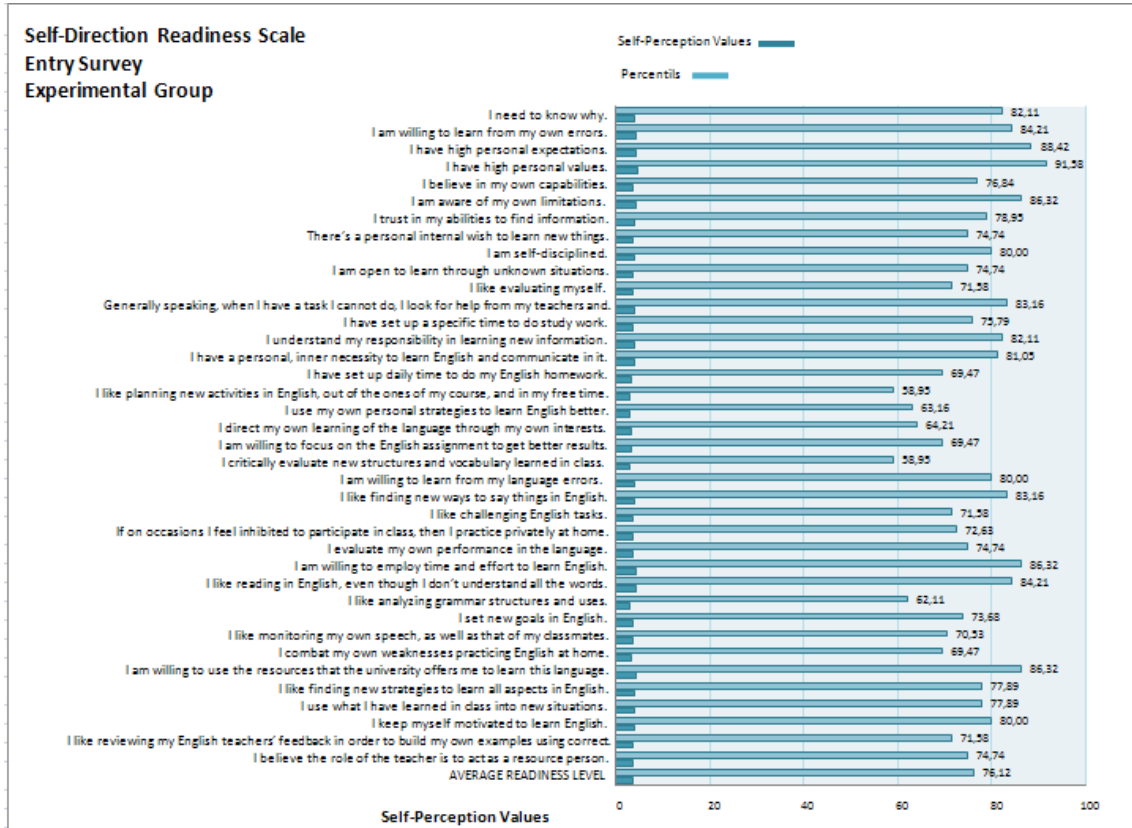
## Appendix 13 – Self-Direction - Entry Readiness Scale – Graphic Results

### Entry Survey - Control Group



## Appendix 14 – Self-Direction Entry Readiness Scale

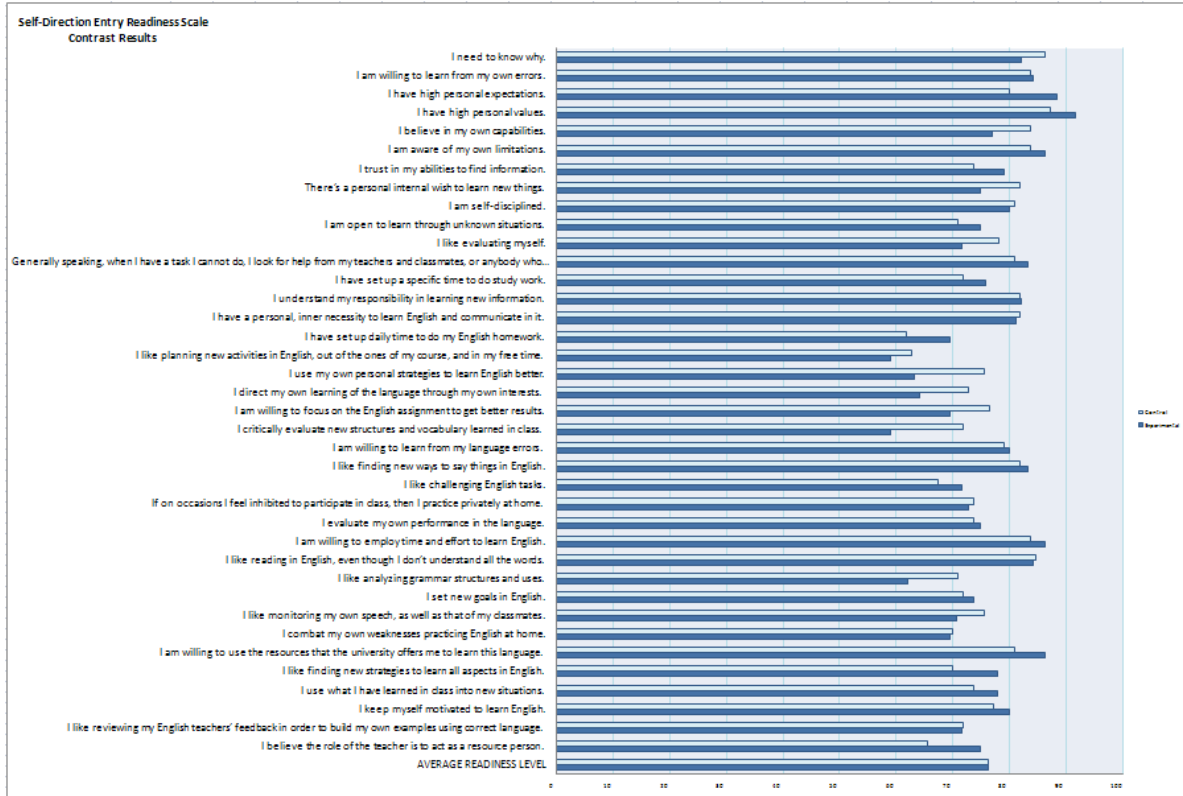
### Experimental Group – Graphic Results





## Appendix 15 - Self-Direction Entry Readiness Scale

### Contrast Results



## Appendix 16 – Self-Direction - Exit Readiness Scale

For each of the following behavior indicators, mark the number that best represents your opinion about your own English learning process:

5=True in most times    4=True, but not all the time    3=True, but only on occasions  
 2=Rarely true    1=Never true.

	5	4	3	2	1
<b>I. LIKE OF LANGUAGE</b>					
1. I have an inner-driven need to learn the English language.					
2. I like planning new activities in English, out of the ones of my course, and in my free time.					
3. I direct my own learning of the language through my own interests.					
4. I like finding new ways to say things in English.					
5. I like challenging English tasks.					
6. I set new goals in English.					
<b>II. RESPONSIBILITY FOR OWN LEARNING</b>					
7. I understand my responsibility in learning.					
8. I have set up daily time to do my English homework.					
9. I analyze written feedback and correct my own errors.					
10. I am willing to use the resources available at university and on the web to learn this language.					
11. I am willing to employ time and effort to learn English.					
<b>III. ACTIONS TAKEN</b>					
12. I periodically review structures and vocabulary learned in class, so that I can use them in different situations.					
13. I listen to English to train my ear and comprehension.					
14. I analyze grammar structures and uses.					
15. If on occasions I feel inhibited to participate in class, then I practice privately at home.					
16. I like monitoring my own speech, as well as that of my classmates.					
17. I make use of what I have learned into new situations in class and out of class.					
18. I seek to keep myself motivated, regardless of the events when my grades are lower than expected.					
19. I critically analyze class and homework tasks and follow the instructions given by my teacher.					
20. I regularly evaluate my own competence performance, as well as my efforts employed in the learning process.					

References

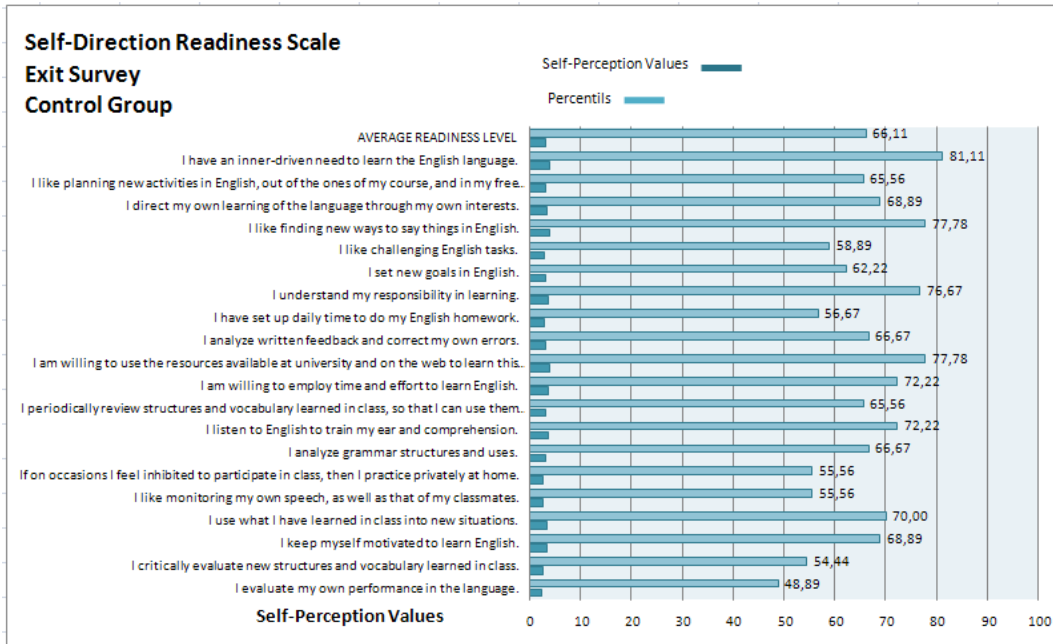
Horvath, I. (2005) *The cognitive components of autonomous learning in Postgraduate interpreter training*. Supporting Independent English Language Learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Proceedings of the Independent Learning Association Conference Inaugural – 2005. Auckland: Manukau Institute of Technology. Online: <http://independentlearning.org/ILA/la05/HOR05034.pdf>

Fisher et al. (2001) *Development of a self-directed learning readiness scale for nursing education*. Nurse Education Today (2001) 21, 516–525. Online: <http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/projects/pl3p/self-directed%20learning%20scale%20for%20nurses.pdf>

Oxford, R. (2002) *Language learning strategies in a nutshell: update and ESL*. Affect in language learning. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, chapter 11. Online: <http://www2.education.ualberta.ca/staff/olenka.Bilash/best%20of%20bilash/SILL%20survey.pdf>

## Appendix 17 – Self-Direction - Exit Readiness Scale – Control Group

### Graphic results

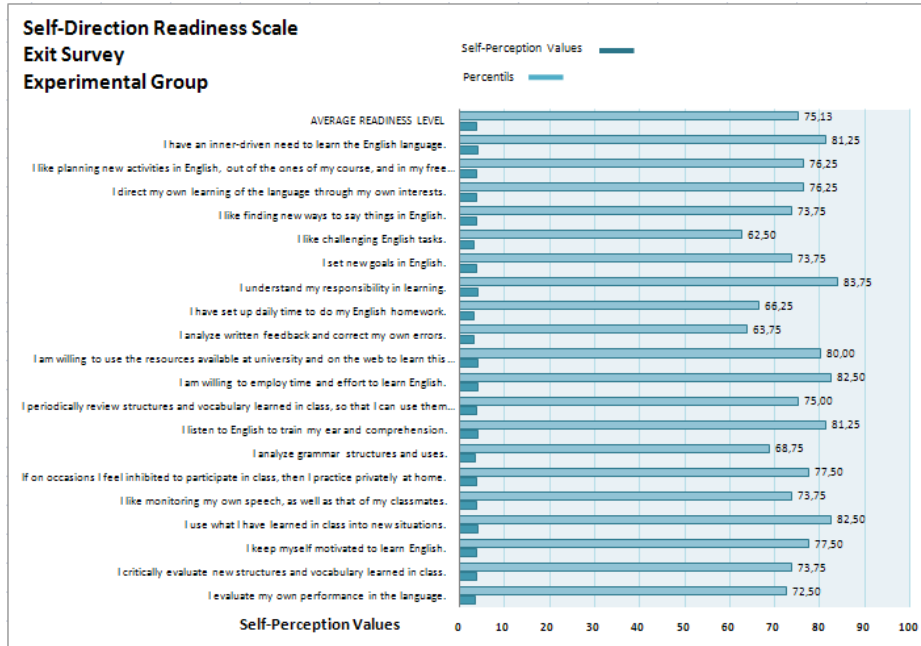


Self-Direction Readiness Scale - Control Group - Exit Survey

Self-Perception Values	Readiness Level	Percentil
1 I have an inner-driven need to learn the English language.	4,06	81,11
2 I like planning new activities in English, out of the ones of my course, and in my free time.	3,28	65,56
3 I direct my own learning of the language through my own interests.	3,44	68,89
4 I like finding new ways to say things in English.	3,89	77,78
5 I like challenging English tasks.	2,94	58,89
6 I set new goals in English.	3,11	62,22
7 I understand my responsibility in learning.	3,83	76,67
8 I have set up daily time to do my English homework.	2,83	56,67
9 I analyze written feedback and correct my own errors.	3,33	66,67
10 I am willing to use the resources available at university and on the web to learn this language.	3,89	77,78
11 I am willing to employ time and effort to learn English.	3,61	72,22
12 I periodically review structures and vocabulary learned in class, so that I can use them in different situations.	3,28	65,56
13 I listen to English to train my ear and comprehension.	3,61	72,22
14 I analyze grammar structures and uses.	3,33	66,67
15 If on occasions I feel inhibited to participate in class, then I practice privately at home.	2,78	55,56
16 I like monitoring my own speech, as well as that of my classmates.	2,78	55,56
17 I use what I have learned in class into new situations.	3,50	70,00
18 I keep myself motivated to learn English.	3,44	68,89
19 I critically evaluate new structures and vocabulary learned in class.	2,72	54,44
20 I evaluate my own performance in the language.	2,44	48,89
AVERAGE READINESS LEVEL	3,31	66,11

Appendix 18 - Self-Direction - Exit Readiness Scale – Experimental Group

Graphic results

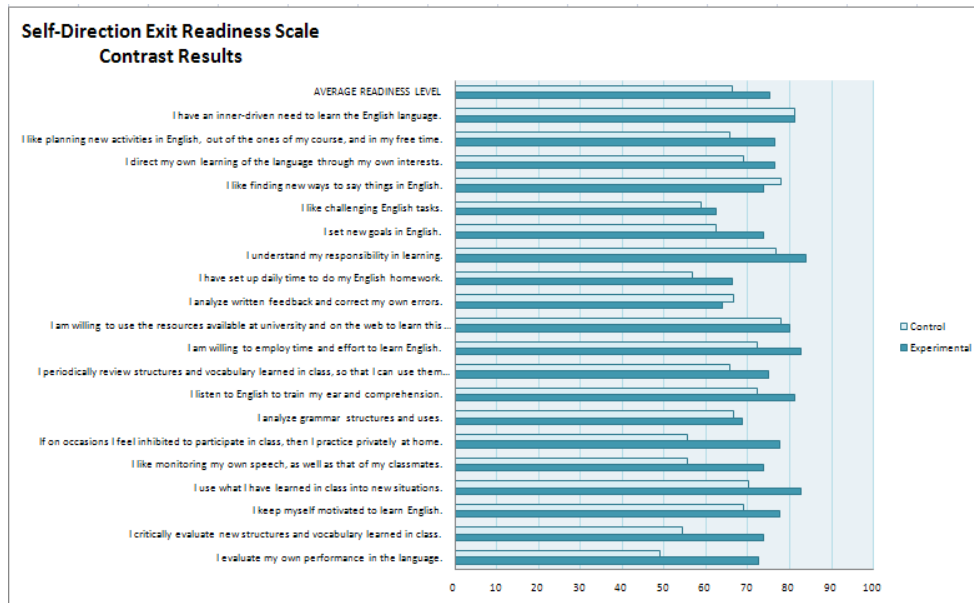


Self-Direction Readiness Scale - Experimental Group - Exit Survey

Item	Self-Perception Values	Readiness Level	Percentil
1	I have an inner-driven need to learn the English language.	4,06	81,25
2	I like planning new activities in English, out of the ones of my course, and in my free time.	3,81	76,25
3	I direct my own learning of the language through my own interests.	3,81	76,25
4	I like finding new ways to say things in English.	3,69	73,75
5	I like challenging English tasks.	3,13	62,50
6	I set new goals in English.	3,69	73,75
7	I understand my responsibility in learning.	4,19	83,75
8	I have set up daily time to do my English homework.	3,31	66,25
9	I analyze written feedback and correct my own errors.	3,19	63,75
10	I am willing to use the resources available at university and on the web to learn this language.	4,00	80,00
11	I am willing to employ time and effort to learn English.	4,13	82,50
12	I periodically review structures and vocabulary learned in class, so that I can use them in different situations.	3,75	75,00
13	I listen to English to train my ear and comprehension.	4,06	81,25
14	I analyze grammar structures and uses.	3,44	68,75
15	If on occasions I feel inhibited to participate in class, then I practice privately at home.	3,88	77,50
16	I like monitoring my own speech, as well as that of my classmates.	3,69	73,75
17	I use what I have learned in class into new situations.	4,13	82,50
18	I keep myself motivated to learn English.	3,88	77,50
19	I critically evaluate new structures and vocabulary learned in class.	3,69	73,75
20	I evaluate my own performance in the language.	3,63	72,50
	AVERAGE READINESS LEVEL	3,76	75,13

## Appendix 19 – Self-Direction Exit Readiness Scale

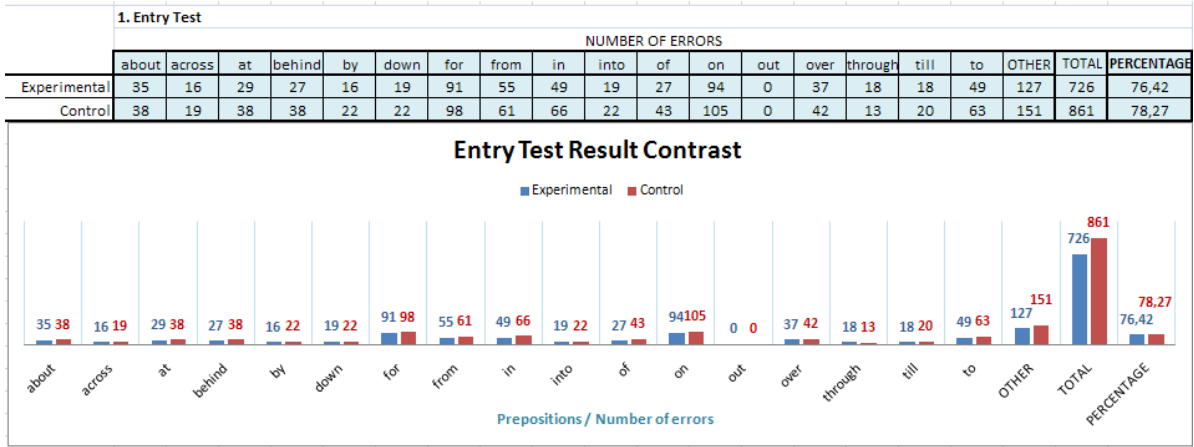
### Experimental and Control Groups – Contrast Results



Self-Direction Exit Readiness Scale - Contrast Results

Self-Perception Values	Experimental	Control
I evaluate my own performance in the language.	72,50	48,89
I critically evaluate new structures and vocabulary learned in class.	73,75	54,44
I keep myself motivated to learn English.	77,50	68,89
I use what I have learned in class into new situations.	82,50	70,00
I like monitoring my own speech, as well as that of my classmates.	73,75	55,56
If on occasions I feel inhibited to participate in class, then I practice privately at home.	77,50	55,56
I analyze grammar structures and uses.	68,75	66,67
I listen to English to train my ear and comprehension.	81,25	72,22
I periodically review structures and vocabulary learned in class, so that I can use them in different situations.	75,00	65,56
I am willing to employ time and effort to learn English.	82,50	72,22
I am willing to use the resources available at university and on the web to learn this language.	80,00	77,78
I analyze written feedback and correct my own errors.	63,75	66,67
I have set up daily time to do my English homework.	66,25	56,67
I understand my responsibility in learning.	83,75	76,67
I set new goals in English.	73,75	62,22
I like challenging English tasks.	62,50	58,89
I like finding new ways to say things in English.	73,75	77,78
I direct my own learning of the language through my own interests.	76,25	68,89
I like planning new activities in English, out of the ones of my course, and in my free time.	76,25	65,56
I have an inner-driven need to learn the English language.	81,25	81,11
AVERAGE READINESS LEVEL	75,13	66,11

## Appendix 20 – Entry Test Result Contrast



POSSIBLE NUMBER OF ERRORS:

EXPER. 950

CONTROL 1100

ERRORS MADE:

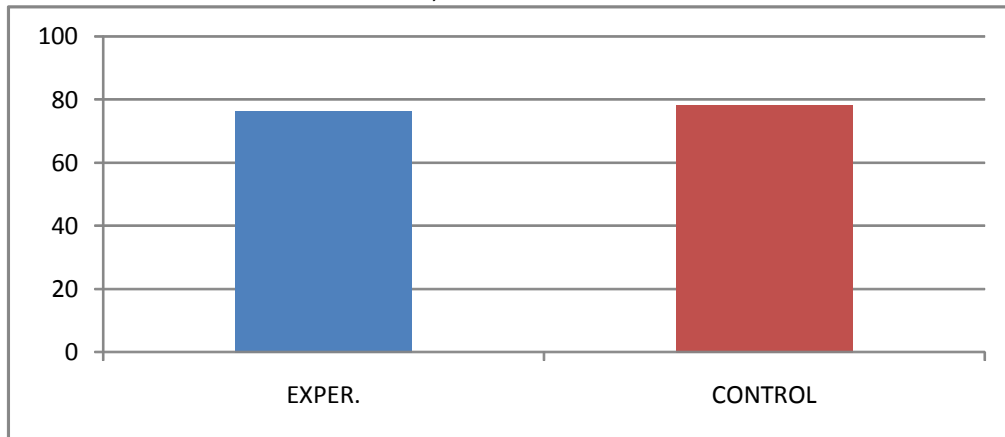
EXPER. 726

CONTROL 861

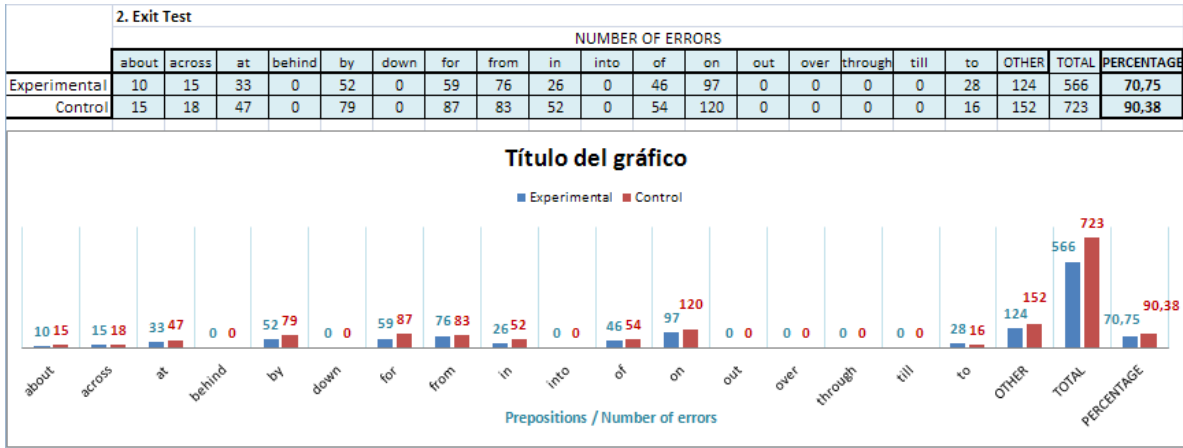
PERCENTAGE OF ERRORS MADE:

EXPER. 76,42

CONTROL 78,27



## Appendix 21 – Exit Test Result Contrast



POSSIBLE NUMBER OF ERRORS:

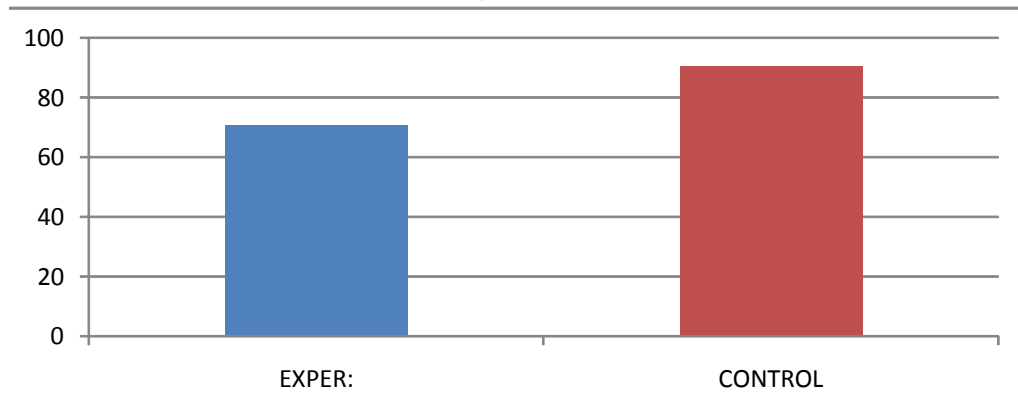
EXPER. 800  
CONTROL 900

ERRORS MADE:

EXPER. 566  
CONTROL 723

PERCENTAGE OF ERROS MADE:

EXPER: 70,75  
CONTROL 90,38



## Appendix 22 – End-of Process Personal Interview Questionnaire

### I. LIKE OF LANGUAGE

1. Describe your feelings about learning English.
2. How do you feel when you come across a difficult recording or text in English?
3. How do you keep yourself motivated about learning the language?
4. How do you visualize yourself using the language in the future?

### II. RESPONSIBILITY FOR OWN LEARNING

5. How do you understand your responsibility in learning English?

### III. ACTIONS TAKEN

6. Which specific actions do you normally do yourself to learn the language?
7. Which additional efforts do you employ to learn the language?
8. What do you usually do with your writing feedback?
9. If nothing is done, explain the reasons why you have acted this way.
10. How do you know that you are progressing or not in the process?

## References

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- Fisher et al. (2001) *Development of a self-directed learning readiness scale for nursing education*. Nurse Education Today (2001) 21, 516–525. Online: <http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/projects/pl3p/self-directed%20learning%20scale%20for%20nurses.pdf>
- Oxford, R. (2002) *Language learning strategies in a nutshell: update and ESL*. Affect in language learning. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, chapter 11. Online: <http://www2.education.ualberta.ca/staff/olenka.Bilash/best%20of%20bilash/SILL%20survey.pdf>



## Appendix 23 – Interview transcripts

Entrevista 1: (Marissa, 22)	
Profesor:	Estudiante:
<p>Qué te dice tu corazón acerca del inglés, te gusta, no te gusta?</p> <p>Pero tú qué sientes por él?</p> <p>Qué sientes cuando te enfrentas a una tarea que parece difícil en el idioma, pero que tienes que hacerla?</p> <p>Cómo te mantienes tú motivada para aprender inglés?</p> <p>Cómo te visualizas utilizando el idioma en un futuro cercano o mediano?</p>	<p>Bueno, sé que es algo que tengo que adquirir para poderme desempeñar mejor en el ámbito laboral; por ejemplo, mis hermanos han tenido como problemas para ingresar exitosamente... Mmm... Pues ahoritica pues noto que como que me está interesando, antes como que era una materia del colegio y ya, pero ahora uno ve la necesidad y siente que le tiene que coger gusto, y tiene que, como que avanzar en él. Como tener el interés para poder aprenderlo, creo que es lo principal.</p> <p>Pido ayuda a alguien que sepa..., por ejemplo mi novio se acaba de ir, y le pido que me ayude y me enseñe cosas que sepa y que yo no... Recorro a alguien.</p> <p>Cómo me mantengo motivada? No sé, como con unas metas que uno se pone para seguir avanzando? Y entonces uno se mantiene como con esa motivación de llegar a esa meta. Tener como planes, también, no sé, como de un año, seis meses.</p> <p>Je, je, bueno en un futuro más bien mediano, largo, pues porque hasta ahora estoy empezando a interesarme ya... Quiero que sea mediano porque uno lo necesita en cualquier contexto, con las amigas, en el estudio, le ponen a uno lecturas en inglés, y uno se siente en desventaja, entonces uno quiere como superar esa ineficiencia, porque lo más rápido posible, pues..., como para no sé, como para hacer muchas cosas.</p>
<p>Tú como entiendes tu responsabilidad en el aprendizaje del idioma?</p>	<p>Cómo entiendo mi responsabilidad?... Eh, mmm..., no sé, eh, mmm, cómo es mi responsabilidad? No sé, como hacer las tareas..., lo que pasa es que yo me rijo mucho como a lo académico y como que no hago nada aparte de esto, entonces es como mi problema. Pues mi responsabilidad es como hacer las tareas, y como poner mayor interés, corregir, eh, pues estudiar bien para los exámenes. El problema ahí es que como que trasciendo a eso, como que tengo el interés, pero como que me da 'cosa' porque no, como que no entiendo bien las canciones o las</p>

	<p>películas, y entonces yo no..., como que me da un poquito de pereza, ja-ja-ja.</p>
<p>Qué acciones específicas tomas tú para aprender el idioma?</p> <p>Qué haces con el feedback que te envía tu profesor?</p> <p>Cómo sabes tú que has progresado o estás progresando en la lengua?</p> <p>Pero tú sientes que has progresado?</p>	<p>Qué acciones específicas... Mmmm... Lo que te decía, pues todas las tareas que tú nos mandas, eh, pues las hago como muy comprometida, poniéndole todo el interés, mmm..., he tratado como de escuchar música en inglés... Le dije a mis amigas que me dijeran de canciones o gente que cantara chévere en inglés, para ver si me interesaba, y pues he tratado poco a poco, ha sido difícil, pero he tratado. Un día me pusieron a mirar una película también en inglés, y pues... Es difícil que uno se motive, porque uno quiere como descansar, no estar como tensionado, pero pues es un proceso, pienso yo.</p> <p>Eh, yo, bueno, al principio como que trataba de corregirlo, pero como son tantas cosas, pues uno como que en un momento se llena de cosas y como que no, como que las dejo acumular y ya después las corrijo, eso es lo que hago. Además, es que a uno no le queda tiempo..., es que lo que pasa es que este semestre estoy tomando 22 créditos y todos los profesores le mandan a uno mucho trabajo.</p> <p>Bueno, pues yo antes no decía nada, pues, como que no hablaba nada. Ahorita más o menos me desenvuelvo algo... Como que yo creo que me... básico, podría pues mantener una conversación. Eh..., en cuanto al escrito, pues yo me siento bien, yo sé que uno tiene que corregir otras cosas. Por ejemplo, yo siento que mi fortaleza es como la gramática y esas cosas como más de aprend..., como más de aprendérselo que como... el fluency..., la parte del speaking, y el listening sí es un desastre. Ja-ja.</p> <p>Sí, sí, sí... Lo que sí no he sentido casi es el listening, no, todavía no... Pues sí un poquito, pero en comparación a las otras competencias de inglés....</p>

## Appendix 24 – Institutional Permission for Research



FACULTAD DE COMUNICACION Y LANGUAGE  
DEPARTAMENTO DE LENGUAS

Permission Letter:

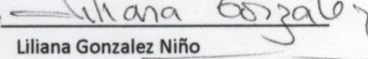
Title of Study: *Promoting learner generated error repair on preposition and preposition combinations through indirect written feedback, clearly stated learning objectives and self-directed learning promotion*

Investigator: Clara Marcela Niño Rosas


I have had an opportunity to read, review and ask questions about the above named research project as part of the informed consent process. I understand that part of the research involves the use of two groups taking *Inglés 3* this semester, one on study, and a control group.

As such, I agree to allow the researcher to carry her study on the two groups as part of the above named research project. They should participate only on this purpose, unless this faculty gives the researcher written permission for other uses.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature   
Liliana Gonzalez Niño  
Language Department Director

## Appendix 25 – Experimental Group Participant Consent



**RESEARCH PROJECT – PARTICIPANTS’ INFORMED CONSENT**

Title of Project: ***Promoting learner generated error repair on preposition and preposition combinations through indirect written feedback, clearly stated learning objectives and self-directed learning promotion***

Clara Marcela Niño R., professor of the Language Department where you’re taking this course, is conducting research on the above topic.

The aims of the research are to explore what effects indirect written feedback and explicit learning objectives have over your learning and acquisition of prepositions, and over your process of independence as a learner.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete written surveys and tests at the beginning and at the end of the process, in an anonymous manner, and with no effects on your course marks; you will also respond to a recorded interview about the process.

Before the final report for the project is prepared, I will send you a summary of what I have written, and will ask you to comment on any descriptions or interpretations that you believe are inaccurate or mistaken. Your comments will not be used in a personalized way, and your names will not be revealed. I will be the only person who will have access to the data collected for the project. Any data I use in reports or publications will be for illustration only. If you wish to have a copy of the final report sent to you, I will arrange for this to be done.

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana. If you have any complaints or reservations about this aspect, you may contact the Director of the Language Department, Building 67, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor.

Participants have signed below:

We agree to participate in this research:	Date: _____
<u>José Manuel Rincón.</u>	<u>Juanita Alvarez Rincón</u>
<u>María José Hernández</u>	<u>Catalina González</u>
<u>Johana Ortega Amado</u>	<u>Lina Mercedes</u>
<u>Angela María Carrillo P.</u>	<u>Sylvia Osorio</u>
<u>Sergio Córdoba Aranzuren</u>	_____
<u>Edgar Ernesto Medellín Rodríguez</u>	_____
<u>María Isabel Riveras Cardona</u>	_____
<u>Andrea del Castillo</u>	_____
<u>Zaira Cármenes Castellano</u>	_____
<u>Andica Galeano</u>	_____
<u>Liam Kristina Juárez</u>	_____

## Appendix 26 – Teaching Philosophy

After being an ESL teacher for 25 years in different contexts, I have come to realize that an ESL instructor is a facilitator of a dialectic process initiated by the student's interest in acquiring concepts and skills, and therefore, it is the student who must play a central role in this dialectics that we call the teaching-learning process.

### Learning

The progression begins upon interest is instilled in students; creative and appealing activities must be offered to them, and a sense of curiosity guides their attention. Learning is the progression of climbing steps on a staircase which has direct ways to “the top” and detours with important information about how to get “there”.

Humans learn through experience and through doing, through understanding the relationship between what is being learned and real life. Particularly in ESL, authentic materials and real world activities are important in this aspect; learners acquire what they understand and what they can actually use. Also, students learn from each other, from their peers' responses, and from their meaning negotiation in real world activities.

### Teaching

As for SLT, the Ten Principles formulated by Ellis (2008) are an excellent guide; I myself am getting used to employing all of them in my classes. Learners must receive plenty of input before using the language, and therefore, I prepare plenty of warm up activities before the students can use what I'm attempting to teach them. Therefore, reading and listening are two ways of introducing learners to new language, strategies for reading and for listening are employed and there is a lot of interaction between the students and myself. Conclusions about the uses of language rise and complete explanation is given.

Once this introductory stage is covered, like in a chained process, we proceed to drill, to practice, and to expand the use of new bits of language into other contexts and situations, through exercises prepared by myself or proposed by their course books. At this stage, students cover a couple of exercises; first, in a silent way, and then in pair work, so that they can share what they have understood and what the correct vocabulary or forms are needed.

The next step is to provide them with previously prepared speech activities in which they negotiate meaning through the use of the bits of language in study. These activities can take the forms of small talks, short presentations, or debates within each pair or group. I do not allow large groups, as the opportunities to speak decrease with large groups. A good number is maximum 4 people. Speech correction takes place here.

As I understand that what has been done in a single class is caught by the learners' short memory, homework is assigned to make them relive the class: workbook exercises and a writing task.

Regular quizzes are given for the learners to recycle learned material, as well as formal tests, and both types of assessment are feedbacked.

### Goals about learners

The practices that have been summarized above represent my goals about the students' learning:

- Students' clear understanding of meaning and form of the English language;
- Their clear understanding of use;
- Their mechanization of new bits of language;
- Provision of interaction opportunities to use it;
- Provision of opportunities to recycle knowledge;
- Opportunities to use the language in real world activities.

### Method

We can conclude then, that the method employed in my classes belongs to Communicative Language Teaching, as it employs communication as the way for understanding and sharing knowledge for one thing, and more importantly, as a vehicle to function in the real world as well. Communication is established through three types of interaction: teacher-students, pair work, and group work. I make use of the English-only policy in class: there are many things about students' personal lives which they wish to communicate to other classmates who follow the same studies; these are real world situations that they must take advantage of in their second language learning. Also, questions to the teacher about opinions about Colombian life or personal things, or even excuses for absences to class must be carried out in English, for the same reason.

As for evaluation, I find different types of assessment exercises, which learners are familiar with, and which attempt at evaluating the four skills and the three systems of the language. Term assessments have: reading and listening comprehension questions, writing and speaking tasks –pair work and teacher-student, grammar and vocabulary focused questions. The assessment aim is to gather the information and practices carried out in class and homework activities; assessment must represent what has been learned but also, what has been done in class.

### Professional growth

Before doing this master's program in English Language Teaching, I usually attend ELT conferences, symposiums, seminars, and workshops organized by my faculty, and am constantly reading in English to perfect my performance in the language.