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División de Ciencias Políticas y Humanidades

**Beliefs About Language Learning of Students Learning
English at the University of Quintana Roo**

TESIS
Para obtener el grado de
LICENCIADA EN LENGUA INGLESA

Presenta
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Abstract

This study examined the Beliefs about Language Learning of 107 students at the University of Quintana Roo taking English at the Self access Center of the institution. Horwitz's Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory was used to collect the data. Results indicate that students hold a variety of beliefs about their language learning experience that help them in their language learning process. However, students also reported to have dysfunctional and unrealistic beliefs that may be distracting students' attention and interfering with their language learning. Any significant differences between the beliefs about language learning among males and females were found.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to my family who always support me and for their love.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my advisor, Dr. María del Rosario Reyes Cruz, for her support, guidance, patience, time, and expertise throughout this process. I am also grateful to the students who participated in this study for their help, for sharing their time to answer the questionnaires and provide information about their language learning beliefs.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Do all students think the same regarding language learning? There are many differences among individuals, everybody sees things differently; as students, each one has his or her idea of how to learn and specifically in the area of language learning all students have different opinions of how to best learn a language. These opinions, ideas or conceptions are very important because they influence the way students behave in specific situations. In the classroom, for example, the perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes that students bring with them to the learning situation have been recognized as a significant contributing factor in the learning process and ultimate success (Richards & Lockhart, 1994, 52). The beliefs students hold can be related to the materials used in class, the best age to learn a language, the activities done in class, and the approaches learners believe to be useful for them to learn. As a consequence, all these conceptions may influence students' performance in the classroom, and affect their academic achievement. From my personal experience as a student, it could be noted that learners acquire ideas from their teachers and they feel motivated or not to attend a specific class based on the ideas they build since the first day of classes. It is important to mention that the teacher has a big responsibility because some learners follow everything that teachers ask them to do; when the final results are positive learners build positive conceptions, but when their results are negative, the ideas they build are negative and sometimes those ideas determine the student's failure or success in future courses.

Research into language learning has shown that beliefs about language learning develop in early elementary and secondary school children (Chin & Brewer, 1993; Paris & Byrnes, 1989, cited in Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005), and mid-to-late adolescence (Cantwell, 1998, Schommer, 1993; cited in Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005), or by the time a student gets to college (Weinstein, 1989; cited in Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005)). It would be very interesting to see what learners of foreign languages think the best way to learn a language is, and what some of the limitations they have as learners to achieve their goals are.

As a student of the English Language Major at the University of Quintana Roo, I thought it would be very interesting to carry out a study to assess student's beliefs about language learning, specifically that of the English language. My interest arose due to the fact that I observed that some students have positive opinions about their language learning experiences, while others, who have failed a course, have negative opinions and ideas about it. I was interested in studying whether their positive or negative ideas are related to the way they expect the language learning process to be. There are not many studies related to factors affecting the foreign language learning process, some of them have been carried out at this University (Marín y Méndez, 2007; Reyes y Murrieta 2005), and to date just a few has been specifically carried out in the field of beliefs about language learning. There are two studies been developed: one is about Students' Beliefs about Learning English and their relation to their Academic Achievement, (Montalvo n.d.), and the other one is about Students' Beliefs about Learning French (Ramirez n.d.). For that reason I decided to undertake

this research study about beliefs about learning English to contribute to the data about this interesting topic.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this survey study was to identify and analyze the different beliefs that language learners at the University of Quintana Roo taking *English I*, hold about their language learning. An additional purpose of this study is to explore whether women and men have different beliefs about their language learning experience.

Research questions

1. What are the most common beliefs students have about foreign language learning?
2. Do men and women have different beliefs about language learning?

Rationale

This study is considered important because it will contribute to existent literature about language learning beliefs. In addition, it will help teachers to be aware of the different beliefs their students may have about language learning. As a consequence teachers would be able to help students who are currently studying English explore

their beliefs about language learning, find out whether these beliefs are true or if they are just misconceptions they have acquired, and offer them opportunities to reflect about them. In addition, the information will help learners to modify their misconceptions over time. Teachers would also help their students build better expectations about language by using a variety of methods and strategies taking into account all students' needs and ideas in order to avoid increasing negative beliefs, and promote positive conceptions to make students develop better in their English courses.

This study would also help to inform learners who have not been successful in their previous courses to realise that they may have got negative beliefs towards language learning which are detrimental to their language learning. With increased awareness, the learners would potentially work to change negative beliefs for positive ones over time, so they can improve their development during their language learning process.

Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be taken into account when interpreting the findings:

1. The study was based on a sample of 110 students at the University of Quintana Roo taking English I. This number of students is not representative of all the students at the University. Therefore the students in this study may not represent all university students.

2. The sample was not selected randomly, for that reason the results cannot be generalized.
3. Questionnaires were the instrument used to collect the data for this research. This kind of instruments is very useful but it limits students' responses to the options they have.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Beliefs about language learning

All learners are different. No two individuals have the same knowledge, or skills, or expectations... Learners are also influenced by their age and by their educational, social and cultural backgrounds (Edge 1993, p.9).

Many scholars in the field of language learning include factors such as age, aptitude, attitude, motivation, personality, cognitive style, and beliefs as part of individual differences among learners that can predict student's success or failure in language learning (Ellis, 1985). Beliefs are considered to influence the processes and outcomes of second/foreign language learning (Kalaja and Barcelos 2006).

The study of beliefs has become of great importance in the area of language learning. In Applied Linguistics, beliefs have been of interest since the mid-eighties and originated from earlier discussion of what characterizes good language learners, including such traits as motivation, aptitude, personality, cognitive styles, learning strategies, (Kalaja & Barcelos, 2006, p. 1). Before we go on to the literature about language learning beliefs it is necessary to define what "beliefs" are.

2.2. Definition of Beliefs

Defining beliefs has become difficult because there are many terms to refer to them according to different theories.

In the different literature about beliefs, learner's beliefs have appeared under different rubrics and categories such as metacognitive knowledge, mental and social representations, self-beliefs, self-concept beliefs, self-efficacy beliefs, control-beliefs, self-regulatory beliefs, locus of control-beliefs, and attributions (Gabillon, 2002, p. 235).

Apart from *beliefs* there are some other terms used to refer to beliefs depending on different theoretical perspectives, such as “folklinguistic theories of learning (Miller & Ginsberg, 1995), learner's philosophy of language learning (Abraham & Vann, 1987), culture of learning (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996), learner representations (Holec, 1987), mini-theories (Hosenfeld, 1978), insights (Omaggio, 1978), representations (Riley, 1989,1994), cultural beliefs (Gardner, 1988), culture of learning languages (Barcelos, 1995), conceptions of learning and beliefs, learner assumptions (Riley, 1980), implicit theories (Clark, 1988), self-constructed representational systems (Rust, 1994), in Bernat and Gvozdenko (2006)”, general assumptions that students hold about themselves as learners about factors influencing language learning and about the nature of language learning and teaching” (Victory & Lockhart, 1995, p.224), metacognitive knowledge (Wenden, 1999), and beliefs, (Horwitz, 1989).

According to Horwitz (1989, p. 62) beliefs about language learning are preconceived ideas or assumptions about the nature of language and the language learning process. In this study Horwitz definition will be used when referring to beliefs about language learning.

2.3. The origin of language Learning Beliefs

The origin of language learning beliefs is viewed differently according to different scholars. Scholars taking social psychological and sociocultural standpoints claim that beliefs are constructed in a social context, so they consider inconsistent to talk about beliefs without referring to the context where they are shaped. On the other hand, scholars with a cognitive point of view consider beliefs as well organized schemas, and claim that the formation of beliefs is an individual autonomous act and that each belief bears the mark of the individual. Their main emphasis is not in the knowledge which is acquired from the environment, but on learner's acquired knowledge which is memorized and stored as the learner's knowledge reservoir (Gabillon, 2002).

Lightbown & Spada (2006, p. 67) state that beliefs about language learning are usually based on student's previous learning experiences and the assumption (right or wrong) that a particular type of instruction is the best way for them to learn.

Studies into language learning beliefs have been done from different theoretical frameworks. The following are the different approaches to the investigation of beliefs described in detail.

2.3. Approaches to the Investigation of Beliefs

Barcelos (2006) has identified three approaches to the study of beliefs, the normative approach, the metacognitive approach, and the contextual approach. In the following paragraphs the main characteristics of each approach are described.

2.3.1 The Normative Approach

Studies within the normative approach see beliefs as indicators of student's future behaviour as autonomous or good learners and defined beliefs as preconceived notions, myths or misconceptions (Horwitz, 1988.)

The studies under the normative approach are characterized by the use of Likert-type questionnaires to investigate learner's beliefs. The collection of the data is done mainly by the use of questionnaires, and data analysis through descriptive statistics. The Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) is the most widely used questionnaire to investigate Beliefs. The BALLI was developed by Horwitz to assess student's opinions on a variety of issues and controversies related to language learning (Horwitz 1988, p. 284).

Most studies within this approach either used the BALLI (Su, 1995; Tumposky, 1991; Yang, 1992) or adapt/modify it Mantle-Bromley, (1995) in Kalaja and Barcelos (2006). Other studies have developed their own questionnaires (Campell, Shaw, Plageman,

& Allen, 1993; Wen & Johnson, 1997; Cotterall, 1995, cited in Kalaja & Barcelos 2006), Horwitz, 1988; Kuntz, 1996, and Mori, 1997.

Other researchers have used other ways of experimenting learner beliefs and have begun to employ other data collection techniques such as descriptions, letters providing advice on language learning (Cotterall 1999), interviews (Sakui & Gaies 1999) to support and validate the questionnaires and to have different descriptions of beliefs that the questionnaire does not allow.

2.3.1.1. Studies within the normative approach

Horwitz (1989) explored the language learning beliefs of a group of 241 university students enrolled in first semester classes of French, German, and Spanish. She used the BALLI that contains 34 items categorized into five factors: (1) the difficulty of foreign learning; (2) foreign language aptitude; (3) the nature of language learning; (4) learning and communication strategies; and (5) motivation and expectations. The kind of preconceived notions that students' reported are that a language can be learned within two years; some people are born with a special ability to learn a foreign language; it is easier for children than for adults to learn a second language; everyone can learn a foreign language; learning a foreign language is a matter of translating from English; students in Horwitz' study reported that they did not have the desire to know the foreign culture and did not believe that learning a foreign language would help them to get a better job. Horwitz (1989) reported that negative

experiences probably reinforce beliefs that especial abilities are necessary to learn a language.

Nikita and Furuoka (2007) carried out a study to investigate the beliefs about language learning of novice and intermediate level students learning Russian at a Malaysian University in order to assess which areas of beliefs were commonly shared by the two groups and which areas contained considerable differences in beliefs. The BALLI (with some modifications to suit the Malaysian context) was used to collect the data. The results obtained reported that the majority of the students surveyed agreed that children are better at language learning than adults, learning a language involves memorizing new vocabulary and grammatical rules and requires different strategies from learning other school subjects; excellent pronunciation is important when learning a language; it is ok to take linguistic risks at guessing unknown words. On the contrary, students disagreed with the beliefs that people who are good at mathematics and science are not good at learning languages; learning a language is about performing translation from one's mother tongue; one should speak only when able to produce error-free language. Significant differences in the beliefs of beginner and intermediate level students concerned language aptitude, the difficulty of learning a language and learning and communication strategies.

Mori (1997) explored the epistemological beliefs and beliefs about language learning of 97 college students learning Japanese at various levels in Midwestern universities using a 132-item questionnaire. She argues that the language learning process is influenced by the beliefs the learner has about the nature of learning and his/ her own

abilities. For example a student who believes that language ability is innate rather than the result of hard work, may easily give up. Other beliefs that may greatly influence the language learning include whether the ability to learn is innate or acquired, whether knowledge is simple rather than complex, whether learning is quick rather than gradual, whether knowledge is certain rather than tentative, and whether teachers have an omniscient authority. Other beliefs focus on the idea that language learning is the same as learning other subjects, that vocabulary is important, that effort in learning is a waste, that memorization is important, that risk taking is important when learning English for communication, that learners cannot learn from mistakes, and that learners learn in a natural way. All these beliefs were studied by Mori, she found that student's beliefs about learning in general and their abilities to learn have differential effects on their learning, thus, positive beliefs could compensate for one's limited ability. In addition her study showed that higher achievers have positive beliefs, and demonstrated that a strong belief in an innate ability is associated with lower achievement.

Altan (2006) explored the Beliefs about Language Learning of Foreign Language-Major University Students. The participants were in the departments of English, German, French, Japanese, and Arabic, and all of them were going to be teachers of the language they were learning. The BALLI was used to collect the data. A minority of English Language students reported to see English as a language difficult to learn. Regarding the amount of time needed to learn a language students responses ranged from under a year to the assertion that a language cannot be learned in one hour a day of study. In addition, this study also showed that a great majority of students

expect to speak the language they are learning in an unrealistic amount of time; that it is easier for children than for adults to learn a foreign language; that people who are good at mathematics and science are not good at learning languages; that women are better at learning languages; that learning another language is a matter of learning new vocabulary and grammatical rules; that learning another language is different from learning other school subjects; that repetition and practice in the language laboratory is important for learning languages; that guessing a word you do not know is important; that errors are difficult to correct if they are allowed to make in the beginning stages; and that speaking with an excellent accent is important.

Diab (2000, 2005) studied the beliefs of 284 Lebanese undergraduate students enrolled in English language courses at the American University of Beirut, the Lebanese American University, and the University of Balamand. The purpose of her study was to describe the beliefs about language learning of Lebanese English as Foreign Language University students, to investigate within group variation in students' beliefs and to compare their beliefs about language learning with those revealed in previous studies of EFL students from other cultures. A modified version of BALLI was used to collect the data along with a background questionnaire. Results reported that Lebanese students believe that some people have a special ability for learning foreign languages, that it is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one, that everyone can learn a foreign language, that Lebanese people are good at learning foreign languages, that English is an easy or very easy language, the French is a difficult language, that learning English is different from learning other academic subjects, that it is best to learn a foreign

language in the country where that language is spoken, that it is acceptable to guess if you do not know a word in English or in French, that they enjoy practicing their English and French with the native speakers they meet, that it is important to speak with an excellent accent. There were also several similarities as well as differences in students' beliefs related variables such as gender, level of proficiency in English, language-medium background, and languages spoken at home that indicate that background variables may be important sources of within group variation in learner beliefs about language learning.

Bernat (2006) explored the beliefs held by 262 English for Academic Purposes (EAP) language learners at an Australian University. The BALLI was used to collect the data that was later compared with an American study of 156 EAP learners (Siebert, 2003). Her findings showed that beliefs about language learning reported by both studies groups were similar in all categories. It was concluded that despite a small number of inter-group differences it was premature to conclude that beliefs about language learning vary by contextual setting. It was reported that beliefs about language learning are due to the effects of individual's complex metacognitive structure (affected by a number of social, cultural, contextual, cognitive, affective and personal factors) that is responsible for the nature and strength of these beliefs.

The following studies report on beliefs about language learning and other variables such as gender differences (Bernat and Lloyd, 2007; Banya and Cheng 1997), teachers' and students' beliefs (Banya and Cheng 1997), motivation (Bernat n.d.), factors that contribute to successful language learning, the role of feedback,

opportunities to practice and knowledge of language learning strategies (Cotterall, 1999), English proficiency (Huang and Tsai 2003), attribution, self-efficacy beliefs and achievement (Hsieh 2004).

Even though this study did not aim at investigating any of these variables, these studies are considered because most of the literature on beliefs relates language learning beliefs with other variables.

Bernat and Lloyd (2007) studied the relationship between beliefs about language learning and gender. The BALLI was used to collect the data. The participants were 155 females and 107 male English as Foreign Language students enrolled in an Academic English Program at an Australian University. Students' beliefs in the area of Foreign Language Aptitude are that it is easier for children than for adults to learn a foreign language, that some people have a special ability for learning foreign languages, and that everyone can learn to speak a foreign language. Students' beliefs concerning the difficulty of language learning include, that some languages are easier to learn than others, that English is a language of medium-difficulty, and that it would take like three to five years to learn a language. Students also reported to hold beliefs related to the nature of language learning such as the belief that it is necessary to learn about English speaking cultures in order to speak English, that it is best to learn English in an English speaking country, that learning English is different from learning other academic subjects, and that the most important part of learning English is learning how to translate from their own language as well as learning new words. Learning and communication strategies' beliefs are that it is important to speak English with an excellent pronunciation, that learners enjoy practicing in

English with the native speakers they meet, that it is ok to guess if they do not know a word in English, and that it is important to repeat and practice a lot. Finally, in the category of motivations and expectations students believe that they will learn English very well, that it is important to learn English in their country, that learning English will help them get better job opportunities, and that they will like to have Australian friends. In almost all the categories there were no significant differences among females' and males' language learning beliefs. The Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test was employed to investigate gender difference. Results indicated that overall males and females held similar beliefs about language aptitude, the difficulty they perceive when learning a language, the nature of language learning, strategies in learning and communication, and their motivations and expectations. Males and females differ significantly in their belief that multilingual are very intelligent, with more females agreeing with that statement. They marginally differ in their enjoyment of practicing English with Australians, with women enjoying it less.

Banya and Cheng (1997) explored the causes and effects of Chinese students' beliefs about foreign language learning; mismatches between teachers' and students' beliefs, and how teachers' and students' beliefs compare across cultures.

Even though this is not the central topic of this research, Banya and Cheng's results were reported because there were some important findings related to students' beliefs about language learning. A questionnaire was used to collect the data. This instrument was divided into four parts: Motivation/Attitude Inventory for English Learning (MAIEL) by Cheng (1995), Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) by Horwitz (1988), Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) by

Oxford (1989, version 7.0), and Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz, and Cope (1989).

Regarding differences between males and females the only significant difference between these groups was in their English Academic Achievement (females tend to have better English achievement than males), and use of more cognitive strategies (such as reasoning deductively, using contrasting analysis, and strengthening grammatical accuracy). It was also found that there is a significant difference between good and poor language learners. They found that good language learners hold more favorable attitudes, higher motivational intensity, positive beliefs, and use more strategies, as well as become less anxious when learning English. That females tend to be best language learners; that high achievers tend to regard English as less difficult, have less anxiety, put more effort trying to learn, and make use of more strategies than low achievers. They remarked that undoubtedly, learners' beliefs about language learning do play an important role in influencing language achievement, and as Horwitz (cited in Huang & Tsai, 2003) indicated if learners have preconceived negative or unrealistic ideas about how a language is to be learnt since the beginning of their language learning process they might be unlikely to learn the language effectively.

Bernat (n.d.) examined the beliefs about language learning of 20 adult Vietnamese ESL learners. The BALLI, which include 34 questions, was used to collect data. Bernat research aimed at identifying learner's beliefs about second language learning for the purpose of informing syllabus design and teacher practice, and to discover if there existed any link between student's motivation for language learning and their

beliefs. Results reported that, despite the respondent's reported lack of language learning aptitude, and the belief in the supremacy of child's second language acquisition, the learners' motivation remained high. It was concluded that external motivators, such as need for employment predominated.

Cotterall (1999) studied the language learner beliefs of a group of students enrolled in an English for Academic Purposes course. The aimed of her study was to examine the beliefs which subjects held about factors that contribute to successful language learning, such as the role of feedback, opportunities to practice and knowledge of language learning strategies, as well as the implications of these findings for encouraging learners to adopt autonomous approaches to their language learning. The instrument used in this study was a 90-item questionnaire divided into four parts and investigated learner beliefs about six key variables (the role of the teacher, the role of feedback, the learner's sense of self-efficacy, important strategies, dimensions of strategies-related behavior, and the nature of language learning. The results of this researcher reported that students see their teachers as helpers for learning effectively, discussing their progress with them, offering them help, creating opportunities for them to practice, explaining the purpose of learning activities, telling them what to do in their learning, identifying their difficulties, and giving them regular tests. Regarding the role of feedback students value their teachers' feedback highly than feedback from themselves or from others. Regarding the learners' confidence in their ability to learn a language, as well as to achieve language goals (sense of self-efficacy), results indicate that the majority of the students believed that they had the ability to learn a language successfully, and to find an effective way to learn. Finally,

concerning the nature of language learning students beliefs are that making mistakes in language learning is normal, that different people learn languages in different ways, that learning a language takes a long time, and that it is necessary to know language rules before you can communicate.

Huang and Tsai (2003) investigated the differences in the beliefs that high-English-proficiency and low-English-proficiency learners held about English learning. Their study revealed five significant discrepancies between high English proficiency and low English proficiency learners. Some factors underlying the beliefs discrepancies appeared: learner's perceptions of the reactions classmates showed toward their performances, the formation of learner's self efficacy, the influence of instructors teaching methods on learner's learning beliefs, the instructions of English communication strategies, and the impact of parent's beliefs on learner's expectations for the target language learning. In addition, they found that high proficiency learners tended to hold relatively positive language learning beliefs than low proficiency learners.

Hsieh (2004) examined the relationship between foreign language learner's attribution, self-efficacy beliefs, general language learning beliefs, and their achievement in foreign language classes. Participants in her study were 500 undergraduate students enrolled in Spanish, German, and French classes. Regarding beliefs about language learning Hsieh found that students beliefs can change over time, that it is acceptable to guess if they do not know a word in the foreign language, that learning a language is mostly a matter of knowing vocabulary, that learning

language is different from learning other school subjects, that it is easier to read and write than to speak and understand, and that if one is allowed to make mistakes in the beginning it will be hard to get rid of them later on. Hsieh also found some differences in the beliefs about language learning that men and women have. In her study she found that men tended to believe that some people are born with a special ability to learn a foreign language, and that people who is good at math and science are usually not good at learning a foreign language more than women. On the other hand, women tended to believe that it is important to practice in the language laboratory, and they attribute their success in language learning to their effort. She argued that these beliefs may have been reinforced because of student's own learning experiences, the teacher messages, or ideas that have stumbled across.

The Normative Approach was the first approach to the investigation of beliefs that originated. All the studies reviewed above were done within the Normative Approach and they were the first studies that explored this area of great interest. This Approach has help to discover many important findings related to beliefs and their relation with other variables; however, there are some weaknesses that need to be taken into consideration when working with this approach. The following are the advantages and limitations of the normative approach.

2.3.1.2. Advantages and limitations of the normative approach

Questionnaires are the most commonly used tool in the investigation of beliefs about language learning in the Normative Approach. Among the advantages that

questionnaires offer are, for instance, that they are less threatening than observation, they are very useful if the research has limited resources and time, questionnaires are easy to tabulate and appropriate for large number of respondents (Gimenez as cited in Barcelos, 2006). In addition, questionnaires are said to afford precision and clarity, allow access to outside contexts and allow data to be collected at different time periods (McDonough & McDonough, 1997). On the other hand, questionnaires also have their limitations. For example they make it difficult to guarantee consistent interpretation by the individuals. Moreover, respondents tend to answer what they think would be appropriate (Gimenez, 1994, cited in Barcelos, 2006). Questionnaires also restrict respondent's choices by framing the answers according to a pre-established set of statements. By not allowing students to use their own words and metaphors questionnaires make it difficult to investigate beliefs in student's or teacher's own terms. In addition, participants may have other beliefs that are not covered by the questionnaire items (Riley, 2006).

The main characteristics of the normative approach had been presented as well as some studies carried out within this approach, its advantages and limitations. In order to complement the information that questionnaires in the normative approach produced, researchers aimed at investigating beliefs using other data collection methods that would help them get a better understanding of students beliefs and in which students would report their beliefs in their own words. This is how that next approach was identified, the metacognitive approach

2.3.2. The Metacognitive Approach

Studies within this approach define beliefs as metacognitive knowledge. According to Wenden (1987, cited in Barcelos, 2006), metacognitive knowledge is defined as the stable, stable although sometimes incorrect knowledge that learners have acquired about language, learning and the language learning process (p. 163). Examples of metacognitive knowledge may be the belief that one is good at listening comprehension; that one has to be intelligent to learn a language; that learning English is more difficult than learning other languages or that memory strategies are more appropriate for learning vocabulary, as Victori mentioned (1992, cited in Victori 2004).

Wenden makes a distinction between beliefs and metacognitive knowledge, she describes beliefs as individual, subjective understandings, idiosyncratic thoughts, which are often value-related and characterized by a commitment not present in knowledge. In addition, she describes knowledge as factual, objective information, and acquired through formal learning.

Data collection within this approach is carried out by verbal accounts gathered through semi-structured interviews and self-reports. Content analysis is used to analyze this data. A few studies may use questionnaires, but none of them have used the BALLI (Barcelos, 2006).

The distinction between the metacognitive approach and the normative approach is the framework that defines beliefs as metacognitive knowledge and their relation with autonomy. Barcelos (2006) states that most of the studies within this approach see metacognitive knowledge as an essential feature in helping students to become autonomous.

2.3.2.1. Studies within the metacognitive approach

Fan (1999) investigated the beliefs and strategies of 529 Hong-Kong students in learning English. Results revealed a consistent relationship between language learning beliefs and strategies as well as other complicated relationships between them. Moreover, language learning beliefs and strategies related to High English Proficiency have been identified. Some of the most important beliefs found in this research were that without hard work no one can learn English successfully; learning English requires painstaking effort; doing a great deal of listening is important to learn English; doing a lot of speaking is important for learning English; and that selecting appropriate learning strategies for learning English is important. Fan suggested that most research needs to be conducted into students of different ages, cognitive backgrounds and interests in the language to understand more the language process.

Riley (2006) investigated the beliefs about language learning of first year university students in Japan. The questionnaire developed by Sakui and Gaies (1999) was used to collect the data. Two student discussion groups were also formed to provide

further data. In addition to describing student beliefs, the study explores differences between student beliefs and teacher beliefs, change in student beliefs during a course of study, and relationships between student beliefs and second language proficiency. The students under study seem to hold a variety of beliefs to varying degrees. Significant differences were found between student responses and teachers responses. The four main areas of difference were related to translation, error correction, the difficulty of language learning, and motivation. In addition, significant differences were found regarding belief change.

Goh and Xue (n.d.) investigated the metacognitive knowledge about language learning among 177 English language learners in two different environments, China and Singapore. To collect the data a 50-item questionnaire based on Flavell's (1979) framework was used. Results obtained showed that despite being in two different environments, both groups held many similar views about language learning. For example, students believed that they had the ability required for learning languages; that mastering a language will guarantee a good future; that students feel timid when speaking English with other people; that they feel embarrassed when making mistakes. Students also reported that learning English in an English speaking country, using English for communication and thinking in English, are effective ways of learning English; that learning English is different from learning other school subjects; students disagreed with the belief that learning grammar is the most important part of learning a foreign language. Both groups agreed that an effective way to learn another language was through using everyday communication. However, most of the China group supported memorization, translation, and pattern drills, in

contrast to the Singapore group that rejected those same strategies most probably as a result of their new learning environment.

As it could be noted, there are not many research studies within the metacognitive approach. Even though this approach is more complete and uses data collection methods that help to get more information from students' experiences, it also has its limitations.

2.3.2.2. Advantages and limitations of the metacognitive approach

The advantages of this approach described by Barcelos are that the use of interviews gives learners the opportunity to elaborate and reflect on their experience. Block (1997) states that interviews allow students to define and evaluate the learning process in their own terms. Another advantage of the metacognitive approach is that the studies add a great deal of information about learner's metacognitive knowledge as related to self-oriented learning.

One limitation of the metacognitive approach is that with this method results do not infer beliefs from actions but only from intentions and statements. In addition, although beliefs are connected to experience, the context and its influence on students' beliefs are not considered.

More recently, some other studies have been carried out from different perspectives. The last approach to the investigation of beliefs is more heterogeneous. Its objective

is to get a better understanding of beliefs in specific contexts. This approach has been known as the Contextual approach.

2.3.3. The Contextual Approach

This approach includes studies that have defined beliefs according to various theoretical frameworks; they have collected a variety of types of data, and used diverse data analysis. The main objective of this approach is to get a better understanding of beliefs in specific contexts by combining different methods to interpret student's beliefs in their contexts.

Beliefs are investigated by using a variety of methods that include using ethnographic classroom observations (Allen, 1996; Barcelos, 1995, 2000), diaries and narratives (Miller & Ginsberg, 1995), metaphor analysis (Ellis, 1999, 2001), and discourse analysis (Riley, 1994, Grigoletto, 2000; Kajala, 1995).

According to this approach beliefs are characterized as contextual, dynamic, and social. Within this approach, participant's perspectives and the ways they organize their perceptions of events are essential.

2.3.3.1. Studies within the Contextual Approach

Barcelos (2000) investigated the relationship between teachers' and students' language learning beliefs specifically of American ESL teachers and their Brazilian

students in an international language institute in the US. Her study analyses how teachers' beliefs may influence students' beliefs as well as how students' beliefs and actions may influence the teachers' actions and beliefs. Some of the teachers' beliefs she found in her study were completely different from students' beliefs. Barcelos states that teachers' beliefs, comments and advice affect students' actions and beliefs. Even though teachers' beliefs is not a variable under this study the research done by Barcelos is included here because there are important findings related to students' beliefs reported on this study.

Some important findings in Barcelos' research have to do with the belief that it is best to learn a foreign language in the foreign country. A student reported that learning English in the target country speeds up the process of learning the language, and provides daily life expressions that are not found in books. He stated that the immersion experience is very important, more than the study of English itself. Also beliefs about error correction were found in this research. Contrary to teacher's beliefs, students expect to be corrected every time they made a mistake because they think that if their mistakes are not corrected, they will keep saying them until they memorize the mistake. Other beliefs found in this research are that repetition is important to learn a language, it is important to practice English with other people, students need to be exposed to the language they want to learn, do homework and avoid the use of the dictionary, listen to music because it is a good way to learn English, learning a language is not a difficult task and everybody has the ability to learn it.

The results of Barcelos' research suggest a relationship of mismatch, similarity, and neutrality between different teachers and students. Barcelos suggests that teachers

need to work with students' different expectations. She argues that it may be necessary to "bargain" with students sometimes doing more of what they expect in the beginning in a gradual process that will guide them and expose them to alternative practices in an interactive process where both learn from each other. He suggests that teachers should reflect about their beliefs and compare them to their students' beliefs.

Alanen (2003) investigated a group of young language learners' beliefs from a sociocultural perspective. The aim of her study was firstly to explicate the theoretical underpinning of sociocultural approaches for the study of language learner beliefs. Secondly, she aimed to understand the interaction between the interview and young language learners whereby the learners appeared to appropriate new ways of speaking about the language learning. In addition, her study also aimed at revealing the nature of belief construction and its context-specificity. In her study she used semi-structures interviews to collect the data. Through the interviews she observed how a group of young learners' internalize or appropriate the utterances of others as they interacted, and concluded that beliefs appeared to be socially co-constructed.

2.3.3.2. Advantages and limitations

The advantages of this approach are that it offers a broader definition of beliefs as dynamic and social, a different methodology to investigate beliefs is proposed, and presents a much more positive view of the learner than the normative and the metacognitive approaches because it takes students own perspectives and contexts into account. Some of the limitations of this approach are that some studies still fail to

investigate the evolution of learner's beliefs and interaction between beliefs and actions, and because it looks at beliefs in depth this approach is more appropriate with small samples only, and is more time-consuming.

2.3.3.3. Summary of the three approaches

The next table contrasts the features, advantages, and disadvantages of the three approaches to the investigation of beliefs about language learning.

Table 1. Approaches to the Investigation of Beliefs

	Normative	Metacognitive	Contextual
Definition of Language Learning Beliefs	Beliefs are defined as synonyms for preconceived notions, myths, or misconceptions.	Beliefs are described as metacognitive knowledge, stable, fallible knowledge that learners have about language learning.	Beliefs are part of the culture of learning and representations of language learning in a given society.
Methodology and Data collection /Data analysis	Likert-type questionnaires. Descriptive statistics.	Semi-structured interviews and self reports. Content statistics	Ethnographic classroom observations, interviews, diaries, case studies, life stories, and metaphor analysis. Interpretative analysis.
Beliefs and actions	Beliefs are seen as good indicators of future students' behaviours as autonomous or good language learners.	Beliefs are seen as good indicators of learners' autonomy and effectiveness in language learning, although it is admitted the influence of other factors such as purpose.	Beliefs are seen as context-specific, i.e., students' beliefs are investigated within the context of their actions.
Advantages	Allows investigating beliefs with large samples, at different time slots, and at outside contexts.	Students use their own words, elaborate, and reflect upon their language learning experiences.	Beliefs are investigated taking into account students' own words and the context of students' actions.
Disadvantages	Restricts respondents' choices with a set of statements predetermined by the researcher. Students may	Beliefs are inferred only from students' statements.	More suitable with small samples only. It is time-consuming.

Research studies within every approach

have different interpretations about those statements.

Horwitz 1989, Mori 1997, Fan (1999), Riley (2006), Barcelos 2000, and Banya an Cheng 1997, Goh and Xue (n.d.) Alanen (2003) Cotterall 1999, Diab 2000 and 2005, Huang and Tsai 2003, Hsieh 2004, Altan 2006, Bernat 2006, Nikita and Furuoka 2007, Bernat n/d, Bernat and Lloyd 2007.

The above mentioned studies correspond to the three approaches identified to the investigation of beliefs: the normative approach, the metacognitive approach, and the contextual approach. Although the three approaches help to get a better idea of students' beliefs, none of the studies carried out within any of the approaches are without limitations.

On the one hand, quantitative research studies in the normative approach provide clarity and precision through the use of well-designed questionnaires, like the BALLI, and descriptive statistics. Qualitative research studies can include a large number of respondents and afford them anonymity, are suitable if the researcher has limited resources and time, allow access to outside contexts and allow data to be collected at different time periods. Quantitative research studies also have limitations. The beliefs inferred in studies within the normative approach are only those identified by the researcher. However, students may hold many other beliefs about language learning that may not be considered. In addition, respondents may confuse or misunderstand some items in the questionnaire and produce different interpretations to those statements. That would produce a different result from the one expected by the researcher.

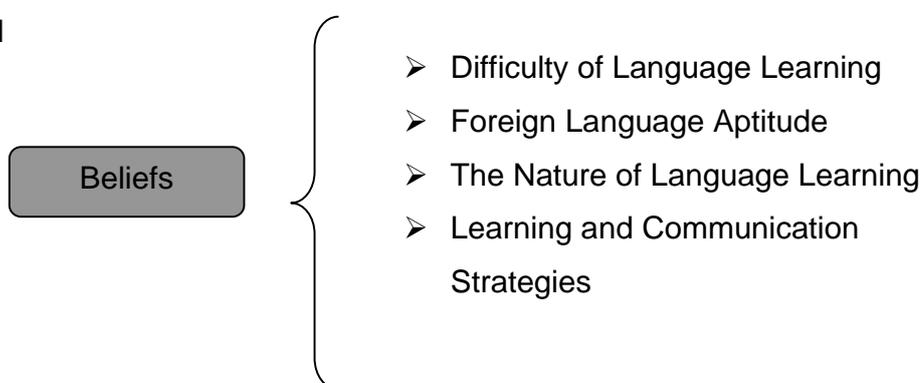
On the other hand, qualitative research studies such as the ones within the metacognitive approach and the contextual approach are small scale studies. The data collection methods used in this type of research include the use of semi-structured interviews and self reports, in the case of the metacognitive approach, and ethnographic classroom observations, interviews, diaries, case studies, life stories; and metaphor analysis, in the case of the contextual approach, that provide descriptive and interpretative analysis which help to get deeper and more complete information of students beliefs. The beliefs inferred in studies within the metacognitive approach and the contextual approach are students' own interpretations, reflections and experiences in their language learning processes. As with studies within the normative approach, studies within the metacognitive approach and the contextual approach also have their limitations. Beliefs in such studies are inferred only from students' statements, studies are more suitable with small samples only, and are more time consuming. In addition, the selectivity of the data and context specificity make researchers to broaden their samples to SLA contexts. As a consequence, the methodology selected in language learner beliefs studies will depend on the investigators' purpose and questions of enquiry, as well as the adopted view of the nature and function on learner beliefs as Bernat and Gvozdenko (2005) concluded. Since this study is based on Horwitz research on beliefs about language learning, the normative approach would be addressed.

Theoretical perspective

The theoretical framework of this research is based on the normative approach addressed by Horwitz (1989) in her study about language learning beliefs of foreign language university students. Horwitz findings provide a clear understanding of language learner's beliefs and their attitudes towards the learning language experience. In the review of the literature it could be observed that the majority of the different studies carried out within the normative approach used the BALLI an instrument develop by Horwitz to assess student's beliefs.

Horwitz research was done within the normative approach, as mentioned before, beliefs within this approach are defined as synonyms for preconceived notions, myths, or misconceptions, and are seen as good indicators of future students' behaviours as autonomous or good language learners. The methodology used to the investigation of beliefs is done by the use of Likert-type questionnaires. Many researchers have used this type of questionnaires to assess learner's beliefs about language learning. The most popular instrument was created by Horwitz (1985, 1987, cited in Bernat & Gvozdenko 2005, p. 4). Horwitz developed the BALLI, (Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory), to assess students opinions on a variety of issues and controversies related to language learning. The BALLI is divided into five main categories related specifically to the difficulty of language learning, foreign language aptitude, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies, and motivation and expectations (Horwitz, 1989).

The Horwitz Model



The BALLI does not have wrong or right answers, rather this instrument addresses the extent of such a belief among students and its consequences for language learning and teaching. Horwitz main objective for the BALLI was to get information to describe beliefs and discuss the influences of them on learner's expectations and interests.

Horwitz findings were that students had preconceived opinions about the time needed to learn a foreign language. Most of the students agreed that a maximum of two years was sufficient to learn the other language, but in reality teachers consider this to be a significant underestimate. Horwitz findings also reported important information regarding the beliefs students have about their aptitude towards language learning. As Horwitz (1998) reported students had a strong idea that some people are born with a special ability to learn a language. Students also reported that they strongly believe that it is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language. On the other hand, most of the students surveyed believed that everyone can learn a foreign language. Students with these positive beliefs also accepted that there might be better language learners than them, but that they could adequate to the task. Among the most important findings were that students reported to conceive the learning of vocabulary and mastering of the grammatical rules as really important when learning a language. With these findings Horwitz stated that it is very important for teachers to

help their students avoid reinforcing negatives beliefs about their language leaning process because it limits the student's potential for achievement (Horwitz 1998).

This instrument has been used in some other research studies that work within the field of beliefs about language learning (Horwitz, 1987, 1988; Su, 1995; Tumposky, 1991; Yang, 199; cited in Kalaja and Barcelos, 2006, 11), some other researchers had adapted it or modified it (Mantle-Bromley, 1995, cited in Kalaja and Barcelos, 2006, 11) according to the necessities of their studies.

In this chapter the different theoretical perspectives to the investigations of beliefs have been reviewed taking into account their advantages and limitations. The Normative Approach has been selected to develop this research study taking into account Horwitz's results.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

This research was done within a quantitative approach, specifically; this is a descriptive survey research. According to Mujis (2004), “survey research designs are quite flexible and can therefore appear in a variety of forms, but all of them are characterized by the collection of data using standard questionnaires.” In this research data was collected using pencil-and –paper questionnaires.

3.1. Participants and setting

The BALLI was administered to beginning English language students taking English 1 at the University of Quintana Roo. The total students surveyed were 107, and all of them were taking English at this university. The participants ranged from seventeen to fifty years of age. There were 48 males and 59 females. The majority of the students was from the first semester and had been taking English from less than a year. In addition most of the students reported that they had never been in an English speaking country.

3.2. Instrument

The BALLI was employed in this study to asses beliefs about learning a foreign language.

The questionnaire consists of 34 questions in a Likert-scale ranging from answers indicating “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”, and it is classified into five general categories that are the following: *“the difficulty of language learning,” “foreign language aptitude,” “the nature of language learning,” “learning and communication strategies,” and “motivation and expectations.”* To help get a more reliable and complete instrument there were added some important questions to the existent version of the BALLI. These questions were suggested by expert teachers in the area of Language Learning Beliefs and Language Education.

Table 2. Factor 1

The Difficulty of Language Learning

3. Algunos idiomas son más fáciles de aprender que el idioma inglés.

5. Creo que aprenderé inglés muy bien.

22. Es más fácil hablar inglés que entenderlo.

26. Es más fácil leer o escribir inglés que hablarlo o entenderlo.

41. El idioma inglés es:

1) muy difícil 2) difícil 3) ni muy fácil ni muy difícil 4) fácil 5) muy fácil

42. Si alguien dedica una hora al día al estudio del idioma inglés ¿Cuánto tiempo crees que tardará en aprenderlo bien?

1) menos de un año 2) 1-2 años 3) 3-5 años 4) 5-10 años 5) No se puede aprender inglés estudiando solo por una hora al día

Table 3. Factor 2

Foreign Language Aptitude

1. A los niños les resulta más fácil aprender inglés que a los adultos.
2. Algunas personas tienen una capacidad especial para aprender inglés.
9. Para alguien que ya domina una lengua extranjera es más fácil aprender inglés.
13. Creo que soy capaz de aprender el idioma inglés.
20. Las mujeres tienen mejor capacidad para aprender inglés que los hombres.
27. Las personas que son buenas en matemáticas o ciencias no son buenas para el inglés.
30. Las personas que dominan más de un idioma son muy inteligentes.
31. Los americanos son buenos para aprender idiomas.
32. Todas las personas tienen la capacidad de aprender inglés.

Table 4. Factor 3

The Nature of Language Learning

7. Para aprender inglés hay que conocer la cultura de los países angloparlantes.
10. Lo mejor es aprender inglés en un país angloparlante.
14. Lo más importante al aprender el idioma inglés es saber mucho vocabulario.
18. Lo más importante al aprender inglés es aprender la gramática.
23. No es lo mismo aprender inglés que aprender otras materias.
24. Lo más importante para aprender inglés es aprender a traducir.

Table 5. Factor 4

<i>Learning and communication Strategies</i>
<i>Learning strategies</i>
15. Es muy importante repetir y practicar mucho para aprender inglés.
19. Para aprender inglés es muy importante practicar en el laboratorio de inglés.
<i>Communication Strategies</i>
6. Es importante hablar inglés con una pronunciación excelente.
8. No se debería decir nada en inglés hasta que se pueda decir bien.
11. A mí me gusta practicar mi inglés con angloparlantes.
12. Si no se sabe una palabra en inglés es válido intentar adivinarla.
16. Soy un poco tímido(a) al hablar con otras personas en inglés.
17. Si mis maestros no corrigen mis errores desde el principio después me será difícil eliminarlos.

Table 6. Factor 5

Motivation and Expectations
21. Si aprendo inglés muy bien tendré muchas oportunidades par usarlo.
25. Si aprendo inglés tendré más oportunidades de encontrar un mejor trabajo.
28. En mi país la gente piensa que es muy importante saber inglés.
29. Me gustaría aprender inglés para poder conocer mejor a personas angloparlantes.

Table 7. Questions added to the BALLI.

Questions added to the BALLI

33. Puedo mejorar mi desempeño en inglés si hago ejercicios extras y consulto otras fuentes aparte del profesor y mi libro.
34. Si me esfuerzo mucho en aprender inglés con el tiempo mejoraré mi habilidad.
35. Desarrollar buenas habilidades en inglés implica tiempo.
36. Los maestros son los únicos que pueden resolver mis dudas sobre el idioma.
37. Memorizar listas de palabras es bueno para mejorar el vocabulario.
38. Es importante dominar bien la gramática antes de empezar a hablar bien en inglés.
39. No importa que cometa errores, debo atreverme a hablar en inglés.
40. Si en la primera semana no entendí nada en mi curso quiere decir que nunca aprenderé inglés.

The BALLI was developed by Horwitz (1989) to assess students' beliefs about language learning. The reliability of the BALLI has been tested on previous studies (Yang, 1992; Truitt, 1995; Kuntz, 1998, Hsieh, 2004), which reported similar Cronbach's alpha coefficients on the BALLI, ranging from .61 to .69.

Based on research findings carried out by Nikitina and Furuoka (2006), the BALLI can be considered to be a suitable tool for conducting research on language learning beliefs. They mentioned that despite the fact that this instrument was generated by language teachers, many of the inquiries that adopted Horwitz's instrument reflected student's perspective on language learning, and offer useful insights for language teaching pedagogy.

3.3. Procedure

It is important to mention that it was decided to adapt the original translation of the BALLI, from English into Spanish, because the existing version had some inadequacies in the translation. A version on Spanish of the BALLI was necessary to suit Mexican students' context, so that there were no difficulties and language interference at the time the students were answering the questions. Before the instrument was administered to the students, it was checked by two teachers fluent in Spanish who made suggestions to improve the quality of the items.

The final version of the questionnaire was piloted at the University of the Quintana Roo with a group of thirty students of the Self Access Center to test its usefulness and to validate it. In the pilot study the Cronbach alpha coefficient obtained was 0.8. After the implementation of the instrument to the participants of this research, the data were processed in the computer for the statistical analysis. The reliability value of the questionnaire was of 0.84.

3.4. Data Analysis

All the data of the study were processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 12.0. Data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics, mainly frequencies and percentages. In addition, a cross tabulation analysis was done to explore any gender difference.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to identify the beliefs about foreign language learning that students at the University of Quintana Roo have, and whether men and women have different beliefs about language learning. In this chapter data is presented and analyzed using tables and descriptive analysis in the order in which the hypothesis were presented starting by the demographic data.

4.1. Demographic data

The BALLI was administered to 107 students learning English I at the University of Quintana Roo. From these 44.9% were males and 55.1% were females. 75.7% were students from the first semester. Subjects ranged from eighteen to fifty years of age with a medium age of eighteen. 94.4% of the students' speak Spanish as their native language, and 5.6% speak Maya and Spanish as a native language. 45.8% of the subjects had been studying English from less than a year. 6.5% is also studying French, 4.7% are studying Italian, and 10.3% are studying Maya. From all the 107 participants in this study very few students (8.4%) have been in an English speaking country less than a year.

4.2. Students' beliefs about foreign language learning at UQRoo

The results obtained from the BALLI are presented taking into account the five factors in which the questionnaire is divided, as well as the questions that were added to the original questionnaire.

4.2.1. The Difficulty of Language Learning

BALLI items 3, 5, 22, 26, 41 and 42 concern the general difficulty of learning a foreign language. Items 41 and 42 assess the relative difficulty of different language skills, and item 5 surveys student expectations for success. Student's responses to this category are shown in table 1.

TABLE 8. The Difficulty of Language Learning

The Difficulty of Language Learning	<i>Completely disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Completely agree</i>
3. Some languages are easier to learn than the English Language.	10.3	17.8	31.8	24.3	15
5. I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak English very well.	7.5	4.7	25.2	34.6	28
22. It is easier to speak English than to understand it.	9.3	29	38.3	16.8	6.5
26. It is easier to read and write in English than to speak it and understand it.	8.4	15.9	37.4	21.5	16.8
	A very difficult language	A difficult Language	A Lang. of Medium Difficulty	An easy Language	A very easy language
41. The English language is:	3.7	22.4	65.4	7.5	.9
	Less than a year	1-2 years	3-5 years	5-10 years	Not possible
42. If someone spends one hour a day learning a language, how long would it take him/her to become fluent? :	18.7	42.1	28	1.9	9.3

As it could be observed in table 8, most of the students surveyed (31.8%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the belief that some languages are easier to learn than the English language. Many students agreed (24.3%), and few students (15 %) strongly agreed. However, some students (17.8%) disagreed, and very few (10.3%) strongly disagreed with this statement. Also most of the students (34.6% agreed and 28% strongly agreed) believed to learn English very well at the end of the course, and many of them (25.2%) neither agreed nor disagreed with this belief.

Most of the students (38.3%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the belief that it is easier to speak English than to understand it, some students (29%) disagreed, and few students (16.8%) agreed. Most of the students (37.4%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the belief it is easier to read and write in English than to speak it and understand it, some students (21.5%) agreed with this statement and some other students (16.8%) strongly agreed.

Most of the students (65%) reported to believe that English is a language of medium difficulty and few students (7.5%) believed that English is an easy language; however, some students (22.4%) reported that English is a difficult language. Regarding the time needed to learn a language, most of the students (42.1%) believed that one to two years were necessary to learn English; many students (28%) believed that three to five years were necessary, and some students (18.7%) believed that less than a year was necessary to learn a language. There were also few students (9.3%) that believed that it was impossible to learn a language under the time described.

4.2.2. Foreign Language Aptitude

BALLI items 1, 2, 9, 13, 20, 27, 30, 31, and 32 concerns the general existence of specialized abilities for language learning and beliefs about the characteristics of successful and unsuccessful language learners. These items address the issue of individual potential for achievement in language learning. Responses to these items are shown in table 2.

TABLE 9. Foreign Language Aptitude

Foreign Language Aptitude	<i>Completely disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Completely agree</i>
1. It is easier for children than for adults to learn English.	6.5	1.9	13.1	17.8	60.7
2. Some people are born with a special ability that helps them learn English.	10.3	9.3	25.2	29.9	25.2
9. It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn English.	6.5	8.4	18.7	35.5	30.8
13. I have foreign language aptitude.	6.5	.9	9.3	36.4	45.8
20. Women are better than men at learning English.	35.5	22.4	32.7	4.7	4.7
27. People who are good at math and science are not good at learning English.	36.4	21.5	32.7	2.8	6.5
30. People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.	15.9	26.2	24.3	19.6	14.0
31. Americans are good at learning foreign languages.	17.8	13.1	44.9	17.8	6.5
32. Everyone can learn to speak English.	2.8	2.8	7.5	23.4	63.6

Almost the majority of the students (17.8% agreed and 60.7% completely agreed) agreed with the statement “It is easier for children than adults to learn English.” Only few students (13.1%) neither agreed nor disagreed with this belief.

Most than half the students (29.9% agreed and 25.2% strongly agreed) believed that some people are born with a special ability that helps them learn English, and some students (25.2%) neither agreed nor disagreed. Most of the students (35.5% agreed and 30.8% strongly agreed) believe that it is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn English, and some students (18.7%) neither agreed nor disagreed.

The majority of the students (36.4% agreed and 45.8% completely agreed) believe that they possess the ability to learn English. Most of the students (35.5% completely disagreed and 22.4% disagreed) disagreed with the belief that women are better at language learning than men, and some students (32.7%) neither agreed nor disagreed with this belief. Most of the students (15.9% completely disagreed and 26.2% disagreed) disagreed that only very intelligent people are good at language learning, many students (19.6% agreed and 14% strongly agreed) agreed with this belief and some students (24.3%) were neutral. Almost half the students (44.9%) were neutral about the belief that states that only Americans are good at language learning, some students (17.8% completely disagreed and 13.1% disagreed) disagreed with this belief, and some other students agreed (17.8% agreed and 6.5% strongly agreed). The majority of the students (23.4% agreed and 63.6% strongly agreed) believe that everyone can learn to speak English.

4.2.3. The Nature of Language Learning

BALLI items 4, 7, 10, 14, 18, 23, and 24 are related to the nature of the language learning process. Item 7 and item 10 concern the importance of cultural contact and language immersion in language achievement. Item 23 shows if learners see learning English as different form other types of learning. Items 14, 18 and 24 assess the learner's perception of the focus of the language learning task. Finally item 4 addresses the students' perceptions of structural differences between English and Spanish. Responses to these items are shown in table 3.

TABLE 10. The Nature of Language Learning

The Nature of Language Learning	<i>Completely disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Completely agree</i>
7. It is necessary to learn the foreign culture in order to learn the foreign language.	15.0	27.1	43.9	12.1	1.9
10. It is better to learn the foreign language in the foreign country.	8.4	13.1	40.2	22.4	15.9
14. Learning English is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary words.	4.7	4.7	17.8	41.1	31.8
18. Learning English is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules.	2.8	8.4	24.3	35.5	29.0
23. Learning English is different from learning other school subjects.	8.4	9.3	25.2	34.6	22.4
24. Learning English is mostly a matter of translating into Spanish.	9.3	16.8	35.5	21.5	15.9

Most of the students (43.9%) were neutral about the idea that it is necessary to learn the foreign culture in order to learn the foreign language, many students (27.1% disagreed and 15% completely disagreed) disagreed with this belief, and few

students (12.1%) agreed. Some students (40.2%) were neutral, and some other students (22.4% agreed and 15.9% completely agreed) agreed with the belief that it is better to learn the foreign language in the foreign country. Most of the students (41.1% agreed and 31.8% completely agreed) believed that learning English is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary words.

Most of the students (35.5% agreed and 29% completely agreed) believed that learning a language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules. Some students were neutral (24.3%) about this belief. Most students believed (34.6% agreed and 22.4% completely agreed) that learning English is different from learning other school subjects and (25.2%) some students were neutral.

Finally, most students (21.5% agreed and 15.9% completely agree) believed that learning English is mostly a matter of translating into Spanish, some other students (35.5%) were neutral.

4.2.4. Learning and Communication Strategies

BALLI items 6, 8, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, and 19 address learning and communication strategies. Items 15 and 19 refer to learning strategies, and items 6, 8, 11, 12, 16, and 17 concern communication strategies. Responses to these items are shown in table 4.

TABLE 11. Learning and Communication Strategies

Learning and communication Strategies	<i>Completely disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Completely agree</i>
Learning strategies					
15. It is important to repeat and practice a lot in order to learn English.	6.5	0	2.8	26.2	64.5
19. It is important to practice in the language laboratory in order to learn English.	2.8	14.0	27.1	29.0	27.1
Communication Strategies					
6. It is important to speak English with an excellent pronunciation.	3.7	2.8	10.3	29.9	52.3
8. You shouldn't say anything in English until you can say it correctly.	37.4	36.4	13.1	6.5	6.5
11. I like to practice English with native speakers.	6.5	15.0	48.6	22.4	7.5
12. It is ok to guess if you don't know a word in English.	21.5	34.6	23.4	14.0	6.5
16. I feel self-conscious speaking English in front of other people.	6.5	17.8	25.2	29.9	20.6
17. If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning it will be hard to get rid of them later on.	8.4	6.5	7.5	35.5	42.1

The great majority of the students believe (26.2% agreed and 64.5% completely agreed) that it is important to repeat and practice a lot in order to learn English. Most of the students (29% agreed and 27.1% completely agreed) believe that it is important to practice in the language laboratory in order to learn English. Some other students (27.1%) were neutral.

Also the great majority of the students believe (29.9% agreed and 52.3% completely agreed) that it is important to speak English with an excellent vocabulary. Most of the students (36.4% disagreed and 37.4% completely disagreed) disagreed with the belief that you shouldn't say anything in English until you can say it correctly. Few students (13.1%) were neutral. Students were neutral when asked if they like to practice in English with native speakers (48.6%), and some students (22.4%) agreed with this belief. Many students (21.5% disagreed and 34.6% completely disagreed) disagreed with the idea of guessing words that they do not know. Some other students (23.4%) were neutral.

Many students (29.9% agreed and 20.6% completely agreed) agreed to feel self-conscious speaking in front of other people. Some students were neutral (25.2%), and few students completely disagreed (17.8%). The majority of the students believe (35.5% agreed and 42.1% completely agreed) that if they are allowed to make mistakes since the beginning, it will be hard to get rid of them later on.

4.2.5. Motivation and Expectations

BALLI items 21, 25, 28, and 29 concern desires and opportunities the students associate with the learning of the English language. Responses to these items are shown in table 5.

TABLE 12. Motivation and Expectations

Motivation and expectations	<i>Completely disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Completely agree</i>
21. If I get to speak English very well I will have many opportunities to use it.	4.7	1.9	6.5	32.7	54.2
25. If I learn English very well, it will help me get a better job.	4.7	2.8	9.3	23.4	59.8
28. Mexicans think that it is very important to speak English.	3.7	3.7	16.8	37.4	38.3
29. I would like to learn English so I can get to know its speakers better.	5.6	4.7	21.5	37.4	30.8

The majority of the students (32.7% agreed and 54.2% completely agreed) believe that if they get to speak English very well they will have many opportunities to use it. Also the majority of the students (23.4% agreed and 59.8% completely agreed) believe that learning English will help them get better job opportunities. Most of the students (37.4% agreed and 38.3% completely agreed) agreed that Mexicans think that it is very important to speak English. Some students were neutral (16.8%). Finally most of the students (37.4% agreed and 30.8% completely agreed) that they would like to learn English in order to know its speakers better. Some students were neutral (21.5%).

The following are the results obtained from the questions that were added to the BALLI.

Table 13. Questions added to the BALLI

Questions added to the BALLI	<i>Completely disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Agreed</i>	<i>Completely agreed</i>
33. I can improve my English if I do extra exercises and consult other references than the teacher and my book.	4.7	3.7	4.7	27.1	59.8
34. If I study very hard I can develop my English skills.	3.7	1.9	4.7	33.6	56.1
35. Developing good skills in English takes time.	3.7	.9	14	46.7	34.6
36. Teachers are the only ones who can solve my doubts about the English language.	12.1	30.8	24.3	21.5	11.2
37. Memorizing lists of words is good to increase your English vocabulary.	2.8	8.4	24.3	35.5	29
38. It is important to know about grammar rules before you start speaking English.	4.7	18.7	29	26.2	21.5
39. I should try to speak in English even though I made mistakes.	3.7	2.8	10.3	34.6	48.6
40. If I don't understand anything in the first week of my English course it means I will never learn English.	50.5	30.8	12.1	3.7	2.8

The great majority of the students surveyed (27.1% agreed and 59.8% completely agreed) believed that doing extra exercises and consulting other references than their books and their teacher can help them Improve their English. Also the great majority

of the students (33.6% agreed and 56.1% completely agreed) believe that if they study very hard they can improve their English skills. Students were also positive regarding the belief that developing good English skills takes time (46.7% agreed and 34.6% completely agreed). Most of the students disagreed with the belief that teachers are the only ones who can solve their doubts about the English language (12.1 completely disagreed and 30.8 disagreed), some students were neutral (24.3%) and some other students agreed (21.5%). Most of the students (35.5% agreed and 29% completely agreed), about the belief that memorizing lists of words will help them increase their vocabulary, some other students were neutral (24.3%). In relation to the study of grammar many students reported that it is important to know about grammar rules before students start speaking in English (26.2% agreed and 21.5% completely agreed), some students were neutral (29%), and some other students disagreed (18.7%). The great majority of students (34.6% agreed and 48.6% completely agreed) believe that they should try to speak in English even though they made mistakes. Finally the majority of the students (50.5% completely disagreed and 30.8% disagreed) disagreed with the idea that if they do not understand anything in the first week of their English course, it means they will never learn English.

4.3. Differences among the beliefs hold by males and females

To answer the second research question of this research, a cross-tabulation analysis was done. Some differences among the expected values and the values obtained were found, however, any significant difference was found. In conclusion, any gender difference was found in this research study.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the discussion and conclusions of the present study. This chapter also offers information about other findings in the study and some recommendations for future research studies.

5.1. Discussion

Concerning the beliefs about the difficulty of English, it could be noted that students believe English as a language of medium difficulty, for that reason students reported that they could learn the language in one to two years. Students were also positive regarding their ultimate success for learning the language. These are positive beliefs because if students are convinced that English is not really difficult, they could face the language learning experience with more ease and more confident that they will achieve the learning experience. On the other hand, if students perceive English as a difficult language, it would be more difficult for them to attend their courses and to be convinced that they can learn the language very well.

Regarding the foreign language aptitude, most of the students reported that it is easier for children than for adults to learn English. Contrasting this belief with the previous one, it could be observed that even though students believe that English is a language of medium difficulty, they also believe that children have more possibilities to learn the language than they do. Since these students are young adults, this belief

can, in some way, interfere with their language learning because they could think that as they are not in the age of privilege they could not learn English.

More than half students believed that some people are born with a special ability that helps them learn English, but also the majority of them believe to have foreign language aptitude, and the belief that everyone can learn to speak English reinforces their confidence in their positive abilities as language learners. Students rejected the idea that women are better than men at learning English, that people who speak more than one language are very intelligent and that people who are good at mathematics and science are not good at learning English. In general, most of the students in this study have functional beliefs regarding their foreign language aptitude. As mentioned before, having positive beliefs will help students to approach their learning experience with more confidence, and as a consequence their learning would be enjoyable (Cotterall 1999).

Concerning the nature of language learning, almost half the students neither agree nor disagree with the belief that it is necessary to learn the foreign culture in order to learn the foreign language. It is surprisingly that students do not show interest in learning the culture of the language they are learning because it is well known that culture is part of the language itself. Students are not aware that the language they are learning is nothing if they do not pay attention to culture. Maybe they are not being exposed, or are not being informed of important cultural facts that will help them understand and learn the language that is being used in the foreign country. Similar to results reported on Horwitz (1989) study, many students believe that learning English

is mostly a matter of learning new vocabulary words, learning a lot of grammar rules and translating from English into Spanish. These dysfunctional beliefs may make learners invest most of their time trying to memorize long lists of words, that they will end to forget, or trying to learn, as much as they can, the grammatical rules of the English language.

In addition, many students in this study believe that learning a language is mostly a matter of translating from one language to the other. This belief may make students get frustrated when trying to translate and not being able to do so. Students have a different conception of the translation process, for that reason it is necessary that students be informed that they are not learning English to translate but to communicate. Moreover, if learners believe that translating from one language into another is the most important task at learning English, they could get frustrated when unable to complete the part of language they cannot translate and will think that they are not able to learn English. As a consequence, students may reinforce the belief that learning a lot of vocabulary is the most important part of learning English, because when translating the most common problems are faced by lack of vocabulary (meaning).

Similar to results obtained by Altan (2006), students in this study supported beliefs such as the importance of repetition and practice in the language laboratory in language learning and the importance of speaking with an excellent pronunciation. These beliefs may influence the way students behave in the English class because students could avoid speaking in the first months of their English studies; as they are learning the new language, their pronunciation may not be excellent, and for that

reason students may avoid speaking in front of their classmates or participating in oral activities. It is true that pronunciation has to be taken into account but it is also true that it is more important to be able to communicate in the target language. I consider that teachers should create an atmosphere of confidence where students will feel relaxed and with enough confidence so they can speak without thinking in the mistakes they would have.

Another important belief that students reported is that mistakes have to be corrected since the beginning of their instruction because they are hard to correct later on. This belief has a lot to do with the previous one because if the teacher corrects every single mistake that students make, learners may try to avoid speaking. Most of the time students are afraid of participating in class because they feel are not sure of the language, they do not want to be corrected, or because they do not want their classmates to tease about their mistakes. For that reason it is very important that teachers use strategies that let students speak even though they make mistakes. Moreover teachers have to be aware that students do not fossilized mistakes by providing exercises were does mistakes could be corrected.

Participants in this research study reported that it is ok to guess if they do not know a word in English. This belief may be related to the previous one; if students are not corrected every time they make a mistake, they would be more confident at speaking even though they do not do it with the correct vocabulary, or pronunciation. This would help students develop confidence and decrease their anxiety when participating in oral activities or oral examinations.

Finally, regarding motivations and expectations most of the students showed to have strong motives to learn English such as the idea that learning English very well will help them to get a better job, and that they will get to know English speaking people better. In addition, the idea that Mexicans think that learning English is very important also motivates students to learn the language. Moreover, the belief that there exist many opportunities to use the language once they have learn it assures them that they are not wasting their time learning something they are not going to use but a language that would be useful for getting more and better opportunities in their live.

As it could be observed, if students have positive beliefs they expect the language learning experience to be easier and enjoyable. Therefore student will feel more motivated to learn. On the contrary, negative beliefs are related to negative expectations. Students who think they have the ability to learn a language work harder to achieve their goal; on the other hand, students who think they lack this capacity will doubt about their ability to learn English and see themselves as poor language learners.

In this study, students do not consider English as a difficult Language. They have positive beliefs regarding the language difficulty what helps them believe that they will ultimately learn the language very well at the end of their courses; this, as stated by Horwitz, confirms that students' attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs may influence students' performance and ultimate success. It is clear that these students have approached their language experience with positive beliefs that help them react in a

positive way. Even though, they have reported to believe that it is easier for children than for adults to learn a language; that some people are born with a special ability that helps them learn a language; that it is easier for someone who already speaks a language to learn English, they see themselves as learners with the ability to learn. In addition, they also believe that everyone can learn to speak English, as long as they work hard, practice and feel motivated to continue learning, the fact that they are almost out of the age range that makes it easier to learn will not affect them.

Results obtained, compared to those found in Horwitz' (1989) study, reinforce the belief that it is easier for children than for adults to learn a foreign language (in this case English), that English can be learnt within two years of instruction, that some people are born with a special ability that helps them learn English, that learning a language is mostly a matter of memorizing new words and translating from English, that everyone can learn to speak English.

Also as well as Horwitz found, participants in this study do not have the desire to know the foreign culture of the language they are learning. Language learners have to be aware of the importance that the culture of the language they are learning is very important. For example in English there are appropriate ways to address people, express gratitude, make requests, and agree or disagree with someone (Peterson and Coltrane, 2003). Students have to understand that language use must be associated with other culturally appropriate behavior. In order that they can use the language in an appropriate way they have to know about these cultural values.

On the contrary, students in this study reported to believe that learning English will help them get a better job as opposed by students in Horwitz' study. These results

may be influenced by the fact that these students have a high possibility of being inserted in a tourist social environment where English is essential to get a good job. It is important to obtain results that confirm students' will to learn English because of professional reasons and not just because of a university requirement.

5.2. Other findings

Other important findings were the ones related to the hard work students invest in order to learn English. The results found in this study are similar to the ones found by Mori (1997) that relate students' success or failure to their positive beliefs and the attitude to work hard in order to achieve their goal.

Interesting results were found regarding the role of effort in the language learning process. For example it was found that students reported to have strong beliefs related to independent practice that will help them improve their abilities. As Mori found in her study, students believe that developing English skills requires time, and that teachers are not the only persons who can help them solve their doubts about the language so they have to do independent or extra work.

Another outcome was that students believe that learning a language takes time. That belief was supported with students' disagreement with the belief that if they do not learn anything in the first week of their course, they will never learn English. This will help them to develop better and more effective strategies because students will be aware that learning English is a process and not a product.

The results report that students who believe in their ability to learn English will work hard to achieve their goals. Thus, it is clear that these students are conscious of the importance that independent work plays in the learning process. If a student waits for the teacher to explain everything, as soon as the teacher walks out the classroom the learner will forget the objective of a class. But if the learner goes to the language laboratory and reviews about the topic he or she has just seen in class, makes extra exercises, and extends his or her knowledge in the topic it is assumable that this student will get to the next class more motivated to learn. This would mean that this student knows that the time being spent in a class is not enough if he/she really wants to learn a language.

As mentioned before, some questions related to independent work were added to the BALLI questionnaire. In this respect, the outcomes reported that most of the students supported the idea that doing extra exercises and consulting other references than their book and their teacher can help them improve their English. Students who are aware of the importance of working independently will spend more time studying and will end to understand and learn better than the ones who are just waiting for the teacher to explain everything.

Students also reported that if they work very hard they can develop the skills where they are not strong enough, and that developing good skills takes time. Being aware of their weaknesses but most important of all being aware that the areas where students are not doing well can be improved, gives students opportunities to develop their skills. At the same time, being conscious that good skills do not develop in a

short time will help learners not to get frustrated if they do not understand anything during their first classes.

5.3. Conclusions

The Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory seems to have proved its usefulness in the elicitation of language learner's beliefs. The present findings indicate that students hold a variety of beliefs. For example that it is easier for children than for adults to learn a foreign language; that some people are born with a special ability that helps them learn English; that they possess the ability to learn English; that learning a language is not a rapid process; and that it is necessary to work hard to develop the skills they have not yet developed.

This study has identified some of the beliefs held by university students, thus the findings confirm most of the findings reported by Horwitz. In conclusion, it is apparent that the majority of the students surveyed in this study have beliefs that are helpful for their language learning experience, such as confidence in their language ability.

Moreover, the majority of the students in this study rated English as a language of medium difficulty, and reveal strong motives to learn the language. However, many of the students surveyed agreed that grammar, memorizing long lists of vocabulary, and translation are very important for learning English. As Horwitz pointed out unrealistic or negative beliefs, such as those, may lead students to failure in their language process; for that reason it is important that learners confront those negative beliefs by being exposed to new information about them, so they can develop more effective language learning expectations for their language learning to be successful.

The results of this study present only a general view of students' beliefs about language learning. The extent to which learners' beliefs are variable over time, from person to person, from different settings needs, differences among teachers and students beliefs, need to be explore in next studies.

These paragraphs review on the findings reported in the present study about beliefs about language learning. Their importance needs to be taken into account since the beginning of language courses. In the following paragraphs, some recommendations for future research and classroom considerations are suggested.

5.4. Recommendations

These paragraphs present the recommendations to be taken into account for future research and classroom considerations.

- Since the participants of this research may not be representative of all university students, it is recommended that a similar study be conducted with a sample that may include more of the students who are actually learning English at this institution.
- Since the present study used surveys to collect the data, it is recommended that future studies make use of other data collection methods, such as interviews, and classroom observations, as in the metacognitive approach and the contextual approach, to gain different and complete information from students' beliefs and to analyze the information with more detail.
- It is also recommended that students' beliefs about language learning be taken into account when designing classroom activities. Teachers need to be aware of their students' language learning beliefs since the beginning of their courses so they can expose learners to new information that would help them confront their unrealistic beliefs.
- It is also recommended to work with dysfunctional beliefs so students may modify them and those beliefs do not interfere with student's motivation.
- Another important recommendation is that teachers use strategies that let students speak even though they make mistakes. Moreover, teachers have to be aware that students do not fossilize mistakes by providing exercises where mistakes could be corrected.

- A final recommendation is that teachers include cultural features that reflect the language students are learning so they stop thinking that culture is not important when learning a language.

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APPENDIX

BALLI Cuestionario de creencias acerca del aprendizaje de un idioma.

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Instrucciones generales:

Esta escala tiene como objetivo conocer las creencias acerca del aprendizaje del inglés. Le solicitamos su cooperación respondiendo a los ítems que aparecen a continuación. Por favor, no deje preguntas sin contestar, no existen respuestas falsas o verdaderas, correctas o incorrectas. No es necesario que escriba su nombre. Gracias por su colaboración.

Para cada enunciado encierre en un círculo la respuesta que mejor representa su acuerdo o desacuerdo.

1= Completamente en desacuerdo
5= Completamente de acuerdo

2= En desacuerdo

3= Neutral

4= De

	1	2	3	4	5
1. A los niños les resulta más fácil aprender inglés que a los adultos.					
2. Algunas personas tienen una capacidad especial para aprender inglés.					
3. Algunos idiomas son más fáciles de aprender que el idioma inglés.					
4. El idioma inglés está estructurado de la misma forma que el idioma español.					
5. Creo que aprenderé inglés muy bien.					
6. Es importante hablar inglés con una pronunciación excelente.					
7. Para aprender inglés hay que conocer la cultura de los países angloparlantes.					
8. No se debería decir nada en inglés hasta que se pueda decir bien.					
9. Para alguien que ya domina una lengua extranjera es más fácil aprender inglés.					
10. Lo mejor es aprender inglés en un país angloparlante.					
11. A mí me gusta practicar mi inglés con angloparlantes.					
12. Si no se sabe una palabra en inglés es válido intentar adivinarla.					
13. Creo que soy capaz de aprender el idioma inglés					
14. Lo más importante al aprender el idioma inglés es saber mucho vocabulario.					
15. Es muy importante repetir y practicar mucho para aprender inglés.					
16. Soy un poco tímido(a) al hablar con otras personas en inglés.					
17. Si mis maestros no corrigen mis errores desde el principio después me será difícil eliminarlos.					
18. Lo más importante al aprender inglés es aprender la gramática.					
19. Para aprender inglés es muy importante practicar en el laboratorio de inglés.					

Para cada enunciado encierre en un círculo la respuesta que mejor representa su acuerdo o desacuerdo.					
1= Completamente en desacuerdo		2= En desacuerdo		3= Neutral	
4= De acuerdo		5= Completamente de acuerdo			
20. Las mujeres tienen mejor capacidad para aprender inglés que los hombres.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Si aprendo inglés muy bien tendré muchas oportunidades para usarlo.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Es más fácil hablar inglés que entenderlo.	1	2	3	4	5
23. No es lo mismo aprender inglés que aprender otras materias.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Lo más importante para aprender inglés es aprender a traducir.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Si aprendo inglés tendré más oportunidades de encontrar un mejor trabajo.	1	2	3	4	5
26. Es más fácil leer y escribir en inglés que hablarlo y entenderlo.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Las personas que son buenas en matemáticas o ciencias no son buenas para el inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
28. En mi país la gente piensa que es muy importante saber inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Me gustaría aprender inglés para poder conocer mejor a personas angloparlantes.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Las personas que dominan más de un idioma son muy inteligentes.	1	2	3	4	5
31. Los americanos son buenos para aprender idiomas.	1	2	3	4	5
32. Todas las personas tienen la capacidad de aprender inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
33. Puedo mejorar mi desempeño en inglés si hago ejercicios extras y consulto otras fuentes aparte del profesor y mi libro.	1	2	3	4	5
34. Si me esfuerzo mucho en aprender inglés con el tiempo mejoraré mi habilidad.	1	2	3	4	5
35. Desarrollar buenas habilidades en inglés implica tiempo.	1	2	3	4	5
36. Los maestros son los únicos que pueden resolver mis dudas sobre el idioma.	1	2	3	4	5
37. Memorizar listas de palabras es bueno para mejorar el vocabulario.	1	2	3	4	5
38. Es importante dominar bien la gramática antes de empezar a hablar en inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
39. No importa que cometa errores, debo atreverme a hablar en inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
40. Si en la primera semana no entendí nada en mi curso quiere decir que nunca aprenderé inglés.	1	2	3	4	5
Para las siguientes preguntas encierre en un círculo la respuesta que mejor representa su opinión.					
41. El idioma inglés es: 1) muy difícil 2) difícil 3) ni muy fácil ni muy difícil 4) fácil 5) muy fácil	1	2	3	4	5
42. Si alguien dedica una hora al día al estudio del idioma inglés ¿Cuánto tiempo crees que tardará en aprenderlo bien? 1) menos de un año. 2) 1-2 años. 3) 3-5 años. 4) 5-10 años. 5) No se puede aprender inglés estudiando solo por una hora al día.	1	2	3	4	5

Sección II. Datos demográficos

2.1 Tu edad es

Menos de 18-24	25- 29	30- 34	35- 39	40-44	45- 49	50 años o más
<input type="checkbox"/>						

2.2 Tu género es:

Hombre	Mujer
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.3 Estudias la licenciatura o ingeniería en:			
1	Lengua inglesa	8	Sistemas de energía
2	Humanidades	9	Ingeniería ambiental
3	Relaciones Internacionales	10	Ingeniería en Redes
4	Gobierno y gestión pública	11	Antropología Social
5	Sistemas comerciales	12	Turismo Alternativo
6	Economía y finanzas	13	Manejo de recursos naturales
7	Derecho	14	Soy alumno externo

Semestre:

2.4 Tu lengua materna es:				
Español___	Maya___	Francés___	Italiano___	Otro: _____

2.5 Estudias inglés desde hace				
Menos de un año	1-2 años	3 - 4	4-5	Más de 5 años

2.6 Si estudias otro idioma además del inglés, indica cuál				
Francés___	Italiano___	Maya___	Español para extranjeros___	Otro: _____

No estudio otro idioma además del inglés. _____

2.7 Si has realizado una estancia en algún país donde se habla el idioma inglés, indica el tiempo:

Menos de un año___	1-2 años___	3 - 4 años___	4-5 años___	Más de 5 años___
Nunca he realizado una estancia en ningún país donde se habla el idioma inglés. _____				

¡¡Gracias por tu colaboración!!