



## Enfoques Pedagógicos y Estrategias Activas para la Enseñanza del Inglés como Lengua Inglesa a Estudiantes Adultos en el Colegio Guillermo Mensi

### Pedagogical Approaches and Active Strategies to Teach EFL among Adult Learners at The Guillermo Mensi High School

### Abordagens Pedagógicas e Estratégias Ativas para Ensinar EFL entre Alunos Adultos na Guillermo Mensi High School

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## Resumen

La presente investigación busca solventar problemas educativos en torno al proceso de enseñanza del idioma Inglés en adultos, pues en esta edad se incrementa la frustración al aprender una nueva lengua, con ello se intenta superar los problemas tradicionales del quehacer docente a través de la inclusión de técnicas, herramientas y metodologías. Con estos antecedentes the purpose of this research is to investigate the pedagogical approaches that allow the teaching of the English language through active techniques in the Guillermo Mensi School in the city of Cuenca. El estudio fue descriptivo, de enfoque mixto, en lo cualitativo se recurrió a una revisión bibliográfica que incluyó la revisión, selección y análisis de información presente en revistas de rigor académico y científico acerca de los enfoques pedagógicos para la enseñanza del inglés, en lo cuantitativo se aplicó una encuesta a una muestra de 100 estudiantes, para conocer el impacto del uso de nuevas técnicas de enseñanza. Los resultados dieron a conocer que los estudiantes adultos muestran una alta habilidad para la resolución de problemas, por tanto. Se concluye que las estrategias didácticas basadas en el autoaprendizaje mejoraron dimensiones como: vocabulario y gramática en los estudiantes.

**Palabras clave:** enfoques pedagógicos; barreras; técnicas activas.

## Abstract

The present investigation seeks to solve educational problems around the process of teaching the English language to adults, since at this age frustration when learning a new language increases. With this, an attempt is made to overcome the traditional problems of teaching through the inclusion of techniques, tools, and methodologies. With these antecedents, the purpose of this research was to investigate the pedagogical approaches that allow the teaching of the English language through active techniques at the Guillermo Mensi High School of Cuenca city. The study was descriptive, with a mixed approach, qualitatively; a bibliographical review was used that included the review, selection, and analysis of information present in academic and scientific journals about pedagogical approaches to teaching English as well as a quantitative component in which a survey was applied to a sample of 100 students to determine the impact of the use of new teaching techniques. The results revealed that adult students show a high ability to solve problems.

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It is concluded that didactic strategies based on self-learning improve dimensions such as vocabulary and grammar in students.

**Keywords:** pedagogical approaches; barriers,; active techniques.

## Resumo

A presente investigação busca resolver problemas educacionais em torno do processo de ensino da língua inglesa para adultos, já que nessa idade a frustração ao aprender um novo idioma aumenta. Com isso, busca-se superar os problemas tradicionais de ensino por meio da inclusão de técnicas, ferramentas e metodologias. Com esses antecedentes, o objetivo desta pesquisa foi investigar as abordagens pedagógicas que permitem o ensino da língua inglesa por meio de técnicas ativas na Escola Secundária Guillermo Mensi da cidade de Cuenca. O estudo foi descritivo, com abordagem mista, qualitativa; foi utilizada uma revisão bibliográfica que incluiu a revisão, seleção e análise de informações presentes em revistas acadêmicas e científicas sobre abordagens pedagógicas para o ensino de inglês, bem como uma componente quantitativa em que foi aplicado um questionário a uma amostra de 100 alunos para determinar o impacto do uso de novas técnicas de ensino. Os resultados revelaram que os alunos adultos apresentam uma elevada capacidade de resolução de problemas. Conclui-se que estratégias didáticas baseadas na autoaprendizagem melhoram dimensões como vocabulário e gramática nos alunos.

Palavras-chave: abordagens pedagógicas, barreiras, técnicas ativas.

## Introducción

In Ecuador, the Institute of Languages of Universidad Salesiana de Ecuador carried out a study focused on knowing the level of English that students have. A sample of between 5,800 and 6,200 students was evaluated, and the results revealed that 5% of the population does not know that language in its entirety, 50% handles it intermediately, and 45% have a good level; the latter took classes at specialized centers. Without a doubt, this reality shows the gaps in access to quality education that guarantee the learning of a second language, mainly because few educational institutions offer a curriculum in an assertive way, the weak preparation of teachers and the weak motivation of the student body to learn a new language is (Armas, 2016).

When it comes to fostering the abilities needed to learn a new language, educational institutions have failed miserably in the teaching of the English language. When a teacher repeats the educational material because they have not used systematic tactics appropriately, they are limiting the teaching and making the students more passive and limited. As a result, the student can lack the drive to pick up a new language (Ricoy y Álvarez, 2016).

As a result, Cabrera and Crespo (2017) state that the shortcomings of traditional education in the teaching of English have primarily been caused by the fact that it has not taken into account the heterogeneity of the group, or the various needs that each student presents, in addition to other factors. The following is a description of the drawbacks in the instructional approaches used: Study schedules are static and do not consider the dialectic of the curriculum. They refer to those who want to alter a curriculum by changing the names of subjects or the times they are taught, as well as to teachers who have not been adequately trained in new teaching methods.

The learning of the English language at the curricular level requires compliance with linguistics and psycholinguistics, which can occur in childhood, adolescence, or adulthood. In this study, we will focus attention on the adult student population who, for some reason, abandoned their studies and have decided to resume them; however, there are gaps and limitations, especially in academic performance in the English language. According to Ausubel (1968), in adulthood, the individual has already reached the formal operative period, which, although it is true, gives them a greater ability to manipulate relationships between ideas about empirical propositions, and reduces the ability to acquire a new language.

Education, in the words of Mendoza (2016), "*is a tool for the transformation of social activity and a key way of advancement where the teacher, when instructing, not only educates individuals but also contributes to developing a fair social life*" (p. 104). According to Gómez (2016), school procedures should not be restricted to specific accomplishments; instead, strategies and methodologies should aim to address the social expectations that the school creates for society.

This study was aimed at the adult population; therefore, it has been considered important to publicize their cognitive and academic characteristics, according to what Usquiano et al. (2022) indicate. In 1970, for the first time, andragogy was addressed for this purpose. addressing the science of education for adults comes from the need to study the reality of the adult in its formative process.

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The characteristics of andragogy were as follows: 1) as a person develops from his or her self-concept toward ongoing self-direction, collecting experiences can then be used as a source of learning. 2) His willingness to learn is unrelated to his biological development, and 3) it takes into consideration the skills they have acquired, so they do better when it comes to problem-solving (Usquiano et al., 2022).

The adult student has specific training-related skills; this presents a chance for English language teachers since it enhances learning, particularly of foreign language grammatical structures, particularly verb tenses. It is difficult, though, because the adult learner has a finite amount of time to learn everything outside of the classroom. (Rodriguez, 2008).

According to the authors Usquiano et al. (2022), any proposal centered on the instruction of English to adult students should consider the following: Adults who participate voluntarily internalize the material better; when teachers give unidirectional directions, assimilation is poor and success levels fall. Respect for one another is a goal that teachers must work to accomplish. Collaboration: Teachers must continuously direct the class to promote participation from everybody. Organizational selection: Adults are more likely to be interested in growth-oriented improvement courses.

Although theories concerning didactics as a support for teaching a new language are frequently difficult, they can offer insight into how people might enhance their acquisition, particularly in adult learners, but it is important to understand how it can be done. The constructivist theory put forth by Vygotsky (1986) mentions that learning begins with experimentation, in which the student faces an all-or-nothing process in which people acquire new information that allows building on the knowledge they already have. This theory aims to improve the students' learning of English.

In line with the Vygotskian school of thought, mental processes are connected to the social and cultural facets of the environment in which foreign language instruction and learning take place, an environment in which both students and teachers have significant roles. According to this viewpoint, the Communicative Method enables students to learn English in real-world contexts, therefore grammar becomes more significant in order to build four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) simultaneously (Usquiano et al., 2022).

Students who are learning a new language place a strong emphasis on cognitive learning, which calls for the use of cutting-edge pedagogic techniques and new technology, since these tools are

already a part of their everyday lives and begin with communication. It should be highlighted, too, that oral skills are more challenging to teach because they call for the development of communicative proficiency in a foreign language. In order to ensure its best development, it is crucial to employ all available resources (Parra, 2014).

According to the authors Quevedo et al. (2021), it is crucial to begin learning English with listening comprehension since it relates to a language ability that is essential to daily life and is most prevalent in the classroom. Cognitive, perceptual, and attitudinal aspects affect it. In order to understand a message being transmitted, a pupil must be able to distinguish between the various sounds of a foreign language. Through the use of auditory and visual resources, this exercise, which is done alone, can be completed more successfully.

As said by Usquiano et al. (2022), listening skills must be emphasized when teaching English because they are crucial for comprehending speech in a realistic setting. Additionally, it is important to focus on improving listening skills because they open up a channel through which the student can access a wealth of information that is understandable in a second language. Additionally, it is important to note that comprehension helps students pick up other linguistic skills and expands their vocabulary.

Malo (2014) lists several methods and techniques used in teaching English that can be used to improve oral skills, including repetition techniques, exercises in small groups, and the use of audiovisual aids. These methods and techniques all serve as excellent didactic supports in the classroom, where the teacher serves as a crucial facilitator for the development of this learning.

Today, teachers have access to a wide range of audiovisual resources thanks to technology advancements; these include videos, movies, short films, animations, etc. Students can enhance their skill acquisition using these resources. Oral in order to improve English language acquisition. (Usquiano et al. 2020).

The authors Ramos and Rosell (2022) advise that when teaching a foreign language, the teacher should use the student's experience studying their native tongue as a starting point. For this reason, it is crucial to use real films in the language classroom to simulate daily life. Alvarez and Rojas (2021) discuss the significance of emphasizing paralinguistic information (body language, gestures, facial expressions, pauses, and intonation) and extralinguistic information in listening



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comprehension so that it is not only limited to oral aspects (the setting where the conversation takes place, the number of participants, the relationship between them, etc.).

According to Feria (2019), the usage of videos allows for a better contextualization of the learning process in the real world, which also helps to activate past information, boost motivation, and be extremely relevant for students who are used to learning. This enhances oral abilities, particularly listening comprehension, and is visual and familiar with auditory learning.

The author, Fernández (2009), proposes the following didactic strategies to work with adults:

Debates and discussions: a group of students was formed, and they are asked to find arguments to defend a topic. The other group establishes arguments to contradict the first. Before building the debates, the teacher must carry out a warm-up that will allow an approach by the students. Students with the vocabulary, including reading previously on the subject. (Reading).

Role-Playing: Each participant interprets a different character, which must meet certain characteristics. Each person must interpret a role, act, think, and decide just as their character would. All this will lead to daily life in the classroom. Through a practical approach, their skills will be improved, including pronunciation, which will allow them to increase their vocabulary. It also promotes participation and, above all, the fear of speaking in public.

As indicated in previous sections, adults characterize their learning towards problem-solving, thanks to the skills previously acquired. Therefore, Rocha (2021) points out that learning faces a series of challenges, among which are maintaining processes and assets and adhering to discovery and research, and this can be achieved through project-based learning (PBL), which allows students to work collaboratively, investigating, and building knowledge.

By evaluating three criteria, including the following, Assapari (2021) suggests learning that is supported by the use of the internet since technology enables the transmission and enhancement of skills and knowledge. Online learning offers the chance to instantly alter, distribute, and exchange material with students using common technology, which, finally, offers a wide perspective for learning outside of the classroom.

In light of the foregoing, this investigation effort aims to learn more about pedagogical methods by looking through many scientific sources to develop active English teaching tactics that are suitable for adult learners. The following particular goals were also mentioned: Identify the challenges the group of adult students faces when studying the English language. Provide examples of



pedagogical strategies and methods for the effective study of the English language. To gain knowledge on how new teaching methods affect pupils at the Guillermo Mensi High School as they learn new skills.

## Methods

The mixed-method approach was used in the current study since it considered aspects of both qualitative and quantitative methods, providing a very comprehensive view of the subject under inquiry.

As an approach, that enables the use of many methods for data articulation and validation, the triangulation design is the one that was employed. The data gathered for the field research, the hypotheses examined, and the researcher's standpoints were triangulated in this study. It was successful with a sample of 100 kids from the night shift at Guillermo Mensi High School.

The data collected complied with ethical and confidentiality principles

- Consult with the institution's administrators to obtain permission for fieldwork.
- Engage in conversation with the night shift students to complete the fieldwork.
- Data preparation. Preparation of the first draft of the interview, survey, and test.
- Review of the draft and final preparation of the applied instruments.
- The investigative study process was carried out through sampling and statistical analysis, among others.

Data enrichment. Analysis of the data obtained and consolidation of the same.

Variables:

Independent variable: Pedagogical approaches.

Dependent variable: Teaching English with active techniques.

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## Results

Table 1: What difficulties have you faced while learning English?

CATEGORIES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Vocabulary	57	57%
Unable to remember	35	35%
I don't find it interesting	0	0%
Comprehension	4	4%
Dislike the subject	2	2%
Other	2	2%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

Almost 50% of those polled report having trouble learning English because they struggle with the vocabulary, and a sizable portion report having trouble remembering what they have learned in class. Students frequently become perplexed when studying this subject because many words have several meanings depending on what they are trying to convey. The different everyday tasks that individuals must complete that prevent them from concentrating were added to this. The English language requires continual practice, and if you do not use it, you'll likely forget everything you've learned.

Table 2: What new strategies would you like to be implemented in class?

CATEGORIES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Games	47	47%
Reading	16	16%
Presentations	10	10%
Group projects	17	17%
Online platform	10	10%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

According to this table's graph, many of the students who responded to the survey indicated that they would prefer to study English through group projects and play; these teaching methods might

be used in this topic to help students overcome the various challenges they experience when learning it.

Table 3: Skills achieved

CATEGORIES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Listening	41	41%
Pronunciation	24	24%
Writing	23	23%
Exposure	12	12%
<b>Total</b>	100	100%

Following the use of didactic methods for learning English, it was discovered that 41% of students were able to write vocabulary more effectively, 24% demonstrated improved reading comprehension through improved pronunciation, 23% demonstrated improved writing, and 13% demonstrated improved presentation of their work.

## DISCUSSION

This study discovered that students' pronunciation of phonemes and listening comprehension are their significant areas of difficulty. According to the study by Alvarez and Rojas (2021), students believe that listening to English has become a difficult task since it calls for a difficult process of processing auditory information. This is made worse when there is no assistance or visual support. Students must simultaneously listen to and process the information included in this linguistic understanding (language).

Yuste (2019) examined the effects of gamification in the English classroom and discovered that students were more engaged in their studies and had a more positive, cooperative, participatory, and responsible attitude. Since collaborative learning is facilitated by the use of video games and audiovisual information that promotes cognitive development, it can be concluded that gamification contributes to positive interdependence and stimulating interaction. This reduces stress and the fear of making mistakes when pronouncing words in English.

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The study by Al-Shams et al. (2020) attempted to investigate the effects of mobile learning on students' acquisition of listening abilities for learning English as a second language, and it found that students' listening ability was positively affected. Thanks to the assistance of mobile gadgets, they felt inspired to learn.

Using the use of Quizlet, a gamification tool, the author Fithriani (2021) aimed to increase the vocabulary learning of adult students. Quizlet helped students learn new terms both inside and outside of the classroom. The study's findings demonstrated the tool's influence in three areas: improved learning outcomes, increased drive to learn, and the creation of a more pleasant learning environment. As a result, the pupils felt more motivated as their vocabulary expanded.

Although students after using Quizlet demonstrated various outcomes concerning attention to learning aspects of life, Muhammad and Setiawan's study (2020) concurs that utilizing Quizlet in teaching English boosts motivation along with the attention span to learn a new vocabulary. The position of Prensky (2001), who claims that the current generation is made up of digital natives who utilize their portable devices to carry out their everyday duties, is related to the success of the use of technology in learning. Yet, it is not just crucial. Age considerations for measuring digital fluency must inevitably take into account social, cultural, and technological accessibility and availability aspects.

Martínez (2019) examined the effects of the flipped classroom on adult students, particularly on their development of grammatical competence, as a pedagogical contribution. A pretest and posttest were used to evaluate 40 students, and the results showed that this pedagogical model increased the grammatical proficiency of the English language.

The inquiry model put forth by Navas (2023), which comprised active methodologies mediated by information and communication technologies (ICT), as well as digital tools built on the inquiry model, offered dynamics in contrast to conventional teaching techniques. Conclusion: The idea improved English language acquisition by fostering substantial learning in which the learner took on a more engaged role.

Hernández and Cordero (2021), nevertheless, supported the use of avatars to boost university students' intrinsic motivation using two theories: communicative socio-cognitivism, Piaget's genetic theory, and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. The results indicated an improvement in the students' cognitive level, leading to the conclusion that the sociocognitive theories that served as

the theoretical foundation of the proposal enhanced academic performance in English. When Valero and Tello (2022) looked into the effects of e-learning in an adult English teaching program, they discovered advantages like autonomy in learning and software solutions that, despite their inherent qualities, did not replace traditional teaching.

## Conclusion

In addition to considering that students represent an advantage in the management of technology for learning, the results of this study showed the advantages of using games in conjunction with technological resources to enhance English language learning in adult students. These results showed that this type of support resource offers greater opportunities for self-learning, language acquisition, and production from individual and collaborative participation.

Technology must support the use of these strategies while also pursuing methodological rigor. Content must be updated frequently to allow for the reinforcement of knowledge in teachers and the direct benefit of students. It is also advised that these methodologies be adjusted to the needs of the educational context, in this case, adult students who have chosen to pick up their studies again.

As the students' skills in listening, speaking, and writing improved as a result of the application of didactic games, their impact is confirmed. Also, they contribute to important learning that is supported by engagement, motivation, and self-learning in the study group.

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