



**“ADULT LANGUAGE LEARNING BELIEFS  
IN AN L2 CLASSROOM”**

MASTER’S REPORT

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## **Abstract**

Along with advances in technology and the need to be at the forefront of knowledge, investigations concerning adult language learning beliefs have diversified and grown, especially in the case of foreign languages. Beliefs play an important role in being able to ensure student's goals and the development of academic competences. This report was developed in order to determine how beliefs about English learning in adult learners over the age of 25 at an A1 level in a private institution affect the development of their oral skills of English. The aim of this study was determined to be of a descriptive type. Seven A1 level students participated in the study in order to reveal how their preconceived language learning beliefs affected them positively or negatively. It entailed the use of a system of evaluations, an initial placement test, two formative and one summative evaluation to determine the progress the learners had and the use of an instrument known as the BALLI (Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory) developed by Elaine Horwitz (1988). Each participant took the 35 question inventory which referenced beliefs that Horwitz had determined to cause impact in language learning. According to the class evaluation logs that were obtained throughout the report and the connection they had with the beliefs that yielded from the instrument a high percentage of positive beliefs, including a high level of motivation and expectations in English learning were revealed to influence learners' progress while at the same time some negative beliefs were analyzed and found not to affect the general outcome of students' progress.

**Keywords:** Beliefs, Andragogy, Beliefs and Language Learner Inventory (BALLI), non-formal education, English as a Foreign Language, oral skills.

## **Introduction**

In recent decades, researchers in the field of second and foreign language acquisition have shown great interest in learners' individual characteristics that can affect the learners' success in language learning. A number of studies have been conducted in the past two decades to examine beliefs about language learning and the relationships between learners' beliefs about language learning and factors that can affect language learning success such as motivation, autonomy, language learning strategies, and anxiety. These findings suggest that second and foreign language teachers, with an understanding of learners' beliefs about language learning, can help enhance learners' success in language learning in two ways: by fostering their students' beliefs that are helpful to language learning and by refining those that are debilitating. As Horwitz (1987) stated, second language learners often hold different beliefs or notions about language learning, some of which are influenced by students' previous experiences as language learners, and others that are shaped by their own cultural backgrounds and as Beattie (2000) posits: "individuals' personal hopes, beliefs, theories, worldviews, passions and preoccupations..." are what give persons the possibility to expand their capacity to choose. It becomes ever more evident the need to emphasize the importance of beliefs in humans and that these same beliefs precede decisions that are made on a daily basis.

As researchers strive to find ways to adjust and refine adult learners' beliefs, studies about teachers' beliefs have become another interest of researchers in the field and are also the focus of several studies. These studies are based on the assumptions that learners develop their beliefs about language learning from their learning experiences (Horwitz,

1987; Mori, 1999). Being able to determine the beliefs that are held by adult learners over the age of 25 plays a crucial role given that practitioners will be able to prepare their lesson plans according to this knowledge, much like knowing the level a student is in before attempting to give a class. This will in turn facilitate the teaching of a foreign language and will better determine a methodology to follow which adheres to the learners' expectations in order to reach a more efficient successful process in teaching and learning. Similarly, second and foreign language learners do not come to class without ideas about the nature and process of the learning. They have some presumptions about what language learning is and how a second language should be learned (Horwitz, 1987).

Accordingly, the relevance of culture in education becomes essential seeing that it is a pillar in which methodologies of teaching are determined; i.e. they are a set of background knowledge that set customs, ideologies, behaviors, means of transmitting knowledge and all aspects of culture which are always present. Both social psychological and sociocultural theories have stressed the influence of external factors and the knowledge which is acquired from the environment. Sociocultural approaches have tended to focus on how beliefs are constructed, appropriated and mediated through social transactions. Research on beliefs about language learning also has proven that learners' beliefs may have the potential to influence both their experiences and actions as language learners, and there are links between beliefs, motivation, and strategy use (Abraham and Vann, 1987; Horwitz, 1988, 1999; Wenden 1987; Yang, 1999). Horwitz (1999) further claims that individual differences, such as age, stage of life, learning style, educational experiences, and learning circumstances, including instructional levels, family, language learning contexts, likely account for as much variation as cultural differences.



This report begins by supplying detailed information on the context where the study takes place along with general information of the participants. Consequently it establishes a common problem found among adult language learners of a foreign language. It then goes on to establish a general and some specific objectives that consider how beliefs can influence the adult language learner. Next it reviews pertinent literature of previous studies and theories. Correspondingly, it then continues by outlining the methodology used to analyze and interpret the information. This is done by defining the initial placement of the learners into a Common European framework level, in the case of this report the initial level is A1. The study then continues to analyze the course assessments in order to compare them to the results from the instrument used, the BALLI. This data is collected in order to present the findings that purport to answer the research question and finally, the report puts forth conclusions and recommendations.

## **Context**

This project which aims to draw the attention of adult language learning beliefs, originates in CLS Language Services, a private language institution with over 20 years' experience. It caters to corporate students which are in need to constantly improve their communication skills. These skills are directed to adults in non-formal educational programs for the purpose of education and human development at the workplace. CLS also offers specialized language programs which include: English, French, Italian and Portuguese. These are offered nationally in Colombia's main cities: Cali, Bogotá and Medellín.

The need for institutions such as CLS has emerged along with the growth of English as a global language, technological breakthroughs such as Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and the ever growing use of English as a lingua franca. Its main goal is for learners to enhance two of the four language skills, listening and speaking, according to the Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR). The CEFR describes foreign language proficiency at six levels: A1 and A2 (A - Basic user), B1 and B2 (B - Independent user), C1 and C2 (C - Proficient user).

The practitioners employed by the institute all have one main characteristic in common: they must be native or near native English speakers in order to meet the expectations that the clients and learners have of the institutes' long standing assurance that the level of spoken English is at its highest level. According to Stern (1983, in Young and Walsh, 2010) "the native speaker's competence or proficiency or knowledge of the language is a necessary point of reference for the second language proficiency concept used

in language teaching” (p. 341). Although no studies have positively shown that the native speaker is a must in order to learn a language this is the general idea that adult students have when they take on a new language.

The institutes’ clientele, which many times are the learners as well, range from Financial institutions, Dealerships, Production plants, Medical practitioners, Service companies, Media research companies etc. and all have one thing in common: the need to communicate across borders in English. In general in institutes’ adult learners are motivated, ready to learn and highly educated professionals that are typically aged between 25 to 35 years old which makes them adult learners. The adult learner is usually self-directed and responsible for their own learning. They rely heavily on meaningful learning, where previous knowledge is used in order to acquire new knowledge (Ausubel, 2000).

In addition, Knowles (1980), in his studies about adult pedagogy known as andragogy, proposes some characteristics of the adult learner: they must want to learn, they will learn when they feel they need to learn and they learn best in informal situations among others. Unfortunately, these ideals, at times, do not fit into the reasons that obligate these learners to take classes. Instead, it is their superiors who impose the objectives to be acquired causing them to learn under pressure; a fact that goes against the principles of adult learning and their integrative motivation. Dornyei, (as cited in Moss, 2003) identifies motivation as "why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity [and] how hard they are going to pursue it." Gardner (as cited in Moss, 2003) explains integrative motivation as wanting to learn a language in order to identify with the community and to have a personal affinity with the people that speaks the language. This motivation seems to promote second language acquisition regardless of the age of the

learner or whether the language is being learned as a second or foreign language. In the case of CLS the learning of the new L2 falls within a foreign language situation being that English in Colombia is a foreign language but the atmosphere generated by the institute is similar to a second language learning process produced within the classroom. On the other hand, Oxford & Shearin (as cited in Moss, 2003) present instrumental motivation as when individuals may want to learn the language to meet their needs and goals, such as to get a job or to talk to their children's teachers.

As a general approach, CLS uses Communicative Language Teaching. Although the institute offers a wide range of programs, the most common of these is the private, two-person program or the corporate 3 to 8 person group which provides a special uniqueness when it comes to class preparation. The class may be tailor made to accommodate each company's needs or, more importantly, the needs of the learner in any of various fields such as Engineering, Administration, Production, Logistics, Planning, and Finance among others. This type of method is known as English for a Specific Purpose (ESP) which is designed to instruct students in the effective use of the language which serves to further their professional purposes (Widdowsson, 1998).

Parrallely, another of the institute's methods of teaching is the Direct Method. This method entails that both teachers and students have high participation in the classroom, to use only the target language, to be a native or near native speaker of the target language and to follow a direct association with words and phrases which begins by taking tangible lexicon and builds up little by little until abstract words and phrased can be used and understood.

All things considered, corporate expectations, language learners, the institute's curriculum and practitioners alike, all have the same goal, to transform an L2 learner into a competent international and intercultural communicator that will be able to use English, as Jenkins (2009, in Jenkins 2015) states, as it is used as a contact language among speakers of different first languages.

## Research Problem

### Problem

It is a common expression heard from adult learners “*You can’t teach an old dog new tricks*”, “*I’m not good with languages*” or “*I’m too old to learn*”. The previous examples are commonly heard in an initial evaluation of future students or when a program is being offered to a student or to human resources in order to solve the need to learn an L2. These are derived from adult L2 teaching experiences in non-formal educational programs from a private institute for the purpose of education and human development at the workplace as is the case in CLS. These allow us to identify that learning conceptions do exist especially in adult learners over the age of 25. This is also confirmed by Galvis (2012) where he states that according to Rokeach (1968), Bandura (1986) and Pajares (1992), multiple types of beliefs exist, e.g. primitive beliefs, as Rokeach describes as being impermeable in nature while inconsequential beliefs originate from indirect experiences.

Similarly, other aspects exist that can either facilitate or obstruct an efficient learning of the language, some positive aspects that can be pointed out are, among others, that adults possess certain characteristics: the need to know, previous experiences, learner self-concept, readiness to learn and a motivation to learn (Knowles, 1980, p. 43). Nonetheless, some aspects can be classified as negative, they make the process of learning slower, less efficient and are recognised as seen as epistemological obstacles (Bachelard 2002), or convictions or even paradigms which many times come from childhood and adolescence. This being the reason that self-efficacy can be severely affected during this period of learning.

Despite this, it is clear that each individual differentiates him or her selves by their own beliefs which are bound by race, religion, culture and all the collection of distinct experiences reached by childhood then adulthood. Each adult possesses a different way of looking at life according to their beliefs and behaviours.

In general terms, today's daily life has impacted all humans dramatically. This impact caused by the needs that globalization has arisen and the accelerated developments of science and technology. Teaching has also changed along with the times. The traditional way of teaching has slowly gone from classrooms of 25 to 30 learners or more to smaller and more personalized instruction.

In the last two decades an increasing number of adult students have required a greater need for ITC (Information, technology and Communication) training and foreign languages learning. This is mainly due to labour related demands; whether it be to find better work or to secure a work promotion.

When an adult professional requires foreign Language training, they commence this training with a vast amount of knowledge and experience which has been acquired throughout their lives. However, this knowledge comes with a series of preconceived opinions which according to the studies that precede this project can be called beliefs. These in turn are transformed into factors that influence the learning process.

Previously studies that have been performed have permitted to characterize the process of teaching and learning a foreign language. As students also pass through this process it is important to investigate deeper in this topic rendered by the specific context of this project which is aimed for education and human development at the workplace, better known as non-formal education. In particular, the main concern that propels this research is

that beliefs about learning English may have an effect in the development of oral skills. Therefore, the following research question is posted.

### **Research question**

How do beliefs about English learning in a group of seven adult learners over the age of 25 at an A1 level in CLS, a private institution affect the development of their oral skills in English?

### **Objectives**

#### **General**

- To determine how beliefs about learning English of seven adults over the age of 25 years of age affect the development of their oral skills in this language at an A1 level in CLS, a private institute.

#### **Specific objectives**

- To characterize beliefs about English learning in adults at an A1 level in a private institute.
- To identify beliefs that influence the development of oral skills in English at an A1 level in a private institute.



## **Justification**

Generally speaking, the need to keep up with globalization and the accelerated developments of ICTs in today's quotidian life has been dramatically impacted by new technologies and scientific breakthroughs. The notion of English as a Lingua Franca has been with us for some time now and this has caused an increasing need to learn to interact in English, especially for the adult learner. Interaction refers to communication between individuals, particularly when they are negotiating meaning in order to prevent a breakdown in communication (Ellis, 1999). In the last two decades the amount of adult learners of foreign languages, especially English, has increased substantially. Their motivation has been the need to be a part of the new lingua franca in order to satisfy labor demands, i.e. to find a better job or to get a promotion within the workplace. Interestingly, Graddol (as cited in Young & Walsh, 2010), estimates that there are currently around 350 million L1 speakers of English (English Native Speakers -ENS), as opposed to over a billion non-native English speakers (NNES). He predicts that the number of NNES will double by 2020, whereas the number of speakers of ENS will remain relatively stable,

When adults require foreign language education, they frequently resort to language classes in order to meet these specific needs. Researchers have found that second language learners come to the language class with some preconceived ideas or prejudices. These prejudices according to studies that precede this report are known as beliefs, beliefs about language and language learning. These beliefs can indicate what expectations the learners have and what actions in their language learning they will take (Abraham and Vann, 1987; Holec, 1987; Horwitz, 1987; Wenden, 1987). Therefore, researchers have been

investigating the beliefs that second language learners possess and the factors that affect learners' beliefs in order to find ways to help learners adjust their beliefs to facilitate their language learning.

It is necessary to conceptualize this topic more in depth by taking into account the particular context of this report. It is developed in a non-formal educational program for the purpose of education and human development at the workplace, it is aimed at a communicative approach of learning and it is focused to a corporate audience which are the ones that propitiate and encourage English to be learned by the adults that work in these enterprises.

Therefore, the present study gains an invaluable relevance since it allows a better understanding of students that undertake learning English as a foreign language in order to become functional speakers and practitioners to improve strategies in order to mediate a successful learning process for adult students.

## Literature Review

### 1. Section I: Beliefs

This report takes an in-depth look at beliefs. Beliefs, to put them simply, are perceptions that something exists or is true or considering that something is false. Rokeach (1968) states that beliefs are moments of boasting about ourselves and of physical and social reality. The author defines a simple consequential proposal deducted from what a person says or does usually before the phrase “I believe that...” Beliefs can be descriptive, evaluative or prescriptive and they have a cognitive, affective and behavioral unit. He also says that knowledge is an element of beliefs.

According to De Costa (2011; p. 348) beliefs are “primarily viewed as preconceived notions, myths or misconceptions”. He then continues by endorsing Barcelos’ (as cited in De Costa, 2011; p. 348) claims that “learners are judged according to an autonomous learner ideal, while beliefs are seen as impediments to realizing autonomy”. In addition, Amuzie & Winke and Diab (as cited in De Costa, 2011) recognized that the nature of beliefs is positioned.

For Abelson in *Differences Between Belief and Knowledge Systems* (1979), beliefs are defined as the knowledge that people handle for an individual project or under a specific case. On the other hand, Nisbett and Ross (1980) show beliefs as clear, reasonable proposals regarding characteristics of objects and the type of objects. For them, beliefs are an element of knowledge different from what Rokeach (1968) postulated years before.

Pajares (1992) asserts that a common difference between beliefs and knowledge is that beliefs are associated with subjectivity and emotion, whereas knowledge tends to be

more empirical. Further, Harvey (as cited in Galvis, 2012; p. 98) affirms that beliefs appear to each “individual’s representation of reality that has enough validity, for a particular purpose under any circumstance”. And finally, Sigel (as cited in Galvis, 2012; p. 98) adds that beliefs are a mental representation of the experiences integrated by the mental composition.

Bandura (as cited in Galvis, 2012) states that many variables of success or failure in individuals can be represented by particular circumstances. These abilities may or not be beneficial to specific situations. These judgments that people possess to perform these actions are known as self-efficacy beliefs. Further, Bandura (1997a) reconfirms four self-efficacy beliefs: Mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social or verbal persuasion and physiological states. For the present report, the author describes three of the four factors before mentioned. Mastery experiences deal with continuous experiences, as is the case with adult learners. Here direct experiences are obtained through mastery of new authentic experiences. Vicarious experiences refer to second-hand experiences that have been deterred or fostered, in the case of the present report by adults’ lifelong experiences, the success of their beliefs to achieve a determined result. And finally social persuasion regards to the ability to “awaken” the beliefs that individuals possess skills which they are capable to use, especially in verbal skills as is the case for Adult language learning. In order for the adult learner to avoid failure and more importantly future avoidance of these beliefs, Bandura cautions that these beliefs not only can act as positive factors but also negative agents if they are not realistic. In addition Bandura (1997b) asserts that efficacy beliefs may vary in strength, weak vs tenacious beliefs. Weak beliefs can easily be denied by disconfirming experiences whereas on the other side of the spectrum tenacious beliefs will

cause people to persevere in their efforts. These self-beliefs are clearly seen when adult learners take on the task of learning a new language as a goal which becomes an endeavor for their future aims. By determining the beliefs a person holds, a learner can face challenges competently and as an adult can show higher academic performances. People have beliefs about many areas in their lives; in the present research, the beliefs about learning a second or foreign language are considered.

### **1.1 Beliefs about language learning**

Different authors have been defining beliefs related to language learning over the years. Although there is not a single definition of beliefs when it comes to language learning, Pajares (1992) has used an extensive list of words to describe them: “attitude, values, judgments, axioms, opinions, ideology, perceptions, preconceptions, dispositions, implicit theories, explicit theories, personal theories, internal mental processes, action strategies, rules of practice, practical principles, perspectives, repertoires of understanding, and social strategy” (p. 309).

### **1.2 Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)**

Many types of elicitation techniques have been used in order to examine beliefs about language learning that include, among others, surveys, interviews, observations, journals. One of the most popular instruments/inventories is the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) developed by Horwitz in 1985. The BALLI passed through several stages during its creation, the first being created for the specific purpose of foreign language teachers and it consisted of 27 Likert-type scale items: a widely used approach for

research. A total of three versions were developed; however, for the present report the ESL version from Horwitz (1988) is used. Although the inventory was not specifically developed for EFL students, as is the case for this report, most researchers have explored language learning beliefs in various studies over the past two decades in an EFL context (e.g. Horwitz, 1987, 1988; Kern, 1995; Loewen, 2009; Diab, 2006; Peacock, 2001; Yang, 1999).

The BALLI along with previous studies helps reflect and contribute to the possible impact of language learning beliefs and the general outcome that learning have on ESL students (Mori, 1999, Tanaka & Ellis, 2003). The BALLI version used for the present study consists of 35 items , 33 of which follow the Likert-type scale which follow a five-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree) and the remaining 2 items follow a different scale and response system. One is designed to measure the level of difficulty of English and the other the period of time necessary to learn a new language.

The questionnaire has been used to assess beliefs about language learning in five categories: beliefs about foreign language aptitude, beliefs about the difficulty of language learning, beliefs about the nature of language learning, beliefs about learning and communication strategies, and beliefs about motivations and expectations (see Annex 2). In order to complete this inventory, the learners are asked to fill out and respond to each statement using scales ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree as mentioned previously. The BALLI score does not yield a composite total, rather, the responses of each individual item are used “as discussion stimuli and as descriptions” (Horwitz, 1985, p. 334) of the participants’ views about language learning.

Likewise, in addition to Horwitz' studies, Kuntz (1996) adds that most quantitative studies that research individual language learning beliefs also use the BALLI or its variations. In Horwitz studies of 1987 and 1988, it is clear that her methods of data analysis are descriptive statistics seeing that the responses to agree, strongly disagree, etc. to each item are found and were used to report findings. However, De Costa (2011) reminds us that criticism on the use of questionnaires exists: Kalaja (as argued in De Costa 2011, p. 348) has said that "questionnaires only measure beliefs in theory and not on actual occasions of talk or writing" Benson and Lor (as cited in De Costa, 2012 p. 348) also criticize that questionnaires are not sufficient to adequately clarify "the complexity of learners' thinking about language learning." On the other hand some studies have made empirical research on the BALLI items, Nikitina & Furuoka, Truitt, Yang (as cited in Fujiwara, 2011) that in fact do measure the categories of the concept

On the other hand, Peacock (2001) reports that several studies have used the BALLI to research students' beliefs on English a second language. This report aims to show how learners' "incorrect" beliefs about foreign language can be harmful to their learning proficiency and overall communicative learning, the same as Horwitz (1988), Kern (1995), Mantle-Bromley (1995), and Samimy and Lee (1997) all asserted. In addition, these studies noted how overall satisfaction of the program being studied and the confidence with practitioners may suffer from the learning point of view. This concluded that teachers cannot ignore those beliefs that are found to be "incorrect" or negative when approaching an English class.. Although Peacock (1999) also used the BALLI to research ESL science, math and engineering students and not language learners he also reached the same conclusion that a strong association between proficiency and beliefs was found concluding.

These “incorrect” language learner beliefs negatively affected language learning; few empirical with little to no empirical studies have tested these ideas. Yang and Kim (2011) and De Costa (2011) agree with Peacock in that, other than a few exceptions (e.g., Alanen, Kim, Kim and Yang 8as cited in Yang & Kim (2011) not a sufficient amount of research has been performed to empirically examine learner beliefs and its influence on future learning.

This review of literature clarifies how the use of the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI), the understating of second and foreign language acquisition and the importance of how to approach adult language learners determine and foster an individual’s success in foreign language learning. It has also shown how a number of studies that have been conducted over the past decades have related the relationship to beliefs and factors such as motivation and autonomy can affect the outcome of adults when taking on this special challenge. In addition, it ratifies those adult second language learners’ beliefs are influenced and shaped by learners’ previous experiences. By the same token, it points out what second language teachers should keep in mind when approaching adults in an EFL classroom by illustrating the type of language learners and the distinct beliefs that may exist, and so on.

Given the complex dynamics and nature of beliefs that these adult language learners possess it is believed that they are not changed easily. However, it is established that some beliefs can change positively in order to represent a clear improvement in performance to the overall achievements reached in conquering beliefs and their negative impacts in foreign language learning.



## **2. Section II: Pedagogy for adults: Andragogy**

Moreover, in this final topic of the review of the literature, Knowles (1980), in his text *“The Modern Practice of Adult Education: Andragogy vs Pedagogy”* states that the term andragogy first appeared in 1833 when the German educator Alexander Kapp utilized it to refer to didactic interaction that was established between him and his adult night school students. While Knowles, Holton III, & Swanson (2005) illustrates that pedagogy is derived from the Greek word “paid” meaning child and “agogus” meaning the leader of which in turn means the art and science of teaching children while andragogy refers to the practice of teaching adults. The pedagogical model of education is a set of beliefs and thus being viewed by teachers on an ideology based on assumptions of teaching children since the seventh and twelfth centuries in Europe. Also, Knowles et al. (2005) assert that in the past decade the term andragogy has been used more and more by adult educators: in France (Bertrand Schwartz), England (J.A. Simpson), Venezuela (Felix Adam), and Canada (a Bachelor of andragogy degree program was established at Concordia University of Montreal in 1973). In the United States, toward the end of the sixties Malcolm Knowles began his works at initiating the foundations of andragogy, a reflection of education which refers exclusively to the learning and teaching of adults. At this historic time the term “andragogy” was not accepted until a few years later when the better known philosopher Johan Frederich Herbart acknowledged the word. Yet later, the German social scientist Eugen Rosenstock expressed the opinion that adult education required special teachers, special methods and a social philosophy, as Rosenstock (as cited in Knowles, 2005; p. 59) stated:

It is not enough to translate the insights of education theory or pedagogy to the situation of adults ... , the teachers should be professionals who could cooperate with the pupils: only such a teacher can be, in contrast to a ‘pedagogue,’ an ‘andragogue.’

It is an interesting fact that in the nineteenth century the pedagogical model in U.S. schools, including adult education was the only existing educational model used to teach both types of learners. Malcolm Knowles, the Father of Andragogy of the United States, in “*The Adult Learner*”, boldly asserted that:

“Systematic efforts to establish adult education programs in this country, initiated after WWI, also used this (pedagogical) model because it was the only model teachers had. As a result, until fairly recently, adults have been by and large taught as if they were children” (Knowles et al. 2005; p. 61).

For Knowles, the principles of andragogy are utilized in order to substantiate and intervene on the diverse contexts of adult education. Andragogy as a pedagogical theory makes it possible for adults to participate in a flexible manner in all educational processes. With these considerations it is impossible not to recognize adult education as an inseparable part of the educational system. This discipline has an increased relevance since it deals with specific goals that adult students wish to reach. All of which to strengthen their own development and that of the society they belong to. In this sense, the anagogical actions articulated in economic, political, social and cultural environment have directed the educational model to imagine and practice new educational forms different than those formal and rigid traditional processes of education. Adult education is not just a corrective educational system, rather than this it has been converted into an indispensable element in

the personal, social, coherent and organic development of each individual needs that correspond to the current, complex and changing needs of society technological challenges.

The current methods which are aimed at adult learners are used in the institution and by the practitioners are the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and the Direct Method. As Savignon (2007) claims that the essence of CLT is the engagement of learners in communication in order to allow them to develop their communicative competence and to foster these competences in order to characterize the ability of classroom language learners to interact with other speakers. In addition, as previously mentioned in the context section the Direct Method is also used; a language pedagogy which Berlitz and Jespersen institutionalized in the early 1900's. The goals of a teacher using the Direct Method, according to Larsen-Freeman (2008: 28) are, "Teachers who use the Direct Method intend that students learn how to communicate in the target language. In order to do this successfully, students should learn to think in the target language." These methods are used in order to highlight that the criteria for students' language learning is based on an oral evaluation which is seen in the instrument results and analysis.

Presently, adult education exists in the vast educational field, whether it be in formal or non-formal educational processes. To name a few examples that the present report has found are:

- Human Resource training for productive and service activities
- Specialized labor
- Literacy campaigns
- Political and Social participation courses

- Scientific and Technological development
- University studies

The development of these new approaches requires pedagogical theories in general and particularly andragogy that generates reflective and interceptive actions which articulate the development of the educational process in a better manner so that in a humanistic perspective the individual be the one to categorize his or her own destiny and of his or her own permanent improvement. These actions must be oriented at fostering and strengthening the adult as several of the assumptions of the Andragogical Model (as cited from Knowles, 2005; p. 62) indicate:

- The need to know: It is best for adults to need to know why they must learn tasks before undertaking the assignment.
- The learner's self-concept: Adults by nature are responsible for their self-concept and for making their own life decisions.
- The role of the learners' experiences: Adults, different from youths, enter educational activities a different quality and greater volume of experiences.
- Readiness to learn: Adults readiness to learn things they feel they need to know helps them cope effectively with real-life situations.
- Orientation to learning: By being life-centered and motivated to learn, adults perceive that learning will help them accomplish tasks from their daily lives.
- Motivation: Adults possess both external motivation (better jobs, promotions, higher salaries ...) and also internal needs (job satisfaction, self-esteem, quality of life...)

With this in mind, it is imperative to characterize each individual's reflective and interceptive andragogical actions to consider their needs, interests and expectations that determine the focus point of andragogy. This focus point should permit the conscious and committed participation of the individuals that participate in the instructional process to meet these adult language learners' direct needs in the work place and in today's global needs of English as a lingua Franca.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Methodology**

According to Kaplan (as cited in Conrad & Serlin, 2006) methodology concerns the process through which we construct scientific knowledge. It is the description, explanation, and justification of research methods (The sage handbook for research education op. cit. 2006, p. 373). Research method is a strategy of enquiry, which moves from the underlying assumptions to research design, and data collection Myers (as cited in Conrad & Serlin, 2006).

The present report was designed to use both qualitative and quantitative research methods to retrieve data due to the complex characteristics that beliefs about language learning possess. A qualitative research method can yield details information while a quantitative research method can obtain comprehensive and general findings. Hence, using a combination of both methods allows for triangulation of the data to achieve accurate and reliable findings (Ellis, 1994; Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1989; Conrad & Serlin, 2006).

According to the Conrad, C. & Serlin, R. (2006). a quantitative researcher relies on samples to inform knowledge about characteristics of a larger populace in order to estimate key parameters of the population so that the researcher can draw meaningful inferences from instruments that measure what they intend to measure. On the other hand, a qualitative research is holistic, empirical, interpretive and empathetic Stake (as cited in Conrad & Serlin, 2006). Empirical because it occurs in a natural setting such as the case in a communicative language teaching environment used in this study, and interpretive since it

focuses on gaining meaning and understanding and it also builds on concepts and theories Miles & Huberman (as cited in Conrad & Serlin. 2006).

## **Research Design**

The research design used for this study is a descriptive study which according to Sampieri, Fernández & Baptista (2006) describes specific situations and events (p.60). They are studies that are also conducted to demonstrate the understanding of a social situation from participants' perspectives. In addition, this research design acquires a major significance in this report as according to Dankhe (as cited in Sampieri et al., 2006): “Descriptive studies search for important properties of people, groups, communities and other circumstances which undergo analysis” (Hernández et al., 1998, p.60)

Research design can be thought of as a master plan or logic that clarifies how the study is to be conducted. Yin (1994) states that “colloquially a research design is an action plan for getting from *here* to *there*, where ‘*here*’ may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered and ‘*there*’ is some set of (conclusions) answers” (p. 19). The research design can also break down the basic strategies that the investigator adopts in order to generate exact or interpretable information. The design of this present research is descriptive. It seeks to answer the interrogatives that the research proposes based on the revision of documents according to a contemporary cross-sectional study. Given that the interest of the investigator is focused on the study of the event at a unique moment in the present and that the focus is constant as Hurtado de Barrera (2000) states “it is

characterized because the collection of data is focalized on a unique event, whether it is to describe, compare, analyze or explain the research.”

The research conducted herein corresponds to a non-probability sampling which according to Hurtado de Barrera (2000) refers to the methods employed when the data of interest are collected directly from reality by means of concrete studies of an investigation. Non-probability sampling is used when a particular trait exists in a population and is suitable for in-depth qualitative research in which the focus is often to understand complex social phenomena (Marshall 1996).

## **Population**

The subjects in this research study are made up of an experimental group (the group of participants that are given the independent variable for this research). This group is composed of seven (7) adult English learners over the age of 25 years old at an A1 level. The group is composed of 4 female participants and 3 male. Their average age is 41 years old, the youngest being 34 and the eldest 55 years old. Since the population belongs to adult professionals it is important to note that their professions are three industrial engineers, three accountants and one business graduate. Five of the learners occupy a Managerial position and two are assistant managers. Although these individuals' careers vary they all work as dependent employees. The departments they work in are also unique to each individual, they are as follows: Student 1 (female, 39, industrial engineer) works in the Planning department, Student 2 (male, 34, industrial engineer) in purchasing, student 3 (female, 34, accountant) in treasury, student 4 (male, 37, industrial engineer) in sales,



student 5 (female, 42, accountant) in finance, student 6 (male, 48, business) in production and student 7 (female, 55, accountant) in finance as well.

This is a purposeful sampling, a non-probability method of sampling with the benefit, as Patton (as cited in Conrad & Serlin. 2006) states, “Any common patterns that emerge from great variation are of particular interest and value in capturing the core experience and central, shared dimensions of a setting or phenomenon”. Three evaluations will be carried out to the study population – an initial assessment, formative evaluations and a final summative evaluation.

### **Data Collection**

Three major sources of data were used in this report. The first type of data comes from the formative and summative assessment to elicit quantitative facts: performance activities and observations which provide qualitative data. The third source used is a survey known as the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI),

#### ***Level of English assessment***

An initial assessment (Annex 1) is given as seen in figure (Table 1) which elicits the level of prior knowledge and intuitions that each of the students possess. In this case it identifies that the learners are of the same initial level, A1. The initial assessment shows that each of the five oral competences, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, pronunciation and structure are labeled and classified as N/A (non-applicable) because their initial level is a total beginner.

### ***Formative Assessments***

The primary data sources for this research are formative assessments, also known as assessments *for* learning, which occur while learning is still underway. These assessments are given systematically at 12 weeks or a minimum of 36 hours in order to determine the general progress each participant has incurred regarding his or her oral competences. The results of these formative assessments are found in the results and analysis section of this report.

### ***Summative assessment***

The goal of a summative assessment is to evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional unit or level by comparing it against some standard or benchmark. The summative assessment for this report is performed at the end of the course program which lasts approximately 36 weeks. In this case the benchmark that is being compared is the BALLI which was given to the participants at the beginning of the research. With the results of the BALLI and the assessments the both the positive and negative beliefs that were found to be helpful or detrimental can be better examined in the analysis section of this paper. A similar “initial assessment”, a final summative assessment, is then repeated in order to confirm and measure that a desired goal has been achieved throughout the process.

### ***BALLI***

The Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory was also used to collect information about the participants’ beliefs. (See Annex 2)

### *Instruments*

The selected participants in the experimental group signed an informed consent before the research was begun. This consent is the permission and clear appreciation and understanding of the facts, implications, and consequences of the research. The present study employed several research methods. The four instruments used during this research are: the initial assessment, the Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) (Horwitz, 1988), formative assessments and the final summative assessment.

The initial Assessment conducted to each of the participants in the sample group determined that the level of the population is an A1 level. The initial assessment is an oral type evaluation that determines if there is a previous communicative level of the students before embarking on their new English program. The result of this assessment confirms learners' oral competences and abilities with regards to English knowledge taking into account fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, pronunciation and structure of the English language. These types of assessments are known as Performance tests which include portfolios, Exhibitions or Demonstrations. "Performance assessment of higher-level thinking often emphasize 'doing', open-ended activities for which there is no once correct answer" Stiggins, Arter, Chappuis & Chappuis (2007). There is a common goal in performance assessments: they all try to involve some type of cooperative learning in order to improve positive outcomes and to reach educational goals. These types of assessments are carried out at any point during the program and are taken into account by the practitioners when each type of assessment is being carried out. In Annex 4, an average of the grades obtained can be found.

Subsequently, the version of Horwitz' 35-item Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI), translated from English to Spanish was used for this study. The translation from English into Spanish was done by the researcher who is a balanced bilingual, as according to Baker (2006) "Someone who is approximately equally fluent in two languages across various contexts may be termed an equilingual or ambilingual or, more commonly, a balanced bilingual". In addition to the translation performed by the researcher, a Colombian certified translator from Ministry of Foreign Affairs verified that the questionnaire is accurate and complete to the best of the translator's knowledge and ability. The participants were asked to rate statements on the beliefs about language learning on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree) for 33 items. The remaining two items had a different scale and different response options. They measured the level of difficulty of English (item 13) and the period of time necessary to learn a new language (item 14). The questionnaire is divided into 5 categories: (1) Aptitude, (2) Difficulty, (3) Nature, (4) Learning and (5) Motivations toward a foreign language. The BALLI questionnaire helps learners become aware and conscience of the existence of beliefs.

Similarly, a formative type assessment report that measures the progress of students was used to ensure that the participants were following the planned process in which assessment-elicited evidence is being monitored by teachers and that the learners' ongoing instruction procedures adjust to their current learning outcomes and finally that the material being covered was understood. (See Annex 4)

Finally, a final summative assessment, in accordance and linked to the initial assessment confirms how the learners' preconceived positive or negative beliefs are linked

to the final general results that the students obtained at the end of the level. The group of seven students all began at an A1 level which was determined by their initial assessment on the first day of class. This initial assessment was performed by way of oral questions that clearly determined that each of the participants has an elementary knowledge of the English language. At the end of the program the same seven students successfully completed the A1 level and are now ready to commence a new level known as A2, according to the Common European Framework. It is important to keep in mind that this new level may or not be approved by their local H.R. departments regardless of their positive outcome during their initial progress.

## **Results and Analysis**

### **Results**

This section presents the results found throughout this study. The first part of this section presents the results of the initial assessment given to the participants when they started the course. (See Annex 1), followed by the results obtained with the BALLI and concluding with the results from the formative and summative assessments of the seven participants' oral communication skills.

The following questions are found in the first part of the initial assessment which establish each participants previous contact with the language in order to show the preliminary parameters that the seven students possess. The following questions are translated into English from original which were asked in Spanish, the local language of the students:

Question 1: Have you taken English classes in the last two years and where?

Question 2: Are you taking English classes at the moment and where?

Question 3: What is your motive to take a language class?

Question 4: Does your current work position require the new language?

Question 5: How often do you use the new language?

In this section the report will analyze the results of the instruments used to reveal students initial communication levels, previous language learning experiences, motivations and goals when commencing an adult language learning scenario.

With attention to the initial assessment, it can be determined that neither of the seven (7) students had taken classes within the last 2 years. This confirms the little previous knowledge that each of the seven (7) students had at the beginning of their foreign language learning program, especially since university level language programs generally used to dedicate their aim to understanding technical concepts from each career. All seven (7) students coincide that their principal motivation to take a language course is instrumental or external; they study in order for them to seek new employment or to maintain their current positions. Subsequently, the seven (7) learners reaffirm the previous question by asserting that orientation to learning a language must be aimed at their current life-centered needs, while learning other important aspects of language communication. Correspondingly, all students concur that English is used on a daily basis in their present workplace.

Thus confirming the absolute and indispensable need they have in learning a foreign language. By taking this course they also recognize that they will better enhance their opportunities to access better work opportunities which follows the lines of the Andragogical Model previously mentioned. Student's knowledge of EFL will also make them more competitive in an ever growing business environment in which those without this skill will not have the same opportunities to succeed.

Finally, the Initial Assessment finishes with a Self-Assessment question regarding each student's perspectives as to their current English level. Although the seven (7) learners all categorically responded that they are total beginners each individual passed through a series of verbal questions that involve simple types of questions using the verb "to be", present progressive, simple present tense, third person, grammatical numbers and prepositions of place to confirm that these adult learners are all A1 level beginner students.

Although these questions are based on a grammatical type structure they are only considered in order to determine their initial communicative knowledge and not their capability to construct grammatically correct sentences. According to the Common European Framework for Languages (CEFR), at the end of the course they will have a solid A1 level. According to what the CEFR, at the end of the course, the students:

Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help (2011).

7 According to your language experience, please indicate with an X the level that best describes your current level of English.

- I am a total beginner.
- I can give simple information of myself and ask simple questions of others.
- I am able to understand and make myself understood in everyday situations.
- I can have conversations with little effort among native speakers of the language.
- I converse fluently about general topics and I participate comfortably in social and professional discussions.
- I have an excellent command of the language.

Thank you for your time, this information will be of great help.



**TO BE USED BY ADMIN.**

**LANGUAGE** \_\_\_\_\_ **LEVEL** \_\_\_\_\_

**EVALUATION**

	Fluency	Vocabulary	Comprehension	Pronunciation	Retention	Structure	Writing	Reading	General
<b>Answers</b>									
	Self Correctin	Motiviation	QFS Fluency	QFS Struct	QFS difficulty				General
<b>Questions</b>									

**LOCATION FOR CLASSES**

H/O/other \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**EXPERIENCE**

Abroad \_\_\_\_\_  
 Institue \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

- |   |  |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> to be<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input type="checkbox"/> third person<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/> pres.progressive<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> plurals<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>               |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> is there/are there<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> how much/many<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/> do vs does<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/> simple pres.<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>          | 2 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> was/were<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> simple past<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/> future going to<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> future will<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>           | 3 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> can<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>                | <input type="checkbox"/> present perfect<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/> pres perfect prog<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> condicional<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>           | 4 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> past perfect<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/> siblings<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> harbor<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/> downfalls<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>             | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> petrified / haggle<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> fine print / jigsaw<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> set up appointment<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> thunderstorms / broth<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |   |

**COMMENTS:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Table 1: The initial self-assessment for new students**

**BALLI**

The purpose of applying the questionnaire known as the BALLI (Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory) developed by Elaine Horwitz (1988) was to initially

recognize some beliefs that students possess regarding language learning. This instrument was given to seven (7) language learners whose initial level is A1, according to the CEFR. The participants' responses to the 35 items that fall under five categories: beliefs about foreign language aptitude, beliefs about the difficulty of language learning, beliefs about the nature of language learning, beliefs about learning and communication strategies, and beliefs about motivations and expectations were analyzed in order to investigate their beliefs about language learning.

### **Section I of the BALLI – Beliefs about foreign language aptitude**

In the first section, as seen below in Table 2 and also available in its entirety as Annex 3, we see “beliefs about foreign language aptitudes”. Each section contains several questions that will take part of the results of this report. In this 9 question section we clearly see that all seven (7) participants responded 100% that they strongly agree that children learn a foreign language easier than adults. This concurs with the long existing belief that people have regarding the critical period hypotheses (CPH) which states that the first few years of life is when a language develops readily while second language acquisition can be more complex. Major (2014) observes that this hypothesis extends only to first language acquisition and that there is no indication that the CPH would benefit or would not second language acquisition (SLA). As White and Genesee (as cited in Cook, 1999) stated, “Ultimate attainment in an L2 can indeed be native-like in the UG [universal grammar]

domain” (p. 258).

**I. BELIEFS ABOUT FOREIGN LANGUAGE APTITUDE**

1. It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.
2. Some people have a special ability for learning foreign languages such as English.
3. It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.
4. I have a special ability for learning foreign languages.
5. Women are better than men at learning foreign languages.
6. People who are good at mathematics or science are not good at learning foreign languages.
7. People who speak more than one language are intelligent.
8. Colombian people are good at learning foreign languages.
9. Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.

PERCENTAGE					
SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
14%	14%	43%	14%	14%	100%
		29%	43%	29%	100%
	14%	86%			100%
14%	14%	71%			100%
71%	14%	14%			100%
14%	14%	71%			100%
		29%	71%		100%
				100%	100%

**Table 2: Section I of the BALLI**

This corroborates that we cannot conclude that these adult participants will not learn a foreign language based on their ages, instead that they are well capable of succeeding in this task. For question 2 the participants were generally spread out with their response regarding whether people in general have a special ability to learn a language. A large amount, 43%, of the participants did agree that having knowledge of a previous language can be beneficial when learning a third language or in this case English. The questionnaire also revealed that 86% and 71% of the adults the participants were neutral when they considered that they had a special ability to learn a language or that women were better at learning a language, respectively. On the other hand 71% strongly disagreed that individuals that are good at other subjects such as math and science are not good at learning a language. This could possibly be due to the fact that most, if not all, the participants generally hold undergraduate degrees in either business or engineering. When asked if people that speak more than one language are more intelligent or that if Colombians are good at learning a foreign language 71% marked neutral for the question regarding being intelligent, while 71% felt that Colombians are good at new languages. On the final question about these beliefs 100% of the participants felt that everyone can learn to speak a

foreign language, although in the first of the nine questions in the first section they tend to pin point that it is children that accomplish this task with ease. This question also shows us that it is important that students are aware that everyone can learn a language before taking on the challenge of learning a new language in order for them to have confidence and to commence with a positive attitude toward a new Language. For the most part, the questions in this section deal more with negative beliefs that are linked to students' aptitude toward learning a language.

## **Section II of the BALLI – Beliefs about the difficulty of language learning**

The results obtained in section II of the BALLI as seen in Table 3 regard beliefs about the difficulty of language learning. This section refers to the general difficulty of learning a language and to the perception that the specific language that is being taken currently has on the participants. 86% of the participants of this population agree that some languages are easier to learn than others while the remaining 14% remain neutral in respect to this question. The following two questions which relate both to the difficulty of speaking to comprehension and reading to speaking 57% of the participants agree that this it is easier to speak than to understand what others say and that reading is easier than speaking and listening.

II. BELIEFS ABOUT THE DIFFICULTY OF LANGUAGE LEARNING		PERCENTAGE					
		SD/1	D/2	N/3	A/4	SA/5	Total
10	Some languages are easier to learn than others.			14%	86%		100%
11	In learning English, it is easier to speak than to understand what people say.	14%		29%	57%		100%
12	In learning English, reading is easier than speaking and listening.	14%		14%	57%	14%	100%
13	I think English is: 1 = a very difficult language, 2 = a difficult language, 3 = a language of medium difficulty, 4 = an easy language, 5 = a very easy language.		71%	14%	14%		100%
14	If someone spent one hour learning English everyday, how long would it take him or her to speak English well. 1 = less than a year, 2 = 1-2 years, 3 = 3-5 years, 4 = 5-0 years, 5 = you can't learn a language one hour per day.	14%	71%	14%			100%

**Table 3: Section II of the BALLI**

On a general basis the students that are being surveyed all believe that understanding a foreigner is a tough task due to the fact that within their environment native speakers speak fast. Parallely, it is easier for students to read vs speak because their jobs and educational background have always entailed texts that are written in English which gives them the benefit of understanding written text much before speaking and listening, in addition to the lack of opportunities they have to find English speakers in order to improve their language competences. The fourth question from section II is notably as important as the fifth which, different from the other 33 questions that follow the Likert type scale, they follow a simple question response system. When asked the direct question regarding the difficulty of English, 71%, five of the seven students, agreed that English is a difficult language while only 14% felt that is a medium difficult language and the remaining 14% felt that it is an easy language. Similarly, 71% also agreed that to learn a language would take 1 to 2 years to speak English well if one hour a day was dedicated to learning, whereas 14% felt that it could be done within one year, and the other 14% agreed that it would take 3 to 5 years. As has been noted, the topics of beliefs that deal with

difficulty are considered negative in questions 10, 11 and 12 while the remaining 2 questions, 13 and 14 are positive.

### Section III of the BALLI – Beliefs about the nature of language learning

Regarding beliefs about the nature of language learning, the following can be said. 86% of the respondents disagree and the remaining 14% strongly disagree that it is necessary to know customs or cultures of English-speaking people in order to speak correctly. Being that the learners are adults, it is interesting to see that the majority of the participants, 43% and 29% for a total of 71% agreed and strongly agreed respectively that it is best to learn English abroad in an English-speaking country.

III. BELIEFS ABOUT THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE LEARNING		PERCENTAGE					
		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
15	It is necessary to know the customs, the cultures, and the ways of life of English-speaking people in order to speak English correctly.	14%	86%				100%
16	It is best to learn English in an English-speaking country.			29%	43%	29%	100%
17	Learning vocabulary words is an important part of learning English.		14%	71%		14%	100%
18	Learning the grammar is an important part of learning English.		14%	71%		14%	100%
19	Learning English is different from learning other academic subjects.		14%	14%	57%	14%	100%
20	Learning how to translate is an important part of learning English.	14%	71%	14%			100%
21	Educational beliefs and cultures are important to learn English.	57%	14%	14%	14%		100%

**Table 4: Section III of the BALLI**

The question that asks if learning vocabulary or grammar are an important part of learning English was answered with sparse responses that range from disagree to agree. However, 71% on both questions remained neutral. The participants showed strong support by 57% marking that learning English is different than learning other academic subjects, which clearly follows the model of andragogy's need to know. The majority disagree that learning to translate has any benefit when learning a new language and that the supposed nature to know how to translate is not a must. Finally, 57% of the individuals that took the

BALLI strongly disagree that educational beliefs and cultures are important to learn English.

#### Section IV of the BALLI – Beliefs about learning and communication strategies

The fourth section of the BALLI helps determine the beliefs about learning and communication strategies that may exist in language learners. Most of the participants, 71%, disagree and 14% strongly disagree that Spanish is structured the same as the L2 they are about to learn, while the remaining 14% felt neutral on the matter. Regarding pronunciation of the L2 language to be acquired, a whopping 71% responded neutral to the importance of speaking with a correct pronunciation, and the remaining 29% disagree that it has importance. 71% of these adult learners strongly disagree and 14% of them disagree that it is necessary to say things correctly, which coincides with the adult learners' self-concept to learn and practice what is needed.

IV. BELIEFS ABOUT LEARNING AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES	PERCENTAGE					Total
	SD	D	N	A	SA	
22 English is structured the same as Spanish.	14%	71%	14%			100%
23 It is important to speak English with a correct pronunciation.				71%	29%	100%
24 We shouldn't say anything in English until we can say it correctly.		29%	43%	29%		100%
25 It's O.K. to guess if we don't know a word in English.		14%	57%	14%	14%	100%
26 In learning English, it is important to practice a lot.					100%	100%
27 I feel timid speaking English with other people.			14%	71%	14%	100%
28 If beginning students are permitted to make errors in English, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on.		14%	29%	57%		100%
29 In learning English, it is important to practice with CD's/audio.			14%	71%	14%	100%

**Table 5: Section IV of the BALLI**

In the following question we see that 57% of individuals are neutral that guessing a word is neither ok nor wrong. The question that relates to the amount of practice and therefore also follows the methodology used for teaching English by the institution and practitioners confirms that 100% of all participants strongly agree that practice does make perfect. By allowing practice, there will always be progress in the overall results of

learners. In order to avoid fossilization, which is an important factor when learning a new language, 57% of the participants agree that correction is a must in order to speak adequately. And finally, the section regarding strategies does confirm that the majority of the participants feel they require extra materials, other than classroom practice, at home.

### Section V of the BALLI – Beliefs about motivations and expectations

Finally, in the last section of the BALLI we see beliefs about motivations and expectations. Although only 71% of the population strongly agrees and 29% agrees that they will learn English, it is apparent that 100% belong to the agree side of the expectation that they will all learn to communicate in their new L2, but yet only 29% of the respondents agree, and 14% strongly agree that they will practice the new L2 if given the chance by meeting English speakers.

		PERCENTAGE					
		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
30	I believe I will learn English very well.				29%	71%	100%
31	If I hear people speaking English, I try to practice speaking with them.			57%	29%	14%	100%
32	I want to learn English well because it can help me access information from around the world.				71%	29%	100%
33	If I can use English well, I will have better opportunities for a good job.				29%	71%	100%
34	Colombian people feel that it is very important to learn English.				71%	29%	100%
35	I would like to learn English so that I can get to know people who speak English better.				71%	29%	100%

**Table 6: Section V of the BALLI**

A total of 100%, 71% agree and 29% strongly agree that better opportunities will come with learning a new language which agrees with instrumental motivation. With similar results when asked if it is important for Colombian people to speak English, a total of 100% also agree. Along the same lines, and in closing of the BALLI questionnaires, 71% of the population agrees that they would like to learn the language so that they can get to know other English speakers better. All things considered, this section that involves



motivations and expectations deals with positive beliefs that are directly related to the general outcome students' oral communication progress for the level. It is also a great place to note that none of the seven participants disagreed with any of the questions asked.

### **Scoring the BALLI – Scorecard**

In order to better decipher the BALLI, the instrument was divided into both positive beliefs and negative beliefs that represent students' previous opinions of what they could expect from a language program or from their previous language learning experiences. These scores were assigned by a minus two (-2) to two (2) range. Minus two (-2) being a "strongly disagree" to a two (2) being a "strongly agree" when measuring the positive beliefs found in the BALLI instrument. On the other hand, when the beliefs were considered to be negative, they were assigned an opposite score of two (2) for "strongly disagree" and a minus two (-2) for "strongly agree". In both cases, all "neutral" responses were given a score of "zero" (0). This numbering system was designed to help find where the students, according to their evaluations throughout the course, could be measured in relation to the beliefs they had at the beginning of the program.

In the first section of the BALLI that measures beliefs about language learning aptitudes, the end result is that all seven participants resulted in having positive numbers, above zero, except student 5, which obtained a zero as a final score. When checking the scores for the second category of the BALLI, beliefs about the difficulty about language learning, the figures are all within a normal range of a positive three to a negative five, except for student 5, which scored below average by receiving a negative 7. The third section of the BALLI, that covers the nature of language learning, also had varied figures.

**I. BELIEFS ABOUT FOREIGN LANGUAGE APTITUDE**

1. It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.
2. Some people have a special ability for learning foreign languages such as English.
3. It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.
4. I have a special ability for learning foreign languages.
5. Women are better than men at learning foreign languages.
6. People who are good at mathematics or science are not good at learning foreign languages.
7. People who speak more than one language are intelligent.
8. Colombian people are good at learning foreign languages.
9. Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.

SCORECARD						
STD 1	STD 2	STD 3	STD 4	STD 5	STD 6	STD 7
2	2	2	2	2	2	2
-1	-2	1	0	-2	2	-2
-1	-2	0	-2	-2	0	-2
1	-2	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1
2	2	0	1	0	2	2
2	0	1	2	0	2	2
0	2	1	2	0	2	2
1	2	1	0	1	0	2
2	1	2	2	2	2	0
8	3	7	6	0	11	5

**II. BELIEFS ABOUT THE DIFFICULTY OF LANGUAGE LEARNING**

- 10 Some languages are easier to learn than others.
- 11 In learning English, it is easier to speak than to understand what people say.
- 12 In learning English, reading is easier than speaking and listening.
- 13 I think English is: 1 = a very difficult language, 2 = a difficult language, 3 = a language of medium difficulty, 4 = an easy language, 5 = a very easy language.
- 14 If someone spent one hour learning English everyday, how long would it take him or her to speak English well.  
1 = less than a year, 2 = 1-2 years, 3 = 3-5 years, 4 = 5-10 years, 5 = you can't learn a language one hour per day.

SCORECARD						
STD 1	STD 2	STD 3	STD 4	STD 5	STD 6	STD 7
-1	1	-1	-1	-1	0	-2
2	1	0	-1	-1	0	-2
2	1	-1	-1	-2	0	2
0	1	1	-1	-1	-1	0
0	0	-1	-1	-2	-1	-1
3	4	-2	-5	-7	-2	-3

**III. BELIEFS ABOUT THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE LEARNING**

- 15 It is necessary to know the customs, the cultures, and the ways of life of English-speaking people in order to speak English correctly.
- 16 It is best to learn English in an English-speaking country.
- 17 Learning vocabulary words is an important part of learning English.
- 18 Learning the grammar is an important part of learning English.
- 19 Learning English is different from learning other academic subjects.
- 20 Learning how to translate is an important part of learning English.
- 21 Educational beliefs and cultures are important to learn English.

SCORECARD						
STD 1	STD 2	STD 3	STD 4	STD 5	STD 6	STD 7
2	2	1	1	1	1	-2
-1	2	-2	0	-2	0	-2
1	1	0	0	-2	1	-2
1	-1	0	0	-2	0	-1
0	2	1	2	-1	1	2
1	1	1	1	0	2	-2
2	-2	-1	0	2	1	-2
6	5	0	4	-4	6	-9

**IV. BELIEFS ABOUT LEARNING AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES**

- 22 English is structured the same as Spanish.
- 23 It is important to speak English with a correct pronunciation.
- 24 We shouldn't say anything in English until we can say it correctly.
- 25 It's O.K. to guess if we don't know a word in English.
- 26 In learning English, it is important to practice a lot.
- 27 I feel timid speaking English with other people.
- 28 If beginning students are permitted to make errors in English, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on.
- 29 In learning English, it is important to practice with CD's/audio.

SCORECARD						
STD 1	STD 2	STD 3	STD 4	STD 5	STD 6	STD 7
1	-1	0	1	1	2	-2
1	2	1	0	0	0	-2
2	2	1	2	-1	2	1
0	2	1	-1	0	-2	-2
2	2	1	1	2	1	2
-1	-1	0	-1	-2	-1	2
0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
2	0	1	1	1	0	2
7	6	6	3	2	1	1

**V. BELIEFS ABOUT MOTIVATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS**

- 30 I believe I will learn English very well.
- 31 If I hear people speaking English, I try to practice speaking with them.
- 32 I want to learn English well because it can help me access information from around the world.
- 33 If I can use English well, I will have better opportunities for a good job.
- 34 Colombian people feel that it is very important to learn English.
- 35 I would like to learn English so that I can get to know people who speak English better.

SCORECARD						
STD 1	STD 2	STD 3	STD 4	STD 5	STD 6	STD 7
1	1	1	2	2	2	2
1	1	0	1	2	0	2
1	2	1	2	2	1	2
1	2	2	2	2	1	2
1	2	1	2	2	1	2
1	2	1	2	2	1	2
6	10	6	11	12	6	12

**Table 7: BALLI Scorecard**



“fluently”. This perspective is reflected in history when headlines state that people speak many languages “fluently” and that they can switch from one to another effortlessly. To many, fluency implies that the process of learning a new language has been fulfilled when in reality it is only one of many competences that must be attained in order to have fluent discourse with one another. As Cook (1999) explains, a person that speaks two or more languages should be viewed as a multicompetent speaker. This distortive process that speakers use is code-switching. Code switching, according to Cook (1999), is “the most obvious achievement of the multicompetent user that monolingual native speakers cannot duplicate, as they have no language to switch into.”

As an illustration to fluency we find that in both the two formative evaluation samples and the final summative evaluation, fluency had a notable improvement. As on the analysis of the results of the BALLI we find that on question 14 relates to this result, 71% of the population agreed that by practicing one hour a day between 1 to 2 years they would learn to speak well, when in reality this improvement has been achieved in less than a year, pinpointing this to be a negative belief.

Parallely, comprehension is yet another learning competence that showed gradual but yet a firm improvement. Although questions 11, 12 and 13 do not solely relate to comprehension, they do provide us with a description that the adults that took the BALLI generally agree that it is easier to speak the language than to understand it, that it is easier to read than to listen and that the English language is a difficult language overall. The improvement in the evaluation system all go against their negative initial beliefs because they show that comprehension did improve throughout this learning process.

Therefore, the final section of the BALLI contemplates beliefs about motivation and expectations. For the most part, as we can clearly see from the summative evaluation, there is a high level of attendance which can be interpreted into high motivation. As the andragogy model by Knowles (2005) reminds us, adults have a readiness to learn and they are oriented at learning. Questions 30, 32, and 33 positively are confirmed when in all three cases the agreement was undebatable, 100% were all located to the agree to strongly agree side of the scale, which characterizes and identifies their motivations and expectations by taking such an endeavor. All things considered, the analysis of the instruments yielded that although students do possess both negative and positive beliefs before commencing with a language program, it is of great benefit to apply the BALLI so that these preconceived notions can come to light and they can also be dealt with accordingly by the practitioners and institution alike.

## **Analysis**

The results of students' progress throughout the study yielded an interesting outcome when the BALLI is broken down into a numerical result that reflects positive and negative figures. These figures compared to the progress of each student measured by a percentage allowed the report to clarify how the beliefs and progress affected each other. The skills that were taken into account in the assessments were; fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, pronunciation and structure.

In the Overall student comparison chart each of the seven students are seen individually. The first half of the chart profiles each student by gender, age, profession and position held in their workplace. We can say that the group is homogeneous in that it complies with the study of adult males over the age of 25. In addition all participants possess a high level employment position by either being the manager of their respective departments or assistant manager. The seven students are divided into 4 female and 3 male students and their average age is 41. Although it cannot be determined that age is a definite factor of progress due to the small population of the study the report did yield that the student with the highest progress, 23%, was the youngest and the student that had the least progress, 10%, was the oldest. As mentioned previously the group was conformed of both male and female learners gender was not part of the aim for this paper.

Overall student comparison chart				
Profile of students	Gender	Age	Position	Profession
Student 1	F	39	Manager	Industrial Engineer
Student 2	M	34	Manager	Industrial Engineer
Student 3	F	34	Ass Manager	Accountant
Student 4	M	37	Manager	Industrial Engineer
Student 5	F	42	Ass Manager	Accountant
Student 6	M	48	Manager	Business Admin.
Student 7	F	55	Manager	Accountant
<b>Significant overall performance indicators</b>				
	Beliefs About Foreign Language aptitud	Beliefs About the Difficulty of Language Learning	Beliefs About the Nature of Language learning	Formative Progress: Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension, Pronunciation, Structure
<b>Range</b>	-18 to +18	-10 to +10	-14 to +14	0% to 24%
Student 1	8	3	6	14.0%
Student 2	3	4	6	<b>23.3%</b>
Student 3	7	-2	5	22.0%
Student 4	6	-5	5	14.0%
Student 5	0	-7	-4	12.0%
Student 6	11	-2	6	<b>10.0%</b>
Student 7	5	-3	-9	22.0%
<b>Overall Average</b>	6	-2	2	17%

**Table 9: Overall Student Comparison Chart**

In the lower part of the chart the comparison of the significant performance indicators are found. This section breaks down the range of the BALLI as seen in Table 7 by determining a total positive score and a total negative score within the sections of the BALLI. The chart only shows three significant sections that represent variables that stray away from one another from student to student. The remaining two sections of the BALLI that are not in the chart are not shown as their results revealed normal trends among the seven students. The sections that are not shown are Beliefs About Learning and Communication Strategies and Beliefs about Motivations and Expectations.

The ranges seen on the chart, as explained in the section Scoring the BALLI, correspond to a minus two (-2) to a positive two (+2) range. Minus two (-2) being a “strongly disagree” to a two (2) being a “strongly agree” when measuring the positive beliefs found in the BALLI instrument. The ranges of ( $\pm$ ) 18, ( $\pm$ ) 10 and ( $\pm$ ) 14 respectively correspond to the amount of question that each section contains 8, 5 and 7 questions.

When analyzing the Beliefs About Foreign Language Aptitude the results were conclusive that all participants scored positively or in the case of student 5 that scored neutral that no special ability is needed to learn a language. The only exception to this is that all seven students agreed that it is easier for children to learn a foreign language. Notwithstanding the final verdict of the participants is that everyone can learn to speak in a foreign language which is reflected in that all students received positive progress in their assessments.

Concerning the relative difficulty of language learning, most of the learners reported believing that learning a new language would have certain difficulties even though speaking the language would be easier than comprehending the language. They also reported that most anyone could learn to speak a language with dedication within 3 to 5 years of taking on the new challenge. When comparing the difficulty of reading and writing skills with listening and speaking skills, they reported that reading alone was easier than listening and speaking which is partly due to their past experiences with traditional learning methods, this closely relates to their average age of 41 as mentioned previously.

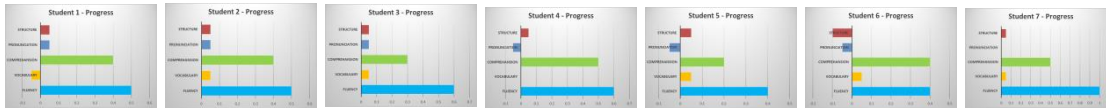
Regarding the beliefs about the nature of language learning the questionnaire reported mixed reviews. Both positive and negative responses were obtained from each of



the seven students and the range of scores was the highest. The total difference found was 15 points on this scorecard. The majority did agree to disagree that customs and cultures of English speaking countries are important to learn in order to speak a new language. There was no strong consensus among the learners that the nature of English learning has in comparison to other subjects and about the role of lexical memorization. Not surprisingly the majority of respondents did agree that it was best to learn English in an English-speaking country. Again, this section corresponds to the nature that adults have when faced with traditional methods and approaches that link their preconceived beliefs that children do learn a language easier than an adult.

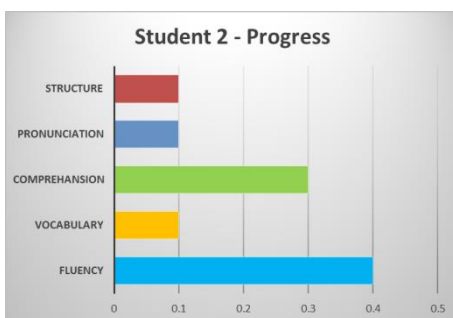
Although the progress obtained by the seven students is positive there are some percentages that stand out more than others. Student 2 and 6 will be later discussed in the analysis. The average progress as seen in the chart is 17%. This, even though positive, shows that the difference from the lowest progress 10% to the highest progress 23% is quite different. By the same token, the relation between the averages of aptitude, difficulty and nature of beliefs of the language and the overall progress of the participant's yields that each column remains relatively stable; aptitude shows positive numbers, difficulty shows negative numbers and the nature of the language yields positive numbers. This combination of numbers resulted in a positive progress for each student.

After carefully reviewing the results of the assessments of the participants the report found that there are several important aspects to be analysed in order to determine the progress of each student vs the results of the BALLI. We will take a close look at the actual progress that the learners' had instead of the grades obtained during the A1 level.

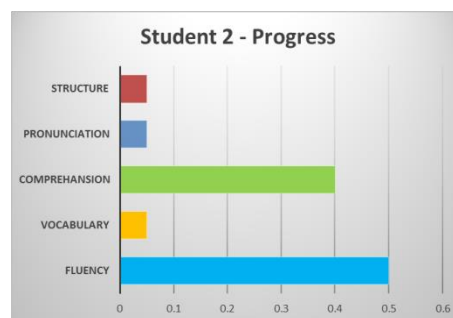


According to the progress that the seven students had from the first summative assessment compared to the formative assessment it is clear that all seven students showed improvement in fluency and comprehension regardless of their sex, age or profession. The questions from the BALLI that directly relate to the factors of fluency and comprehension are found in the beliefs about learning and communication and strategies section of the questionnaire, specifically questions 25, 27, 28, 29 (see annex 2). Despite the participants answering these questions in no particular order they all progresses in this oral communicative skill.

The students that this analysis will take a closer look at are student 2 which had the greatest progress taking into account all the competences measured throughout the level and student 6 which represented the lowest general progress in the competences especially in structure and pronunciation that yielded negative progress.



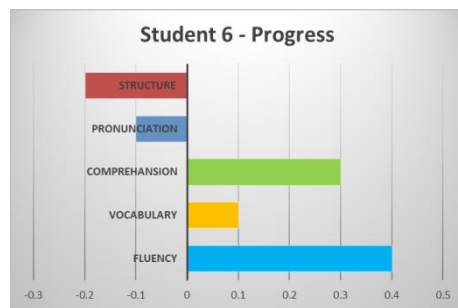
Formative 1 vs Formative 2



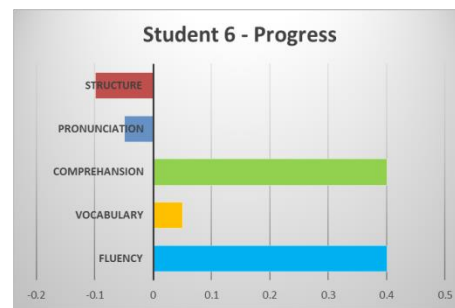
Formative 1 vs Summative

Student 2, a 34 year-old male that is an industrial engineer working as a purchasing manager, obtained the overall highest marks in progress and also had several differences in the scoring of the categories of the BALLI. In the first section the section “beliefs about foreign language aptitude the student, as all other seven participants strongly agreed that it is easier for children to learn a foreign language. However, on this same section the student presented unique choices. When asked if he believed that he had a special ability to learn a language he was the only one to respond “strongly disagree” which is connected to the overall progress of each student. Curiously, when asked “people who are good at mathematics or science are not good at learning a FL” he was also the only one to respond “neutral”. This shows us that the student feels that his profession has no direct connection to progress. The third and last question from this first section that is “everyone can learn to speak a FL” the student uniquely responded that he agrees whereas all other participants responded that they “strongly agree”. Interestingly the least modest answer showed more progress than everyone else that responded “strongly agree”. Moving on to the second section of the BALLI that showed illustrative answers the student responded that he “disagreed” to “some languages area easier to learn than others” meaning that he again, along with student 1 - the second best student to show progress, believes that all languages are equal in the learning process. When responding to the statement “if someone spent one hour learning English every day, how long would it take him or her to speak English well” the learner responded that he believed that it would take 3 to 5 years. The answer with the highest response was 1 to 3 years which again shows that the student took on the challenge of learning a FL with the thought that it takes time and effort to learn, while the student with the least progress responded quite the opposite (this will be analysed in the coming paragraph). In section III “beliefs about the nature of language learning” the student

responded “neutral” to the statement “learning English is different from other academic subjects” again along with student 1 (the other student with high progress) clearly believes that regardless of your profession you may learn a FL without the need to have special previous academic knowledge of other subjects.



Formative 1 vs Formative 2



Formative 1 vs Summative

Student 6, a male 48-year old business manager working as a production manager obtained the lowest overall score related to his progress. There are also some statements in the BALLI that will be analysed versus the progress of this student. Beginning with section I of the BALLI “beliefs about foreign language aptitude” the participant was the only one of the seven that “strongly disagreed” that some people have a special ability for learning foreign languages such as English” which shows that he was very confident that his previous skills would catapult him to learning English based on his past experiences. With regard to the second and last question of the first section he chose “neutral” when deciding that” it is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another”, this could be due to his knowledge of already knowing general concepts of Portuguese. The reason he knows this Language is because he frequently visits the Brazilian affiliate that operates along with the plant that he manages locally in Colombia. Continuing on to the

second section of the BALLI “beliefs about the difficulty of language learning”, student 6 basically responded “neutral x 3” to “disagree x 2” to all of the 5 statements which show that he feels that the new language has little to no difficulty in learning. As seen above with student 2, being the least modest of the participants gained the highest progress while student 6 that felt that the language had little difficulty turned it to have lower than expected results. In section III “beliefs about the nature of language learning” the participant along with one other, student 7 which also had a low progress, felt that learning how to translate is *not* important in learning English. It is important to highlight that student 6 and 7 are the two oldest of the participants, 48 and 55 respectively. This in part could be due to the traditional grammar translation method which was previously a norm in the teaching of English in Colombia in the past decades until recently when methodologies were updated to newer ones. Finally, in section IV “beliefs about learning and communication strategies” the last segment that this student responded outside of the standard as opposed to the other participants the learner responded that he “strongly disagreed” that English is structured the same as Spanish”, again the probable cause could be related to his understanding of Portuguese which he could compare the three languages’ syntax as being different. When responding to the statement “if beginning students are permitted to make errors in English, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on” student 6 exclusively uniquely and by far was the only respondent to choose “disagree” which is represented in his negative progress in pronunciation and structure which can easily be represented in fossilization of the language caused by their relaxed state of mind when taking a FL class. . All other participants felt neutral when asked this same question.

## **Conclusions**

To conclude, this report has examined how beliefs about English learning in adult learners over the age of 25 at an A1 level affect the development of learners' oral skills of English. The results and analysis of the different instruments used for this report revealed a number of positive factors. The initial assessment, along with the formative and summative assessments helped determine that beliefs whether positive or negative do affect adult students over the course of a program. The seven adult learners' professional job pressures greatly influence the need to learn English as well as their previous negative experiences in past L2 classrooms. The beliefs that also impacted students' progress was the belief that some people do not have a special ability to learn a language in combination to the high expectation that the new language will be learned with little effort influences their general outcome.

One deduction that should be drawn from this study is that learner's progress also depends to a considerable extent on the nature of the program. This program can be characterised as an Adult English class with a specific purpose which is for the learners to use the language on a daily basis at the workplace in a business format and not for academic purposes. Yet another conclusion is that there is an obvious need to further investigate what other factors may figure in learners' beliefs about language learning with larger studies.

The results of the present study demonstrated that the seven students all had preconceived beliefs. The BALLI instrument was key in characterizing the opinions that each of them had regarding learning a new language. Despite 100% that the participants strongly agree that children learn a language with less difficulty than adults, it was proven

that they too, adults, can learn a foreign language with dedication and effort when taking on a new challenge such as an L2 class. The connection between the different categories and oral progress concluded that all students did in fact progress. However, each showed different levels of progress according to their professions, job titles and their beliefs regarding aptitudes, nature and strategies of learning a language.

For students, the results of the study which identified that several preconceived notions can help determine learning behavior to be more effective, and the potential to identify some of the beliefs can affect the development of learning a new language and its objective. It can be seen that there are a number of positive beliefs that adult A1 level learners possess. It is important to take them into account when preparing a lesson plan by considering the factors that determine and characterize the needs that adults have, expectations and motivations was found to be crucial in this study. The category proved to affect the general outcome of students, the higher the expectations and motivations the lower their overall oral progress reflected at the end of the course level.

In conclusion Horwitz (as cited in Kuntz, 1996) stated, “instructor’s knowledge of both student beliefs and their own beliefs is important for successful foreign language teaching and learning.” These existing beliefs may also be known as control beliefs, as Flammer (1997) describes:

A control belief is a personal construct of considerable complexity that is linked to environmental influences. Clearly, it is not present at birth but is gradually constructed during the lifetime of each individual. (p. 70)

In closing, Kuntz (1996) revealed that comparison of beliefs between students and instructors can reveal goals and even possible misunderstandings that may exist between

teachers and students in learning situations which may lead to more success and satisfaction within language learning classes.



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**TO BE USED BY ADMIN.**

LANGUAGE \_\_\_\_\_ LEVEL \_\_\_\_\_

**EVALUATION**

	Fluency	Vocabulary	Comprehension	Pronunciation	Retention	Structure	Writing	Reading	General
<b>Answers</b>									
	Self Correctin	Motiviation	QFS Fluency	QFS Struct	QFS difficulty				General
<b>Questions</b>									

**LOCATION FOR CLASSES**

H/O/other \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**EXPERIENCE**

Abroad \_\_\_\_\_  
 InSTITUTE \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

- |   |  |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> to be<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input type="checkbox"/> third person<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/> pres.progressive<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> plurals<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>               |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> is there/are there<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> how much/many<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/> do vs does<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/> simple pres.<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>          | 2 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> was/were<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> simple past<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>         | <input type="checkbox"/> future going to<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> future will<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>           | 3 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> can<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>                | <input type="checkbox"/> present perfect<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/> pres perfect prog<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> condicional<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>           | 4 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> past perfect<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/> siblings<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> harbor<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/> downfalls<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>             | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> petrified / haggle<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> fine print / jigsaw<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> set up appointment<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> thunderstorms / broth<br><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |   |

**COMMENTS:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



## Annex 2. BALLI

UNIVERSIDAD ICESI  
MA TEFL  
MASTERS REPORT  
ADULT LANGUAGE LEARNING BELIEFS IN AN L2 CLASSROOM

INVESTIGATOR NICHOLAS A. BARON      Date \_\_\_\_\_

Note: The statements below are beliefs that some people have about learning a foreign language. English in Particular. The questionnaire is known as the BALLI (Beliefs About Language Learner Inventory) elaborated by Horwitz (1988).

Please choose on of the options for each phrase with an "X".

- 1 = Strongly disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neither agree nor disagree
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly agree

### I. BELIEFS ABOUT FOREIGN LANGUAGE APTITUDE

**OPINION**

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- 1. It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.
- 2. Some people have a special ability for learning foreign languages such as English.
- 3. It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.
- 4. I have a special ability for learning foreign languages.
- 5. Women are better than men at learning foreign languages.
- 6. People who are good at mathematics or science are not good at learning foreign languages.
- 7. People who speak more than one language are intelligent.
- 8. Colombian people are good at learning foreign languages.
- 9. Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.


### II. BELIEFS ABOUT THE DIFFICULTY OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

**OPINION**

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- 10 Some languages are easier to learn than others.
- 11 In learning English, it is easier to speak than to understand what people say.
- 12 In learning English, reading is easier than speaking and listening.
- 13 I think English is: 1 = a very difficult language, 2 = a difficult language, 3 = a language of medium difficulty, 4 = an easy language, 5 = a very easy language.
- 14 If someone spent one hour learning English everyday, how long would it take him or her to speak English well.  
1 = less than a year, 2 = 1-2 years, 3 = 3-5 years, 4 = 5-0 years, 5 = you can't learn a language one hour per day.


### Annex 3. Table of results – BALLI

I. BELIEFS ABOUT FOREIGN LANGUAGE APTITUDE		OPINION					Total	PERCENTAGE			
		SD	D	N	A	SA		SD	D	N	A
1	It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.					7	7	0%	0%	0%	0%
2	Some people have a special ability for learning foreign languages such as English.	1	1	3	1	1	7	14%	14%	43%	14%
10	It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.			2	3	2	7			29%	43%
15	I have a special ability for learning foreign languages.		1	6			7		14%	86%	
22	Women are better than men at learning foreign languages.	1	1	5			7	14%	14%	71%	
29	People who are good at mathematics or science are not good at learning foreign languages.	5	1	1			7	71%	14%	14%	
32	People who speak more than one language are intelligent.	1	1	5			7	14%	14%	71%	
33	Colombian people are good at learning foreign languages.			2	5		7			29%	71%
34	Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.					7	7				

II. BELIEFS ABOUT THE DIFFICULTY OF LANGUAGE LEARNING		OPINION					PERCENTAGE			
		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total	SD/1	D/2	N/3
3	Some languages are easier to learn than others.			1	6		7			14%
24	In learning English, it is easier to speak than to understand what people say.	1		2	4		7	14%		29%
28	In learning English, reading is easier than speaking and listening.	1		1	4	1	7	14%		14%
4	I think English is: 1 = a very difficult language, 2 = a difficult language, 3 = a language of medium difficulty, 4 = an easy language, 5 = a very easy language		5	1	1		7		71%	14%
14	If someone spent one hour learning English every day, how long would it take him or her to speak English well. 1 = less than a year, 2 = 1-2 years, 3 = 3-5 years, 4 = 5-0 years, 5 = you can't learn a language one hour per day.	1	5	1			7	14%	71%	14%

III. BELIEFS ABOUT THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE LEARNING		OPINION					Total	PERCENTAGE	
		SD	D	N	A	SA		SD	D
8	It is necessary to know the customs, the cultures, and the ways of life of English-speaking people in order to speak English correctly.	1	6				7	14%	86%
11	It is best to learn English in an English-speaking country.			2	3	2	7		
16	Learning vocabulary words is an important part of learning English.		1	5		1	7		14%
20	Learning the grammar is an important part of learning English.		1	5		1	7		14%
25	Learning English is different from learning other academic subjects.		1	1	4	1	7		14%
26	Learning how to translate is an important part of learning English.	1	5	1			7	14%	71%
35	Educational beliefs and cultures are important to learn English.	4	1	1	1		7	57%	14%

IV. BELIEFS ABOUT LEARNING AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES		OPINION					
		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
5	English is structured the same as Spanish.	1	5	1			7
7	It is important to speak English with a correct pronunciation.				5	2	7
9	We shouldn't say anything in English until we can say it correctly.		2	3	2		7
13	It's O.K. to guess if we don't know a word in English.		1	4	1	1	7
17	In learning English, it is important to practice a lot.					7	7
18	I feel timid speaking English with other people.			1	5	1	7
19	If beginning students are permitted to make errors in English, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on.		1	2	4		7
21	In learning English, it is important to practice with CD's/audio.			1	5	1	7

PERCENTAGE		
SD	D	N
14%	71%	
	29%	
	14%	
	14%	

OPINION

PERCENTAGE

V. BELIEFS ABOUT MOTIVATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS		OPINION					
		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
6	I believe I will learn English very well.				2	5	7
12	If I hear people speaking English, I try to practice speaking with them.			4	2	1	7
23	I want to learn English well because it can help me access information from around the world.				5	2	7
27	If I can use English well, I will have better opportunities for a good job.				2	5	7
30	Colombian people feel that it is very important to learn English.				5	2	7
31	I would like to learn English so that I can get to know people who speak English better.				5	2	7

PERCENTAGE		
SD	D	N
	57%	

