1. Información General

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tipo de documento</th>
<th>Trabajo de grado (TESIS)</th>
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<td>Acceso al documento</td>
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<td>Título del documento</td>
<td>Raising Awareness on Language Development in an English Beginner College Course</td>
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<td>Palabras Claves</td>
<td>Autonomous English learning, Raising awareness, WebQuest, Planning learning, Setting up learning goals.</td>
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2. Síntesis de la problemática

During the English language courses at CELDI (Centro Electrónico de Idiomas de la UNINCCA) in the first English levels, it was possible to identify that students were not able to inquire, search and start, without teacher’s monitoring, their own quests and set their own goals, when the teacher in charge assigned homework and inquiry tasks in which they did not go further, and the way they understood why to study English, whose objectives were focused on fulfilling their curricular subjects in order to graduate from university.

The surveys showed that most of the students’ target language training just happened in the classroom, just a few of them spent some time doing so beyond the academy constrains, it also pictured that some of them were focused on other subjects from the curriculum, rather than English. On the other hand, it described that most of the students thought that curriculum design such as: activity and goals planning was something that concerned teachers only. On the other hand, over a half of the students agreed with having taken at least once an online English course.

During the second session another survey was applied, whose aim was also to inquire about how students understood their role and their teacher’s in the educational domain, According to it, over 50% of the interviewee experienced a teacher expository method as an approach to EFL learning, less than the 40% of them received lessons in English only, but Spanish was the main linguistic code of communication. The experience with assignments was negative, because they understood independent work as a grading method in which there were not positive outcomes. The activities that they marked as positive were those ones referring to listening, videos and films.

Based on these results, it was possible to picture a wide view of pupils’ attitudes towards English learning, and identify some issues that could impede or end up failing their educational process. Lack of autonomy was a variable that depended on the teaching approaches in which learners had been immersed and their actions limited to listen and follow rules and commands about what to do.
during lessons.

The observation’s outcomes illustrated the involvement in the learning process as well as it helped to corroborates and support the findings of the surveys.

After this preliminary investigation the question that leads the investigation is:

Research Question

How can the use of WebQuests raise awareness on English language learning in a beginner college course?

General objective.

* To help students raise awareness on English language learning through the use of WebQuests.

Specific objectives or research tasks

* To engage students to their learning process through the use of WebQuests
* To lead students to develop autonomous language learning strategies such as planning and self-assessing learning through the implementation of WQs
* To help students to become aware of the difference their contributions make in autonomous language learning through the interaction with WQs.

Object of study

Autonomous Learning

Field

Awareness raising of language development (through WebQuest)

3. Contenido del trabajo de grado

This research study deals with Developing Autonomy in Basic Learners Through the Use of Webquests (WQ) in EFL carried out by professor Jhon Jairo Acosta Linares who attended the Master in Education with emphasis on Didactics at Universidad Libre in


Research on autonomy is a field that has been explored since 1990s, however, nowadays it has called the attention of academics because of the ongoing growth of ICTs, where independent students’ action is necessary to success in learning, what has led to the development of many projects on this topic. However the relevance of this investigation is that no other has been concerned about how technology, specifically WebQuests, raises language learners’ awareness of
autonomy, to help them success in their independent assignments. Investigations regarding this topic have been focused on how multimedia increases students engagement to learning, as it is the case of the proposal headed by Chen (2012) and Zhao (2014). Other studies, as the ones by Zhang (2014) and Karathas (2015), focused on how effective learning encourages autonomous learning and what the teacher’s role is in the current educational dynamics, show the emphasis that has given on the field of autonomy the last years. The research on WebQuest by Pérez and Dos Santos (2016) makes a compilation of the studies based on this subject. The review shows that they were focused on didactic strategies for reading and vocabulary and active pedagogies and motivation towards language learning. Nonetheless, it is evidenced that there are not studies that use this pedagogical tool as a strategy to raise awareness of autonomy on English language learning. Being so, this proposal becomes relevant in the ELT field, because it explores a new didactical approach that fosters EFL learner’s autonomy based on virtual environments.

The investigation is framed in action research type of study, using a cycling route, by which the pedagogical strategy was devised and evaluated, and it was possible to conclude that the pedagogical intervention, allowed the pupils to be aware of their existing attitudes towards English language learning, the strategies they use, the necessity of setting up their own learning goals to be engaged to the learning process, and how to develop assignments autonomously.

In consonance with the corpus of this research, the proposal is developed throughout the document as follows: in the first part it outlines the population that was observed and analyzed in order to identify the problems that impeded a better development of the teaching and learning practices in that specific context, allowing to have a diagnosis and in that way set a research question which frames and directs the investigation. The second part is based on a summary of the most important research proposals about autonomous learning, which clarifies what has been investigated so far on this field and what can be taken as a further research, and also a description of the theoretical constructs that uphold the proposal, for that reason it is explained how autonomy is understood in terms of language learning and how WebQuest is a powerful tool, that allows students to develop autonomy. In the third part of this paper the type of research and methods are pointed out and described, intending to outline the route that the investigation follows, then the pedagogical intervention is explained in detail, finally outcomes are analyzed, and findings and conclusions are systematized.

### 4. Metodología

This project was carried out at a private university located in the zone 3 of Bogotá, Colombia. The strategy was applied to a group of 14 students, from several programs, ages rank between 20 and 40.

The action research approach the investigation followed was cycle, in which the researcher went through several stages. According to Nunan (1992) it is constituted by seven phases: initiation, preliminary investigation, hypothesis, intervention, evaluation, dissemination and follow up. In the case of this study, initiation corresponded to identify and analyze the problem. In the second phase some data was collected from surveys and observations to analyze students’ discourse and
behavior, to set up a hypothesis which involved the problem and the way to intervene. The intervention step was led by the application of the WebQuests, whose aim was to help students to raise awareness to develop autonomous English language learning. After applying the strategy, the data obtained from this process, which was collected through interviews, self-assessment rubrics and students’ artifacts (recordings of students’ performance and learning plans) was evaluated, considering that the actions taken were led to have changes of this social situation for improvements in the English learning process.

5. Resultados
The strategy helped learners to get engaged to the English learning process through allowing them to be co-designers of WebQuests and join their needs to the lessons. The strategy helped learners to strengthen English language learning process through the development of the WQs and the ongoing interaction with the resources, which was evidenced in the marks they got at the end of the course and the product obtained from the WQ4, in which they displayed control over the contents and empowered language. The research experience has strengthened my teaching endeavor considering that I got highly involved in the development of English learning strategies to foster learning autonomy, that through the process I realized that before the experience I was not autonomous enough, and it demanded my entailment in the dynamics of teacher’s autonomy to foster learner’s autonomy. This experience is considered by the researcher only a first step as this process is wider and can reach a further scope. Students are placed in the awareness stage that according to Scharle & Szabo (2000), is the preliminary phase in order to start developing an autonomous behaviour in language learning.

6. Conclusiones y recomendaciones
The pedagogical strategy provided answers to the scientific question and fulfilled the objective of the study through the students’ voices in terms of taking charge of their English learning process, through strategies such as own lesson goals setting, learning planning, and self-assessment in order to overcome difficulties of the learning process that they displayed at the beginning of the course. The experience of the research work allowed to understand the WebQuest as a tool that places pupils and teacher in the same distance from learning, making an analogy between the Telemaque of Jacotot (Ranciere, 1991) and the WQ strategy, transferring teacher’s role to students and emancipating their freedom to learn by abolishing the explicative traditional method of the teaching practices, that diminished the pupils’ role as main character of the process. This proposal should keep being developed, in the other stages that haven been explored so far, such as changing attitudes and transferring roles (Scharle & Szabo, 2000), in which more insights into these fields will contribute to English language teaching dynamics and specifically the learning autonomy.

7. Referencias bibliográficas


Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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