

Occurrence of incidental second language learning in first semester students of the FLT

BA: A descriptive study at UIS

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Énfasis en Inglés

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Appendix A. Survey.

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Title: Occurrence of incidental second language learning in first semester students of the FLT BA: A descriptive study at UIS.*

Author: Samir David Grazziani González.**

Key words: Incidental learning, language acquisition, language proficiency, language skills.

Abstract: The present study researches how many first semester students have experienced incidental language learning before starting university and after starting university. Further inquiries sprout from this initial inquiry, such as: which language skill is most often acquired through incidental learning, or what is the kind of media in which incidental language learning is a more common occurrence. The scope of this inquiry is limited to the university, and its population is limited to freshman students of the Foreign languages teaching BA corresponding to the period of 2022-2 and 2023-1. To achieve these goals, a survey, which was conducted first among 2022-2 students and posteriorly among 2023-1 ones, was developed as a data collection tool with the objective of gathering information from the students. Such information ranged from population profiling (age, gender, socioeconomic status, etc), to insights related to their language acquisition process and their experience with incidental language learning. This study concluded that Among first semester students of the FLT BA program, incidental language learning is undoubtedly a prevalent phenomenon. 2) Incidental learning primarily manifests through auditory stimuli. 3) Reading and listening skills tend to be the most commonly acquired abilities through incidental language learning.

*Bachelor Thesis

**Faculty of Human sciences. School of languages. Director Gerson Zambrano Gómez

Título: Ocurrencia de aprendizaje incidental de una segunda lengua en estudiantes de primer semestre de la Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras: Un estudio descriptivo en la UIS.*

Autor: Samir David Grazziani González.**

Palabras clave: aprendizaje incidental, adquisición de lenguas, competencia lingüística, habilidades lingüísticas.

Resumen: El presente estudio investiga cuántos estudiantes de primer semestre han experimentado un aprendizaje incidental de idiomas antes de comenzar la universidad y después de comenzar la universidad. A partir de esta indagación inicial surgen más preguntas, tales como: qué habilidad lingüística se adquiere con mayor frecuencia a través del aprendizaje incidental, o cuál es el tipo de medio en el que el aprendizaje incidental de idiomas es más común. El ámbito de esta consulta se circunscribe a la universidad, y su población se limita a los estudiantes de primer año de la Licenciatura en Enseñanza de Lenguas Extranjeras correspondiente al periodo 2022-2 y 2023-1. Para lograr estos objetivos, se desarrolló una encuesta, que se realizó primero entre los estudiantes de 2022-2 y posteriormente entre los de 2023-1, como herramienta de recolección de datos con el objetivo de recopilar información de los estudiantes. Dicha información varió desde el perfil de la población (edad, género, estado socioeconómico, etc.) hasta información relacionada con su proceso de adquisición del idioma y su experiencia con el aprendizaje incidental del idioma. Este estudio concluyó que entre los estudiantes de primer semestre del programa FLT BA, el aprendizaje incidental de idiomas es sin duda un fenómeno predominante. 2) El aprendizaje incidental se manifiesta principalmente a través de estímulos auditivos. 3) Las habilidades de lectura y comprensión auditiva tienden a ser las más comúnmente adquiridas a través del aprendizaje incidental del idioma.

*Trabajo de Grado

**Facultad de Ciencias Humanas. Escuela de idiomas. Director Gerson Zambrano Gómez

Problematization

1. Context

At Universidad Industrial de Santander, in the city of Bucaramanga, Colombia, the faculty of Human Sciences hosts the School of languages which offers a number of undergraduate programs including the bachelors' degree in foreign language teaching, which prepares its students to become professionals in the teaching of the English language, which of course, requires them to become fluent in English. To achieve this, students are required to pass five courses of English. The courses are: pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper-intermediate, advanced 1, and advanced 2, which are taken in the first five terms of the program. This is the context in which the research will take place. By applying methods of quantitative research, it is expected to discover what the occurrence of incidental second language learning in first semester students of the FLT BA is, as well as more specific objectives deriving from this said general aim. It is also expected to produce beneficial resources for future research in different areas of linguistics and language acquisition studies.

However, there are possible limitations of this study, mainly occurrences that hinder the data collection process, such as the suspension of classes due to strikes and other extraordinary events. Another limitation might be professors unwilling to provide the time of their class to allow the researcher to distribute the data collection tool among their students to gather the desired information (which is unlikely to happen since faculty members of the school of languages are usually helpful with student researchers). Another limitation that must be clarified is that the scope of this research, including the expected results, is based entirely on student's perception, instead of more specialized tests. The reach of this study is limited to freshmen students of the Foreign language teaching BA of the Human Sciences Faculty at Universidad Industrial de Santander.

1.1 Research question

The inquiries of this research can be conceptualized in the following question: How many freshman students have experienced incidental language learning before and after starting university? Further inquiries sprout from this initial question, such as: which language skill is most often acquired through incidental learning, or what is the kind of media in which incidental language learning is a more common occurrence. The reach of this inquiry is limited to the university, and its population is limited to freshman students of the Foreign languages teaching BA corresponding to the period of 2022-2 and 2023-1.

1.2 Justification

The main reason to conduct this study is the personal interest in finding out how common second language acquisition, through incidental learning, occurs within freshmen students of the FLT BA in order to understand how important incidental learning actually is in the second or foreign language acquisition process. In addition, the results of this study can help designing future diagnostic testing, curriculum design, the development of teaching and learning material, and future studies especially in the fields of language teaching and language acquisition.

1.3 Objectives

The main objective of this study is to determine what is the amount of freshmen students of the FLT BA that have experienced incidental language learning before and during their first semester at the program. In order to provide a deeper understanding of the phenomena of incidental language learning and its impact within the language acquisition processes of students, this study has two specific objectives as well. 1) To determine which

kind of incidental second language learning is the most common among freshmen students, and 2) find out which of the 4 language skills is the most learned through incidental learning.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Defining Incidental language learning.

The concept of incidental language learning must be dealt within the field of applied linguistics and second language acquisition theories. Incidental language learning can be traced back to the zenith of American behavioral psychology (Hulstijn, 2013, p.1). In order to successfully provide a definition for what incidental language learning is, one should consider the works of professor Hulstijn in which an ample array of research regarding the subject can be found. The first input from this author is a definition of incidental language learning which affirms that people “may not even have the intention to learn the other language, and yet gain some proficiency in it, just from hearing it being used in their environment (incidental learning)” (Hulstijn, 2001, p.1). Hulstijn provides further definitions of incidental language learning in the field of second language acquisition by affirming that the concept refers to “the acquisition of a word or expression without the conscious intention to commit the element to memory, such as “picking up” an unknown word from listening to someone or from reading a text.” (Hulstijn, 2013, p.1). Van Zeeland and Schmitt (2013, p.1) elaborate further on this definition by affirming that incidental language learning happens when individuals make progress in certain parts of their second language acquisition process without actually focusing on such a process.

Further works have been found that are able to provide a definition of incidental language learning by explaining the difference between, implicit, explicit, intentional and incidental learning. Implicit learning refers to the acquisition of knowledge without the

awareness of the learner within a learning context, like reading dictionaries or taking language courses (Leow, R. P., Hama, M. 2013 p. 545). Explicit and Intentional learning are concepts that overlap. Both of them refer to “any activity aiming at committing lexical information to memory” (Hulstijn, 2001, p.13) which is thought of as the conscious acquisition and memorization of knowledge by an individual. Incidental language learning can therefore be defined as the unconscious and unintentional acquisition of elements of a second language outside of any given learning environment.

2.2 Sources of incidental language learning.

With the concept of incidental language learning defined as a process in which an individual acquires or “picks up” elements of a second or foreign language outside of a learning environment without the awareness of doing so, the next step is to establish the possible environments and contexts in which incidental language learning can occur and the sources of it. Incidental language learning happens in contexts that are not meant to be a traditional learning environment, and in situations where the individual’s goal tends to be, usually, to perform leisure activities, resting, and, or engaging in entertainment. One key characteristic that needs to be present in a context or environment in order for incidental language learning to occur is that there has to be some sort of input of information being received by the unaware learner. This idea can be supported further by stating that incidental language learning occurs strictly in situations where an individual engages “in a variety of communicative activities, mostly in reading and listening activities, during which the learner’s attention is focused on the meaning rather than on the form of language” (Doughty, 2003, p.1). Following this line of thought we can also add that “vocabulary learning requires input to happen, be it written, oral or bimodal. Hence, incidental vocabulary also requires a form of exposure to unimodal or multimodal input that will ultimately allow learning”

(Pérez-Serrano et al., 2021, p.2) It is safe to say then that incidental language learning does not occur all the time in every single daily life situation. Instead, it occurs only in situations in which an individual receives information, which most of the time happens by engaging in activities or consuming information in which hearing and sight are needed. It can also be stated that incidental learners mainly acquire knowledge of the meaning of words and phrases, rather than more complex grammatical rules or structures. In other words, incidental language learning happens when the meanings of certain words and expressions are unconsciously acquired by an individual, a process which tends to occur through listening and reading.

By having established what incidental learning is, and when it occurs, the following step is establishing the specific sources, resources, and activities an individual might engage with in order to incidentally acquire elements of a second or foreign language. By taking into account that incidental language learning mostly requires input to happen, we can assert that activities such as watching TV or movies, playing video games, listening to music, and reading books, magazines and comics, all in a foreign language, can be considered potential sources of incidental language learning. Previous research on incidental language learning not only supports the previous assertion, but also places higher importance in specific activities and sources of input, specifically bimodal and multimodal sources. Pérez-Serrano et al. (2021) states that there should be further consideration of the benefits of exposure to bimodal inputs for foreign language learning (p.3). Consequently it can be considered that incidental language learning happens more often with multimedia sources such as watching TV series and movies even with subtitles on as long as they remain in their original language, playing video games in their original language as well, and listening to music even if the individual does not get the meaning of the lyrics immediately. All of the mentioned activities can be expected to provide incidental language learning occurrences. In short, for the sake of this

research, the different sources of incidental language learning can be classified into categories based on the kind of input being received, such as audio (listening to songs, podcasts, or radio), visual (reading books, comics, or journals), or multimodal (watching series, movies, videos, or streams).

2.3 Previous research

A wide range of research regarding incidental language learning is available. A vast part of it is focused on testing and proving the effects that different kinds of input can have on any given group of learners' language acquisition processes. A good example is the study of Nie et al. (2022) in which by studying the possible effects of incidental vocabulary learning by listening to songs. It was found that doing so significantly yields improvements when it comes to vocabulary knowledge, specifically in the area of word recognition (p.1). However, most research is actually focused on studying the effects of multimedia input, since it happens to be the most consumed type of input source available. An early example of this is Brett's (1998) descriptive investigation of incidental language learning by using multimedia, which found multimedia to be able to encourage 'negotiation of meanings' (which is a process in which speakers go through in order to reach a clear understanding of each other, or the material being consumed.) and facilitate language acquisition (p. 196). To add upon the research on multimedia input we also find Peters and Webb's (2018) study on incidental vocabulary acquisition through viewing L2 television which found that "viewing TV resulted in incidental vocabulary learning at the level of meaning recall and meaning recognition" (p.1). Moreover, research related to the comparison of different kinds of input in incidental language learning can also be found. One example of such studies is Feng and Webb's (2020) study which focuses on determining if incidental language learning occurred through reading, listening, and viewing, as well as finding out which input mode is the most effective. This

study concluded that there are no significant differences between the three input modes studied, and instead they provided similar results regarding vocabulary gain and the retention of it. Finally, when it comes to studies focused on analyzing the presence of instances of incidental language learning prior to formal instruction, or according to the perspective of students themselves, there seems to be a gap in the literature. Most studies are focused on testing different inputs on groups of subjects to determine the extent of the incidental acquisition of vocabulary, but not to explore occurrences of such a phenomenon in groups of students based on their perspectives of their L2 acquisition processes, which is a gap that the present research study attempts to fill.

2.4 Legal reference

This study is binded by the laws of protection of information of the republic of Colombia (Ley 1266, 2008) due to the management of information input that is required for its development, specifically in the data collection stage in which information from the participants (even if it is not personal information) will be used as input. The mentioned law provides an ethical framework to work with.

3. Methodological design.

3.1 Type of research

This study will be quantitative in nature, as well as descriptive. The reasons behind this choice are based on lengthy consideration of the objectives of the study. Considering that it seeks to establish not only the existence, but the overall occurrence of incidental language learning among freshmen students, it seemed as if leaning into a more quantitative approach

was the accurate choice. Moreover, the nature of the inquiry makes it possible to categorize this study as descriptive.

3.1.1 *Quantitative-method approach*

This research study uses a quantitative approach for its execution. To achieve its aims, the use of tools such as surveys for data collection are paramount. The benefits of such an approach in the context of this research are explained by Watson (2015) who states that “quantitative research encompasses a range of methods concerned with the systematic investigation of social phenomena, using statistical or numerical data. Therefore, quantitative research involves measurement and assumes that the phenomena under study can be measured.” (p, 1.) This makes a quantitative approach more suitable as its value relies on the representation of information in terms of percentages and numeric values, which in turn, allow for an easier interpretation, categorization and analysis.

3.1.2 *Descriptive study*

The quantitative method used in this research is descriptive. Its suitability is explained by Baker (2017) “Descriptive designs collect information about variables without changing the environment or the variables, so they do not look for possible cause and effect.” (p, 171.) The execution of this study is based on the recollection of raw data from the population being studied with the sole purpose of interpreting it, categorizing it, and analyzing it in an attempt to answer the established inquiries.

3.2 Population and sampling

It is expected that the population of study is encompassed by a more or less equal number of women and men of ages 16 to 24. The size of the population is anticipated to be around 90 individuals who correspond to all the pre-intermediate English groups from semester 2022-2 and 2023-1. The most direct benefits of this research are the potential to become a resource for further studies on incidental learning, contributing to the fields of linguistics and language acquisition studies. Students can also see themselves benefited in the future due to the potential uses of incidental learning in curriculum. The population being studied is composed of freshmen students of all the groups that make up the subject of pre-intermediate English. Since all freshmen students must take said subject, it will be possible to get most of the target demographic to fill out said survey. The population was selected using convenience sampling, which is a “non-probability or non-random sampling where members of the target population that meet certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, geographical proximity, availability at a given time, or the willingness to participate are included for the purpose of the study” (Etikan et al., 2016, p. 2). This kind of sampling is more than suitable for the context of research studies of such a small scale, low number of researchers, and tight budgets like this one.

3.3 Data collection tools

A survey (see annex 1) will be designed to gather the desired data. In order to distribute the data collection tool, the professors teaching in each pre-intermediate English group will be asked to allow the researcher to present and distribute the survey to the students in the classroom. Such a process should not last longer than ten minutes. The survey will be designed in Spanish in order to allow students with more basic English levels to fill it out

without holdbacks such as misinterpretations. Furthermore, key concepts (such as incidental learning) will be briefly explained within the survey to further simplify the process for the participants. The questions of the survey will be concise and of multiple choice, and all of them will inquire the participants about their experiences with incidental second language learning, such as the source of their incidental learning (video games, TV shows, movies, books, comics, songs, etc). The survey is divided into three sections. 1) Description of the population, 2) perceived language proficiency, and 3) perceived notions about their experience with incidental language learning. Additionally, a consent form will be included in the survey, it will be necessary to answer affirmatively in order to access the rest of the survey. Once the data from the observations and the interviews are gathered, it will be codified with the aid of data processing software and then analyzed with the aim of answering the research questions. All the participants will have access to the results of this study.

3.4 Resources

The survey used as a data collection tool will be designed and distributed using google forms and internet connection. The distribution of the survey will be done by going to the students' classrooms and providing them with a QR code and, or a link conducting to the survey hosted in google forms.

Google forms will provide statistics and figures immediately. All the input gathered by the google forms survey will be available for downloading in a convenient excel/google sheets file.

The program JASP for data processing is paramount for this research as it provides a wide range of tools for data managing and quantification. The program will be used to

generate percentage tables and any other graphic representation of information needed for analysis.

4. Findings and data analysis

The data was gathered using a google forms hosted survey with twenty five multiple choice questions which was distributed among the target population by sharing it with QR codes during their pre-intermediate English classes with permission of their professors. The results of the survey were divided into “period 2022-2” and “period 2023-1” for their analysis. The program JASP (Jeffreys’s Amazing Statistics Program) was used as a tool for processing the collected data and generating graphics for each of the questions of the survey. This section is divided in two parts, 1) summary of findings, and 2) analysis. Each of them have their own subsections addressing specific types of information gathered, and the specific and general research aims.

4.1 Summary of findings

Once the data had been collected it was classified based on the structure of the survey designed. The information, which is all based on the perspectives of 62 students that filled out the survey can be classified in 1) population description, 2) language skills, and 3) incidental learning. All of the answers are based on the subjective perceptions of the surveyed students.

4.1.1 *Population description*

This research was conducted with first semester students of the Bachelor's Degree in Foreign language teaching (FLT BA) as the target population. The survey was answered by 62 students in total, encompassing the students from both the 2022-2 and 2023-1 academic periods. The questions 1 to 5 in the survey are aimed to provide a general description of gender, age, socioeconomic level, and working status. Question 1, for example, shows that in the period 2022-2, out of the 30 individuals that answered the survey, 19 identify as female, and 11 identify as male.

Figure 1

Gender of students from academic period 2022-2.

Q1	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Hombre	11	36.667	36.667	36.667
Mujer	19	63.333	63.333	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

While in period 2023-1, the main differences from 2022-2, are that out of 32 individuals that took the survey this time, the number of female identified individuals remained the same while male identified individuals went from 11 to 12, and a nonbinary person is now incorporated in the course.

Figure 2

Gender of students from academic period 2023-1.

Q1	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Hombre	12	37.500	37.500	37.500
Mujer	19	59.375	59.375	96.875
Other	1	3.125	3.125	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

In the second question, we get insight into the age range of the surveyed population. In 2022-2, 14 out of 30 students affirmed to be aged 18 to 21 years, 12 claimed to be 15 to 18 years old, 3 claimed to be 21 to 24, and only 1 affirmed to be 25 or older.

Figure 3

Age ranges from students of academic period 2022-2.

Q2	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
15 a 18 años	12	40.000	40.000	40.000
18 a 21 años	14	46.667	46.667	86.667
21 a 24 años	3	10.000	10.000	96.667
25 o mayor	1	3.333	3.333	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

In the period 2023-1 the data shifted, and now seventy one percent of the surveyed population of this period claims to be 15 to 18 years old, almost three quarters of this period's population in contrast to the 40% of 15 to 18 year olds that 2022-2 had. Twenty one percent claim to be aged 18 to 21, and only six percent claim to be between 21 to 24. Unlike 2022-2, no one appears to be older than 25 in this period.

Figure 4

Age ranges from students of academic period 2023-1.

Q2	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
15 a 18 años	23	71.875	71.875	71.875
18 a 21 años	7	21.875	21.875	93.750
21 a 24 años	2	6.250	6.250	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

The questions 3 to 4 are oriented to finding out the working status of the population, inquiring if they hold a job and how many hours a week they dedicate to such a job. In 2022-2, 70% of the student's claimed to not have a job while 30% claimed to have one. And out of the 9 individuals that stated having a job, one claims to work only 2 hours a week, two work 3 to 5 hours a week, 3 work 6 to 8 hours, one claims to work 13 to 16 hours, one works 17 to 20 hours, and only one claims to work more than 20 hours a week.

Figure 5

Amount of students that have a job in academic period 2022-2.

Q3	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	21	70.000	70.000	70.000
Sí	9	30.000	30.000	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

Figure 6

Amount of weekly hours worked by students who claimed to have a job in academic period 2022-2.

Q4	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1 a 2 horas	1	3.333	11.111	11.111
13 a 16 horas	1	3.333	11.111	22.222
17 a 20 horas	1	3.333	11.111	33.333
3 a 5 horas	2	6.667	22.222	55.556
6 a 8 horas	3	10.000	33.333	88.889
Más de 20 horas	1	3.333	11.111	100.000
Missing	21	70.000		
Total	30	100.000		

When it comes to the information gathered from 2023-1, the answers shift to show a decreasing number of working students. 87.5% corresponding to 28 of the students surveyed this period claim to not have a job and only 12.5% corresponding to only 4 students claim to have one. Out of the working students, one claims to work 6 to 8 a week, two claim to work 9 to 12 hours, and only one claims to work 13 to 16 weekly hours.

Figure 7

Amount of students that have a job in academic period 2023-1.

Q3	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	28	87.500	87.500	87.500
Sí	4	12.500	12.500	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

Figure 8

Amount of weekly hours worked by students who claimed to have a job in academic period 2023-1.

Q4	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
13 a 16 horas	1	3.125	25.000	25.000
6 a 8 horas	1	3.125	25.000	50.000
9 a 12 horas	2	6.250	50.000	100.000
Missing	28	87.500		
Total	32	100.000		

Question number 5 is aimed to provide an insight on the socioeconomic level of the surveyed students based on the Colombian framework of 6 levels of socioeconomic status, being strata 1 the lowest, usually the poorest, and strata 6 the highest, usually the wealthiest. Strata 3 and 4 would fall into the category of “middle class”. During period 2022-2, 3 students claimed to be in strata 1. Half of the students, corresponding to 15 individuals,

claimed to be strata 2, which would put them just under middle class, and 12 students, encompassing 40% of this period's population, claimed to be strata 3. No one claimed to be strat 4 or higher.

Figure 9

Socioeconomic level of students from academic period 2022-2.

Q5	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Estrato 1	3	10.000	10.000	10.000
Estrato 2	15	50.000	50.000	60.000
Estrato 3	12	40.000	40.000	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

In 2023-1, the data shifted to show that there is just 1 student that claims to be strata 5, which would correspond to higher middle class. Four students claimed to be strata 4. 10 students claimed to be strata 3, and 10 claimed to be strata 2. 7 students claimed to be strata 1, which is three more individuals than in 2022-2.

Figure 10

Socioeconomic level of students from academic period 2023-1.

Q5	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Estrato 1	7	21.875	21.875	21.875
Estrato 2	10	31.250	31.250	53.125
Estrato 3	10	31.250	31.250	84.375
Estrato 4	4	12.500	12.500	96.875
Estrato 5	1	3.125	3.125	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

4.1.2 Language skills

The questions 6 to 15 are aimed to provide an insight on the perception that students have of their own language skills, such as their perceived level of proficiency, their strategies to acquire a foreign language, and their strengths and weaknesses regarding their language acquisition process.

The sixth question provides an understanding of the population's current English level proficiency based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. When answering this question, it is found that 15 students (half of the surveyed population) of period 2022-2 affirm to be B1. 33% of the students claim to be B2, 3 of them claim to be C1, and only 2 of them claim to be A2.

Figure 11

Level of English proficiency in students from academic period 2022-2.

Q6	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
A2	2	6.667	6.667	6.667
B1	15	50.000	50.000	56.667
B2	10	33.333	33.333	90.000
C1	3	10.000	10.000	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

In the period 2023-1, the number of B1 students (17) grew by two individuals, meaning 53% in this period. The number of B2 students decreased by 3 in relation to 2022-2, with seven claiming to be in that level. 4 people, corresponding to 12.5% of this period, claimed to be C1. 4 students claimed to be A2.

Figure 12

Level of English proficiency in students from academic period 2023-1.

Q6	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
A2	4	12.500	12.500	12.500
B1	17	53.125	53.125	65.625
B2	7	21.875	21.875	87.500
C1	4	12.500	12.500	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

In question seven, students were asked how many hours of the subject of English they received per week in elementary school. Half of the population in 2022-2 answered 3 to 4. Eleven claimed to receive 1 to 2 hours per week. The options “5 to 6”, “7 to 8”, and “9 to 10” were chosen by one individual each. Only one individual claimed to not have the English subject in elementary school.

Figure 13

Amount of hours of the English subject received per week in elementary school by 2022-2 students.

Q7	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0 horas	1	3.333	3.333	3.333
1 a 2 horas	11	36.667	36.667	40.000
3 a 4 horas	15	50.000	50.000	90.000
5 a 6 horas	1	3.333	3.333	93.333
7 a 8 horas	1	3.333	3.333	96.667
9 a 10 horas	1	3.333	3.333	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

In the period 2023-1, 18 students affirmed having 3 to 4 hours of English per week. Eleven said 1 to 2 hours per week. Two individuals claimed to have had 5 to 6 hours of the subject. Only one person claimed to have received 7 to 8 hours of the subject per week.

Figure 14

Amount of hours of the English subject received per week in elementary school by 2023-1 students.

Q7	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1 a 2 horas	11	34.375	34.375	34.375
3 a 4 horas	18	56.250	56.250	90.625
5 a 6 horas	2	6.250	6.250	96.875
7 a 8 horas	1	3.125	3.125	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

Question eight functions as a progression of question seven by asking the same question but focused in high school (6th to 11th grade). In the period 2022-2 twenty students claimed 3 to 4 hours per week. Five claimed to have received 5 to 6 hours, two answered 7 to 8, only one chose 9 to 10 hours, and only one person stated to have received only 1 to 2 hours of the subject per week.

Figure 15

Amount of hours of the English subject received per week in secondary school by 2022-1 students.

Q8	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1 a 2 horas	3	10.000	10.000	10.000
3 a 4 horas	20	66.667	66.667	76.667
5 a 6 horas	5	16.667	16.667	93.333
7 a 8 horas	1	3.333	3.333	96.667
Más de 10 horas	1	3.333	3.333	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

When it comes to 2023-1, again, only one individual claimed to receive just 1 to 2 hours per week, the case is the same for the 9 to 10 hours option. In this period two people chose 7 to 8 hours per week, nine people chose 5 to 6 hours, and once again, the majority of this period (59% corresponding to 19 people) claimed to receive 3 to 4 hours of English per week at highschool. It's important to note that the standard number of hours of English per week in public schools is supposed to be three to four.

Figure 16

Amount of hours of the English subject received per week in secondary school by 2023-1 students.

Q8	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1 a 2 horas	1	3.125	3.125	3.125
3 a 4 horas	19	59.375	59.375	62.500
5 a 6 horas	9	28.125	28.125	90.625
7 a 8 horas	2	6.250	6.250	96.875
9 a 10 horas	1	3.125	3.125	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

In the ninth question the aim was to know at what age the students got actually interested in learning English and not just as a requirement for school. 53% of students from 2022-2 claimed to have gotten interested in learning English when they were 12 to 15 years old. 7 people said 7 to eleven , four people said 16 to 18, and only three individuals said from 6 to 8 years old.

Figure 17

Age at which 2022-2 students developed an interest in learning English.

Q9	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
6 a 8 años	3	10.000	10.000	76.667
9 a 11 años	7	23.333	23.333	100.000
12 a 15 años	16	53.333	53.333	53.333
16 a 18 años	4	13.333	13.333	66.667
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

When it comes to 2023-1, the numbers remain fairly similar to 2022-2. Again, sixteen students, this time corresponding to exactly half of this period's population, claimed to have developed interest in learning English at 12 to 15 years old. Eight people said 9 to 11, five people chose 16 to 18, and just like 2022-2, only three people claim to have gotten interested in the language at 6 to 8 years old.

Figure 18

Age at which 2023-1 students developed an interest in learning English.

Q9	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
12 a 15 años	16	50.000	50.000	50.000
16 a 18 años	5	15.625	15.625	65.625
6 a 8 años	3	9.375	9.375	75.000
9 a 11 años	8	25.000	25.000	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

Question ten is meant to discover how much of the population enrolled in English courses before entering university. In 2022-2, 53.3% answered affirmatively to having taken an English language course before starting university, while 46.6% answered negatively.

Figure 19

Amount of 2022-2 students who enrolled in an English language course before starting university.

Q10	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	14	46.667	46.667	46.667
Sí	16	53.333	53.333	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

Regarding the group of 2023-1, the numbers changed considerably. Only 34.3% of this academic period's population answered affirmatively to have enrolled in an English course, while 65.6% answered negatively.

Figure 20

Amount of 2023-1 students who enrolled in an English language course before starting university.

Q10	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	21	65.625	65.625	65.625
Sí	11	34.375	34.375	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

Question eleven works as a progression for question ten, as it asks the students that enrolled in an English course before university to say how many hours per week they had on their English course. In 2022-2, 43% out of the sixteen students that took an English course before university said the course was 8 to 10 hours per week, two claimed their course was an 11 to 18 hours per week intensity course, and only one claimed to have enrolled in a 19 to 24 hours per week course.

Figure 21

Weekly hours of the English courses taken by 2022-2 students.

Q11	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
11 a 18 horas	2	6.667	12.500	12.500
19 a 24 horas	1	3.333	6.250	18.750
8 a 10 horas	13	43.333	81.250	100.000
Missing	14	46.667		
Total	30	100.000		

In 2023-1, nine people out of the eleven that claimed to have enrolled in an English course, said it was an 8 to 10 hour course. One person claimed to have taken a 19 to 24 hours a week course. One individual out of the 11 people who affirmed to have enrolled in an English language course opted not to answer this question.

Figure 22

Weekly hours of the English courses taken by 2023-1 students.

Q11	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
19 a 24 horas	1	3.125	10.000	10.000
8 a 10 horas	9	28.125	90.000	100.000
Missing	22	68.750		
Total	32	100.000		

The twelfth question aims to establish how many hours of English the students are currently taking at university. In 2022-2, 80% answered 7 to 10 hours per week. 20% corresponds to 6 students considered to be taking on more than 10 hours of English classes at university, most likely considering the subject of "Introduction to the Articulatory Phonetics of English" as additional hours of English language input, since said subject is taught almost entirely in English.

Figure 23

How many hours of the English subject are 2022-2 students taking at university.

Q12	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
7 a 10 horas	24	80.000	80.000	80.000
Más de 10 horas	6	20.000	20.000	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

Figure 24

How many hours of the English subject are 2023-1 students taking at university.

Q12	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
7 a 10 horas	27	84.375	84.375	84.375
Más de 10 horas	5	15.625	15.625	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

Question thirteen dives into the study habits that students employ in their language acquisition process by asking how much time per week they spend studying English independently. 60% claim to dedicate 1 to 3 hours of weekly independent English language study, nine dedicate 4 to 6 hours, only one individual affirms to study 7 to 10 weekly hours, and two students claim to dedicate more than 10 hours per week to study English.

Figure 25

Weekly hours 2022-2 students dedicate to study English.

Q13	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1 a 3 horas	18	60.000	60.000	60.000
4 a 6 horas	9	30.000	30.000	90.000
7 a 10 horas	1	3.333	3.333	93.333
Más de 10 horas	2	6.667	6.667	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

In 2023-1, the options 1 to 3 hours, and 4 to 6 hours were chosen by 12 students each. Five students claimed to study 7 to 10 hours, and three declared to study more than 10 hours per week.

Figure 26

Weekly hours 2023-1 students dedicate to study English.

Q13	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1 a 3 horas	12	37.500	37.500	37.500
4 a 6 horas	12	37.500	37.500	75.000
7 a 10 horas	5	15.625	15.625	90.625
Más de 10 horas	3	9.375	9.375	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

Question 14 inquires the students on which of the language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) they find the easiest. In 2022-2, the majority (53.3%) found that reading was the easiest skill. Followed by speaking, which was chosen by 6 people as the easiest. Five answered listening as the easiest skill, and three chose writing.

Figure 27

Language skills considered easier by 2022-2 students.

Q14	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Listening	5	16.667	16.667	16.667
Reading	16	53.333	53.333	70.000
Speaking	6	20.000	20.000	90.000
Writing	3	10.000	10.000	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

In 2023-1, the tendency remains constant as, once again, reading is regarded as the easiest skill by nineteen students (59.3%), followed by speaking and writing, chosen by 15.6% of the students each. Listening was chosen as the easiest skill by just 3 people.

Figure 28

Language skills considered easier by 2023-1 students.

Q14	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Listening	3	9.375	9.375	9.375
Reading	19	59.375	59.375	68.750
Speaking	5	15.625	15.625	84.375
Writing	5	15.625	15.625	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

Question fifteen operates as a progression of question fourteen by asking which language skills do students consider the most difficult. In 2022-2, speaking is regarded as the most difficult by 56.6% of the interviewed students, listening follows it as the most difficult for 23.3% of the students. 13.3% of students affirm that writing is the most difficult for them, and reading is considered the most difficult for only two people.

Figure 29

Language skills considered harder by 2022-2 students.

Q15	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Listening	7	23.333	23.333	23.333
Reading	2	6.667	6.667	30.000
Speaking	17	56.667	56.667	86.667
Writing	4	13.333	13.333	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

In 2023-1, Speaking remained considered as the most difficult, this time by half the students. Followed by writing with 8 people considering it the most difficult, and listening with 7 people. Only 1 person perceived reading as the most difficult skill.

Figure 30

Language skills considered harder by 2023-1 students.

Q15	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Listening	7	21.875	21.875	21.875
Reading	1	3.125	3.125	25.000
Speaking	16	50.000	50.000	75.000
Writing	8	25.000	25.000	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

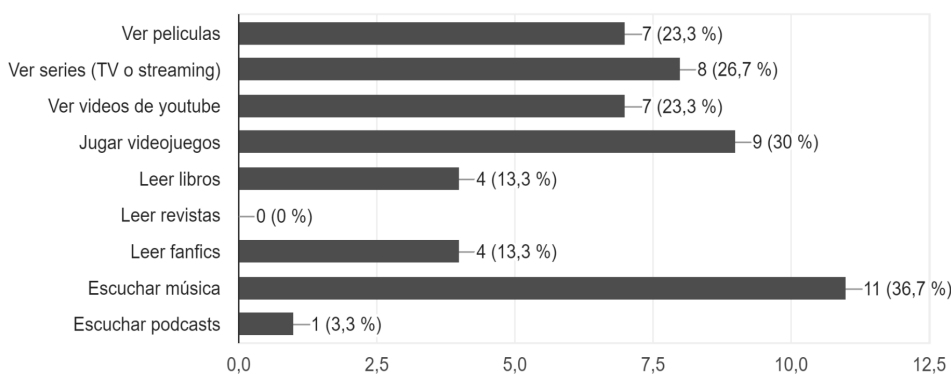
4.1.3 Incidental learning

The last section of the survey, which encompasses questions 16 to 25, is meant to provide understanding of the context and sources in which incidental learning can be an occurrence in among both 2022-2 and 2023-1 students before and after starting university. Question 16 is a multiple choice question in which students picked one or more activities they most frequently engaged in, specifically before starting their undergrad. The results show that most students of period 2022-2 chose listening to music as the most usual activity in which they used to engage before starting university. Followed closely by playing video

games (30%), watching TV shows whether cable or streaming (26%), watching movies and watch youtube videos both with 23.3%, reading books and reading fanfics both with 13.3%, and listening to podcasts as the least chosen option with just 3.3% choosing it. None of the students chose reading magazines.

Figure 31

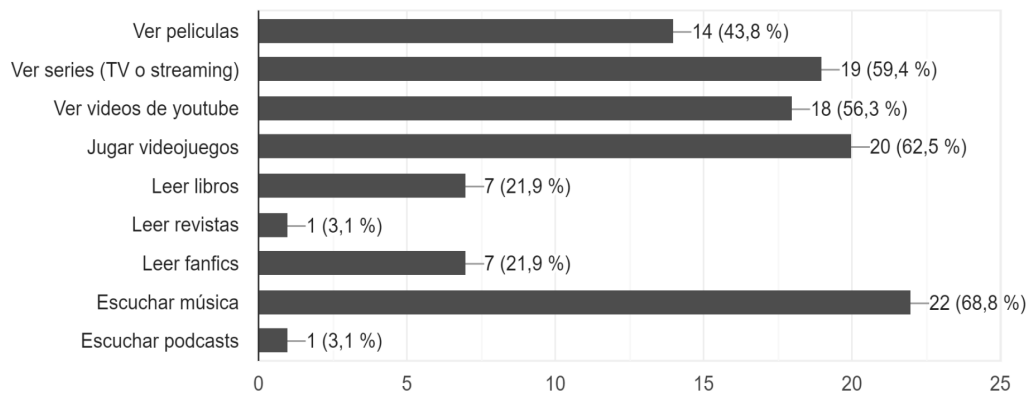
Activities carried out most frequently by students in the period 2022-2 before starting university.



In period 2023-1 the magnitudes grew as more students chose more answers each, yet, the proportions remained almost the same as 2022-2. Music is once again the most chosen activity being chosen 68% of the time, followed by playing video games (62,5%) and watching TV shows (62,5%). This time, watching youtube videos (56,3%) was chosen more times than watching movies (43,8%). Reading books and reading fanfics tied once again, this time being chosen 21,9% of the time. This time, listening to podcasts and reading magazines tied as the least chosen activity with 3,1%.

Figure 32

Activities carried out most frequently by students in the period 2023-1 before starting university.



Question 17 works as a follow up question to the previous one by inquiring students on how many hours per week they dedicated to the activities they engaged in, before starting university. In 2022-2, 7 to 10 weekly hours is the most common answer followed by 11 to 14 hours, and 4 to 6 hours.

Figure 33

Hours dedicated to carrying out the aforementioned activities by students of period 2022-2 before starting university.

Q17	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
+30 horas	1	3.333	3.333	3.333
11 a 14 horas	7	23.333	23.333	26.667
15 a 18 horas	2	6.667	6.667	33.333
19 a 21 horas	2	6.667	6.667	40.000
22 a 25 horas	1	3.333	3.333	43.333
26 a 29 horas	1	3.333	3.333	46.667
4 a 6 horas	5	16.667	16.667	63.333
7 a 10 horas	11	36.667	36.667	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

In 2023-1, 7 to 11 hours per week was again the most common answer, followed by 11 to 14 hours and 15 to 18 hours.

Figure 34

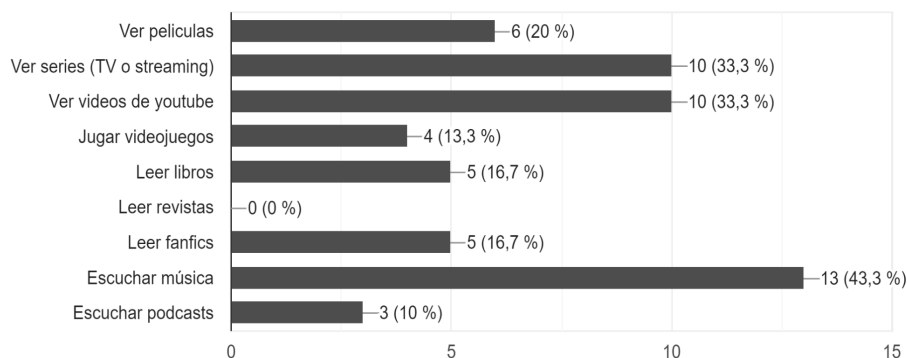
Hours dedicated to carrying out the aforementioned activities by students of period 2023-1 before starting university.

Q17	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
+30 horas	3	9.375	9.375	9.375
11 a 14 horas	8	25.000	25.000	34.375
15 a 18 horas	4	12.500	12.500	46.875
19 a 21 horas	1	3.125	3.125	50.000
22 a 25 horas	2	6.250	6.250	56.250
26 a 29 horas	1	3.125	3.125	59.375
4 a 6 horas	2	6.250	6.250	65.625
7 a 10 horas	11	34.375	34.375	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

Question 18 is similar to question 16. This multiple choice question asks students which activities they undertake now after starting university. For the students of period 2022-2, remained the most common response. Watching TV and watching youtube tied with 33,3%. Watching movies followed with 20%, reading books and reading fanfics became more frequently done activities after starting university (15,7%) and playing video games fell considerably as it was chosen only 13,3%of the time. Listening to podcasts raised in percentage, now with 10%.

Figure 35

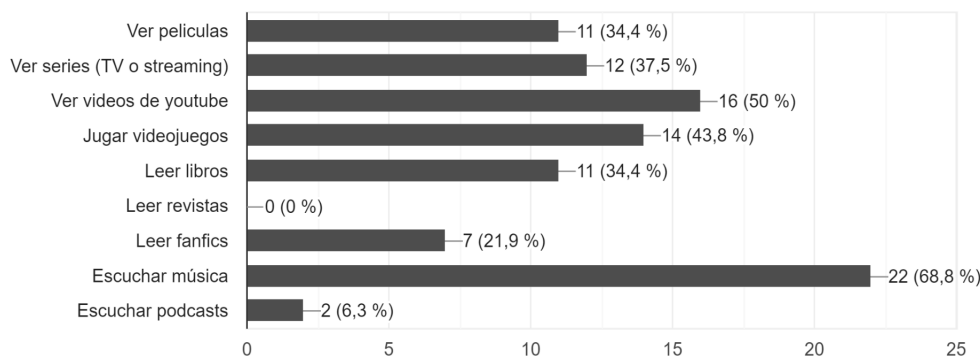
Activities carried out most frequently by students in the period 2022-2 after starting university.



In 2023-1, Listening to music was the most chosen option as well. Followed by watching youtube videos (50%), playing video videogames (43,3%), and watching TV shows. Watching movies and reading books tied this time with 34,4% each. 2023-1 students did not stop reading fanfics after starting university, as the percentage (21,9%) remained exactly the same as before starting their degree. Listening to podcasts got 6,3%. Once again, no one claimed to read magazines.

Figure 36

Activities carried out most frequently by students in the period 2023-1 after starting university.



Question 19 functions as a follow up for question 18 by asking students how many hours per week they currently dedicate to performing the activities they chose in the previous question. Among students of period 2022-2, 4 to 6 hours per week is by far the most picked option (36,6%), followed by 7 to 10 hours (23,3%).

Figure 37

Hours dedicated to carrying out the aforementioned activities by students of period 2022-2. after starting university

Q19	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
+30 horas	1	3.333	3.333	3.333
1 a 3 horas	2	6.667	6.667	10.000
11 a 14 horas	3	10.000	10.000	20.000
15 a 18 horas	2	6.667	6.667	26.667
19 a 21 horas	1	3.333	3.333	30.000
22 a 25 horas	3	10.000	10.000	40.000
4 a 6 horas	11	36.667	36.667	76.667
7 a 10 horas	7	23.333	23.333	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

In 2023-1, the time that most students claimed to dedicate to their favorite activity was 11 to 14 hours a week (31,2%), followed by 7 to 10, and 19 to 21 hours a week, both being chosen by 18,7% of the students.

Figure 38

Hours dedicated to carrying out the aforementioned activities by students of period 2023-1 after starting university.

Q19	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1 a 3 horas	4	12.500	12.500	12.500
11 a 14 horas	10	31.250	31.250	43.750
15 a 18 horas	4	12.500	12.500	56.250
19 a 21 horas	2	6.250	6.250	62.500
4 a 6 horas	6	18.750	18.750	81.250
7 a 10 horas	6	18.750	18.750	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

Question 20 asks what was the language of most of the pieces of media (music, movies, TV shows, internet videos, books, fanfics, and podcasts) that they consumed specifically before starting university. In 2022-2, most of the students (76,6%) claimed that they consumed such media in the English language, while 23,3% claimed it was in Spanish.

Figure 39

Language of the media consumed by 2022-2 students before starting university.

Q20	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Español	7	23.333	23.333	23.333
Inglés	23	76.667	76.667	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

In 2023-1, the answers were more varied than in the previous period, since this time, only 56,2% claimed to consume media mostly in English language. 40,6% claimed to consume media in Spanish, and 3,1% claimed to have consumed media in Korean.

Figure 40

Language of the media consumed by 2023-1 students before starting university.

Q20	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Coreano	1	3.125	3.125	3.125
Español	13	40.625	40.625	43.750
Inglés	18	56.250	56.250	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

Question 21 asks students a question similar to 20, this time focusing on the language of the media they consume currently as university students. In 2022-2, 90% of students claimed to consume media entirely in English, while only 6,6% claimed to consume media in Spanish. Only one person claimed to consume media in Korean,

Figure 41

Language of the media consumed by 2022-2 students after starting university.

Q21	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Coreano	1	3.333	3.333	3.333
Español	2	6.667	6.667	10.000
Inglés	27	90.000	90.000	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

Students from period 2023-1 provided similar answers, with the detail of English being chosen even more now, with 93,7% of students choosing it. Spanish and Korean were each chosen by 3,1%.

Figure 42

Language of the media consumed by 2023-1 students after starting university.

Q21	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Coreano	1	3.125	3.125	3.125
Español	1	3.125	3.125	6.250
Inglés	30	93.750	93.750	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

Question 22 starts inquiring students on their perception of the mentioned activities regarding their role in any possible incidental language acquisition. Specifically before starting university. This question requires students to answer if the purpose of those activities

was learning or leisure. In 2022-2, 90% of students claimed “leisure” as the main reason to engage in such activities.

Figure 43

Reasons for carrying out the aforementioned activities by 2022-2 students before starting university.

Q22	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Aprender	3	10.000	10.000	10.000
Diversión	27	90.000	90.000	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

In 2023-1, the difference was not particularly large, as in this instance 81,2% chose leisure and 18,7% claimed learning.

Figure 44

Reasons for carrying out the aforementioned activities by 2023-1 students before starting university.

Q22	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Aprender	6	18.750	18.750	18.750
Diversión	26	81.250	81.250	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

Question 23 has the function of a follow up to question 22 by asking students for what purpose do they engage in those same activities now that they have started university. In 2022-2, 70% of students chose leisure as the main reason and 30% chose learning as the main reason.

Figure 45

Reasons for carrying out the aforementioned activities by 2022-2 students after starting university.

Q23	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Aprender	9	30.000	30.000	30.000
Diversión	21	70.000	70.000	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

In 2023-1, 62,5% of students chose leisure as the reason for engaging in such activities, while 37,5% chose learning.

Figure 46

Reasons for carrying out the aforementioned activities by 2022-2 students after starting university.

Q23	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Aprender	12	37.500	37.500	37.500
Diversión	20	62.500	62.500	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

Question 24 asks students if according to their perceptions, they have acquired vocabulary in a foreign language thanks to these activities. In 2022-2, 100% of them answered affirmatively, claiming they did acquire vocabulary thanks to such activities.

Figure 47

Have 2022-2 students acquired vocabulary by engaging in the aforementioned activities?

Q24	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Sí	30	100.000	100.000	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

In 2023-1, the numbers remained almost the same, with 96,8% claiming to have acquired vocabulary, but with the exception of one individual claiming to not have acquired any vocabulary.

Figure 48

Have 2023-1 students acquired vocabulary by engaging in the aforementioned activities?

Q24	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	1	3.125	3.125	3.125
Sí	31	96.875	96.875	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

Finally, question 25 asks students if the vocabulary they acquired from engaging in those activities was retained, answering using a likert scale where the options were: Yes, most of it, some, few, and no. In 2022-2, 43,3% of students answered with “yes”, 40% answered with “most of it”, and only 16,6% answered with “some”.

Figure 49

Have 2022-2 students retained the vocabulary acquired by engaging in the aforementioned activities?

Q25	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Algo	5	16.667	16.667	16.667
La mayor parte	12	40.000	40.000	56.667
Sí	13	43.333	43.333	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	30	100.000		

In period 2023-1. The options “yes”, and “most of it” tied, being picked by 43,7% of the students each. 12,5% claim to have retained “some” of the vocabulary acquired.

Figure 50

Have 2023-1 students retained the vocabulary acquired by engaging in the aforementioned activities?

Q25	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Algo	4	12.500	12.500	12.500
La mayor parte	14	43.750	43.750	56.250
Sí	14	43.750	43.750	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	32	100.000		

4.2 Data analysis

After the processing of the collected data, the following step is to review the information obtained and relate it back to the objectives of this study in an attempt to answer the main inquiries. The main objective of this study sought to investigate what is the amount of freshmen students of the FLT BA that have experienced incidental language learning before and during their first semester at the program. There are two specific objectives in this study as well. 1) To determine which kind of incidental second language learning is the most common among freshmen students, and 2) find out which of the 4 language skills is the most learned through incidental learning. Each of these objectives will be dealt with with its own

subsection in this analysis, starting by the specific objectives and finalizing with the main objective. Moreover, further analysis is made regarding aspects such as the characterization of the population studied. Which will be made by reviewing the results of questions related to gender, age, and socioeconomic status to have an accurate representation of the sample.

Furthermore, additional analysis will be made in order to reveal if there are any correlations between variables such as gender or socioeconomic status, as well as information related to the population's language acquisition process. Thus, the order of the subsections in which this analysis will be divided goes as follows: 1) Population sample analysis, 2) Acquisition of language skills by incidental learning, 3) Kinds of incidental language learning, 4) Occurrence of incidental second language learning, and 5) Further analysis regarding gender and socioeconomic status.

4.2.1 Population sample analysis

Population sample analysis is a fundamental component of scientific research, enabling researchers to draw meaningful conclusions and make generalizations about larger populations based on a representative subset of individuals. By carefully selecting and studying a sample from a target population, it is expected to obtain insights into various characteristics, behaviors, or phenomena without the need to study every individual in the population. Before tackling the sections of the analysis that will provide the adequate insight to respond to the specific and general objectives of this study research, This section aims to provide an overview of the studied population itself.

The target population of this research were first semester students of the undergraduate program of Bachelor's Degree in Foreign Languages with an Emphasis in English, which is an equivalent of an FLT BA (Foreign language teaching Bachelor's Degree). To conduct this study, a survey was designed with twenty five questions which

required students to answer with information that ranged from gender, age, and socioeconomic status, to questions that related to their proficiency in English as a foreign language, and their language acquisition process. And of course, their experience with incidental language learning.

After administering the survey among the target population, the total number of individuals that answered the survey was sixty two (62). This number of individuals encompasses the students from both period 2022-2 (30 individuals) and period 2023-1 (32 individuals).

The first section of said survey was designed entirely as a means to provide an accurate description of the population. This section comprehends questions one (1) to five (5) in the survey, which are aimed to provide a general description of the population's gender, age, socioeconomic status, and labor status.

Question one (1), for example, shows that in the period 2022-2, out of all the thirty (30) individuals that answered the survey. Nineteen (19) identify as female, and eleven (11) identify as male (refer to figure 1). Meanwhile, period 2023-1, is differentiated from period 2022-2 in the fact that out of thirty two (32) individuals that took the survey this time, the number of female identified individuals remained the same as the former period, while the number of male identified individuals went from eleven (11) to (12). Another difference from the former period is that one nonbinary person is now incorporated in the course (refer to figure 2). This leaves us with a total population of thirty eight (38) women, making up for 61.2% of the population of both periods. Twenty three (23) men, making up for 37% of the population of both periods. And one (1) nonbinary person, making up 1.6% of the entirety of the surveyed population.

Question two (2) is formulated with the aim of providing insight into the age range of the surveyed population. In the case of period 2022-2, Twelve (12) out of thirty students

claimed to be aged 15 to 18 years old. Fourteen (14) students affirmed to be aged 18 to 21 years. Three (3) claimed to be aged 21 to 24, and only one individual affirmed to be aged 25 or older (refer to figure 3). In the case of period 2023-1 the data shifted, and now twenty three (23) individuals of the surveyed population of this period claim to be 15 to 18 years old. Only seven individuals claim to be aged 18 to 21, and only two people claim to be aged between 21 to 24. Unlike 2022-2, no one appears to be older than 25 in this period (refer to figure 4). This data reveals that thirty five people making up 56.4% of the total surveyed population are aged 15 to 18, twenty one individuals, making up 33.8% of the entire population are aged 18 to 21, five people that make up 8% of the population are aged between 21 to 24, and only one person (1.6% of the population) is 25 or older.

Questions three (3) and four (4) have the objective of identifying the working status of the population, by asking if they hold any paid job position and how many hours a week they dedicate to said job (question 4). The results of these two questions in the academic period 2022-2 were as follows: 70% of the students (21 individuals) claimed to not have a job while 30% (9 individuals) claimed to have one. Additionally, out of the 9 individuals that stated having a job, one claims to work only 2 hours a week, two individuals claim work 3 to 5 hours a week, three claim work 6 to 8 hours, one claims to work 13 to 16 hours, one works 17 to 20 hours, and only one claims to work more than 20 hours a week (refer to figures 5 and 6).

Likewise, the results of questions 3 and 4 in the academic period 2023-1 presented the following results: The proportions of this part of the sample shifted to show a decreasing number of working students. 87.5% corresponding to 28 of the students surveyed in this period claim to not have a job, and only 12.5% corresponding to only 4 students claim to have one. Out of the working students, one claims to work 6 to 8 hours a week, two claim to

work 9 to 12 hours, and only one claims to work 13 to 16 weekly hours (refer to figures 7 and 8)

The analysis of these questions manifest the following data: The totality of students from both academic periods who hold a paid job position is 13, which corresponds to 20.9% of the population surveyed, while 79%, corresponding to 49 individuals claim to not hold any paid job position. This means that out of all the students of academic periods 2022-2 and 2023-1, only slightly more than a fifth of them have a job while the rest do not.

Question number five (5) is aimed to provide an insight on the socioeconomic levels of the surveyed students, which in this case are based on the Colombian framework of 6 levels of socioeconomic status, being strata 1 the lowest, usually the poorest, and strata 6 the highest, usually the wealthiest. Strata 3 and 4 would fall into the category of “middle class”. During the academic period 2022-2, 3 students, corresponding to 3% of this period’s population claimed to be in strata 1. 50% of the students, corresponding to 15 individuals, claimed to be strata 2, and 12 students, encompassing 40% of this period’s population, claimed to be strata 3. No student was found claiming to be strata 4 or higher (refer to figure 9).

In the academic period 2023-1, 7 students, corresponding to 21.8% of this period’s population, claimed to be strata 1. 10 students, encompassing 31.2% claimed to be strata 2. Likewise, 10 students, corresponding to another 31.2% of this specific part of the sample, claimed to be strata 3. 4 students (12.5% of the sample) claimed to be strata 4. In this period, one student (3.1% of the sample) claimed to be strata 5 (refer to figure 10). This data reveals that 10 individuals, corresponding to 16.1% of the entire sample are strata 1. 25 students, corresponding to 40.3% of the full sample are strata 2. 22, making up for 35.4% are strata 3. 4 individuals (6.4% of the full sample) are strata 4. And finally, only 1 individual, who corresponds to 1.6% of the sample is strata 5. Based on this information it is possible to

affirm that 91.9% (57 individuals) of the entire surveyed population belong to strata 3 or lower, while only 8% of the entire sample belongs to strata 4 or higher.

Thanks to the analysis of questions 1 to 5, it is now possible to create an accurate profile of the entirety of the population studied. This leaves us with a studied population of 62 individuals from which:

- 61.2% identify as women, 37% identify as men, and 1.6% identify as nonbinary.
- 56.4% are aged 15 to 18, 33.8% are aged 18 to 21, 8% are aged between 21 to 24, and 1.6% are 25 or older.
- 21% claim to have a paid job, while 79% claim to not have a job.
- 16.1% of the entire sample are strata 1, 40.3% of the full sample are strata 2, 35.4% are strata 3, 6.4% are strata 4, and 1.6% are strata 5.

4.2.2. Acquisition of language skills by incidental learning

The first of the specific aims of this research study is to find out which of the four language skills (listening, speaking, writing, and reading) is more usually easily acquired through incidental learning within the context of first semester students of an FLT BA. After revision of the results gathered with the survey it is possible to claim that certain language skills are more likely to be acquired through incidental learning than others. The specific skills with the highest probability to be acquired are input skills, rather than output skills. This claim can be supported by referring to the following results obtained in specific questions from the data collection tool.

In the first place, in order to answer the first specific inquiry it is possible to review the results of questions 16 and 18 of the survey, which asks which of a determined set of activities (media) did students engage with more often before and after starting university. The results of these questions can be of aid in fulfilling this specific aim. From the options

these questions offered, which were: watching movies, watching series (TV or streaming), watching youtube videos, playing video games, reading books, reading magazines, reading fanfics, listening to music, and listening to podcasts, the option that was chosen by most students was listening to music, in both questions and in both periods (2022-2, and 2023-1). The other options that follow listening to music as the type of media most students engaged with were: playing video games, watching series, watching youtube videos, and watching movies. Activities that specifically require reading text to be consumed; such as reading books, fanfics, or magazines, were chosen considerably less than the activities first mentioned, which are based on sound, or sound mixed with visual media. These results hint at a preference for the consumption of mixed media among students, which could be due to the enhanced stimulation that it entails. These results establish the nature of the sort of skills that are most likely to be acquired through incidental learning.

In second place, the results obtained with questions 20 and 21 contribute further to answering this inquiry by establishing the language of the input obtained by students that engaged in the consumption of the types of media mentioned in the previous paragraph. Question 20 asks students from both periods to choose in which language from a limited set (English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, German, Japanese, and Korean) were most of the media they consumed before starting university. Question 21 functions as a follow up for question 20 by asking the same question but specifically after starting university. The results are consistent in both contexts and in both periods, as English is, by far, the most chosen answer with over 60% on average in question 20 and over 90% in question 21, followed by Spanish and occasionally Korean with far lower percentages. The results of these questions on top of the results of questions 16, and 18 help support the claim that incidental language learning occurs more usually when partaking in the consumption of input media like listening

to music, or watching movies, TV shows, and internet videos in a foreign language, as is the case with English in this context.

Another set of questions that serve for further analysis are questions like 14, in which students of both periods are asked which of the four language skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking) do they consider as the easiest, and follow up question 15, in which they are asked which language skill do they find most difficult. Thanks to these questions, we find out that for both periods, reading is the skill that most students consider as the easiest, and at the same time, that speaking is regarded as the most difficult skill for most students of both periods. The contributions that these results have for answering this specific aim lay on the fact that reading, an input skill, was consistently regarded as the easiest skill for students in 2022-2 and 2023-1. This, on top of the results discussed in the previous two paragraphs, makes it possible to claim that it's more likely to acquire input language skills such as reading and listening, than output language skills, such as speaking or writing.

Consequently, it is possible to establish that reading and listening are the skills most likely to be acquired through incidental learning. To establish which skill between listening and reading is the most likely to be learned in an incidental learning context would require further and more specialized research.

4.2.3 Kinds of incidental language learning

The second specific aim of this study was to find out which kind of incidental language learning is most common among freshman students at the FLT BA. We have established that for the sake of this research, the different kinds of incidental language learning are based on the source of it. The different sources of incidental language learning were classified into categories based on the kind of input being received, such as audio (listening to songs, podcasts, or radio), visual (reading books, comics, or journals), or

multimodal (watching series, movies, videos, or streaming). In order to fulfill this specific aim we refer to the results of specific questions within the data collection tool to determine the answer to this specific inquiry, as well as the conclusions reached in the previous section (Acquisition of language skills by incidental learning). This study was already determined that input skills are the most likely to be developed through incidental learning, so audio, visual, and multimodal sources of incidental learning are all to be expected to occur. However, specifically in the context of first semester students at the program, it is possible to affirm that not all kinds of incidental learning occur in the same proportions, and instead, some sources of incidental language learning are more normally occurring than others.

By, once again, referring to the results of questions 16 and 18 we are aware that listening to music is the activity that is consistently chosen by students when asked which activity they carry out more often. Followed closely by consuming multimodal media such as watching movies, series, and internet videos. Strictly visual activities as is the case with reading any kind of literature (books, fanfics, and magazines) are chosen considerably less than either audio or multimodal kinds of incidental learning. Based on this information it is possible to uphold the affirmation that audio based incidental language learning is the most common kind of incidental learning found in the context of first semester students in periods 2022-2 and 2023-1.

The reason for this phenomena of listening to music being the most regular activity among first semester students would require a more specific study, in which the reasons behind such an occurrence could be accurately recorded and measured.

Now, it is important to point out that “playing video games” obtained a consistently high percentage of the answers from students in both periods, specifically before starting university, in fact being persistently second to “listening to music” in both periods (refer to figure 32 and 33.) Playing video games was grouped with the multimodal media as it is both

visual and audio based. However, videogames possess the particularity of needing active interaction from the user in order to be consumed, usually requiring certain psychomotor abilities to respond to visual or auditory stimuli. This raises the question of whether video games may represent a more effective way of producing incidental language learning. To answer this question, further research is required.

4.2.4 Occurrence of incidental second language learning

After tackling the specific aims of this study, it is time to focus on its main objective, which is to determine what is the amount of freshmen students of the FLT BA that have experienced incidental language learning before and during their first semester at the program. After dealing with the specific objectives, and the respective results of their analysis, it is possible to affirm that incidental language learning effectively occurs among first semester students of the undergraduate program foreign languages with an emphasis on English at UIS. It is also possible to state that incidental learning based on audio input is the most common among the studied population. Such results can be used as leverage to support the resolution of the general objective. However, it is by, once again, analyzing the results of specific questions from the data collection tool, that determining the answer to our main question becomes a task with a more precise result.

We can start by addressing the results obtained in questions 22 and 23, in which students were inquired about the main reason to engage in the activities mentioned in questions 16 and 18. Question 22 focused on the time period before students started university and question 23 focused specifically in the time after starting their undergrad studies. The options available for both questions were “learning” or “fun” as the reason to partake in the mentioned activities. The results for both questions showed that most students claim to take on such activities just for fun. Fun, entertainment, leisure, were the main

reasons to take part in activities such as listening to music, playing video games, watching movies, watching series, watching youtube videos, and reading books, fanfics, or listening to podcasts. Although some students declared that the main reason was learning and not fun, the gaps between the percentages obtained by both choices are significant. Such phenomena is more noticeable in question 22 which focused on the time before students started university, as within the 2022-2 population. 90% of students claimed “leisure” as the main reason to engage in such activities while only 10% claimed “learning” (refer to figure 44). The results obtained from the 2023-1 sample are similar to those of 2022-2, as in this instance 81,2% chose leisure and 18,7% claimed learning as the main reason (refer to figure 45).

Question 23 works as a follow up question to 22, this time petitioning students to choose their answer within the time frame of their current experience as university students. The results of this question show that in the period 2022-2, 70% of students chose leisure/fun as the main reason to participate in the said activities and 30% chose learning as the main reason (refer to figure 46). In the period 2023-1 we find the biggest difference from the results obtained in question 22, as 62,5% of students chose leisure as the reason for engaging in such activities, while 37,5% chose learning (refer to figure 47). Although the change in the percentages of both items is fairly noticeable, the fact is that the majority of students participate in those activities with the purpose of having a fun time, not for learning, even if learning does effectively occur when taking part in them.

Now, it is possible to analyze the results of even more questions of the survey to achieve a solid deduction that answers or main inquiry, such as the case of question 24. This question interrogates students by asking if, according to their perceptions, they acquired vocabulary in a foreign language thanks to these activities. The results to this question showed that In 2022-2, 100% of them answered affirmatively, claiming they did acquire vocabulary thanks to such activities (refer to figure 48), and in 2023-1 the percentages

remained mostly the same as those from 2022-2, with 96,8% claiming to have acquired vocabulary, but with the exception of a single individual (representing 3,1% of this period's sample) claiming to not have acquired any vocabulary thanks to such activities (refer to figure 49). The results of this question show that, at least from the perspective of students themselves, almost all of them acquired vocabulary through engaging in activities such as listening to music, watching movies, watching series (TV or streaming), watching youtube videos, playing video games, reading books, reading fanfics, and listening to podcasts, with the specific intention of partaking in leisure time, and not as a learning strategy.

The analysis of the previous question can be complemented with the analysis of the final question of the data collection tool, question 25, which asks students if the vocabulary they acquired from engaging in the activities mentioned was retained. The options of this question were formulated using a likert scale where the options were: Yes, most of it, some, few, and no. Accordingly, the results obtained in the period 2022-2, showed that 43,3% of students answered with "yes", 40% answered with "most of it", and only 16,6% answered with "some" (refer to figure 50). In the period 2023-1. The percentages in the results remained similar to those in period 2022-2, as options "yes", and "most of it" tied, being picked by 43,7% of the students each, and 12,5% claimed to have retained "some" of the vocabulary acquired (refer to figure 51). Consequently, it is possible to state that basically all of the students from both periods consider that they effectively acquired and retained vocabulary through engaging in leisure activities.

After having analyzed the results of the gathered data and going back to one of the basic definitions of incidental language learning which states that individuals that experience it "may not even have the intention to learn the other language, and yet gain some proficiency in it, just from hearing it being used in their environment (incidental learning)" (Hulstijn, 2001, p.1). We can assert that not only has incidental language learning occurred among

students of the first semester students of the FLT BA, but that it is still a common occurrence, as virtually every student in the sample has experienced it and benefited from it.

Hence, the answer to the main aim in this study, which is to determine what is the amount of freshmen students of the FLT BA that have experienced incidental language learning before and during their first semester at the program, is: All of them. Every student in the first semester of the FLT BA from period 2022-2 to period 2023-1 can be considered as having experienced incidental language learning at some point in their language acquisition process.

4.2.5 *Further analysis*

The findings obtained after the results' analysis managed to answer both the specific and general aims of this study satisfactorily. However, an arrangement of questions within the data collection tool were put in place not only as a means to provide a characterization for the population of study (gender, age, socioeconomic status, etc) in an attempt to discover any possible relationships between such variables.

4.2.5.1 Gender

In the realm of scientific research, the exploration of relationships between variables is a fundamental endeavor. One area of interest has been the examination of gender and its potential associations with various factors. In the case of this particular study, there was an attempt in finding out whether there is a relationship between the gender with which the individuals of the studied population identify with, and variables such as language proficiency.

First, as with the other sections on this analysis, the results of specific questions of the data collection tool were revised and compared afterwards to try to establish a pattern. In this case, the questions were the first question, which asked students about their perceived gender, and the sixth question, which inquired them about their current English level proficiency based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Each of these questions was analyzed separately and then compared to find any possible interdependence. With the analysis of question one it is possible to determine that, as it was said previously, 61.2%, corresponding to thirty eight (38) individuals, of the studied population identify as women. 37%, made of twenty three (23) individuals, identify as men, and only one individual (1.6% of the total population) identifies as nonbinary.

The analysis of question six provides an understanding of the population's current English level proficiency, presenting the following results: In the academic period 2022-2, 2 individuals, corresponding to 6.6% of this period's population, claim to be level A2. 15 students, encompassing 50% of period 2022-2 surveyed population affirm to be level B1. 10 individuals, corresponding to 33% of the students, claim to be level B2. 3 students, making up 10% of the population claim to be level C1 (refer to figure 11).

In the results of the academic period 2023-1, it was found that 4 students, which correspond to 12.5% of this period's population, claimed to be level A2. The number of individuals who claimed to be level B1 (which in this case is 17) grew by two units in relation with the previous academic period, meaning 53% of students in 2023-1. The number of level B2 students decreased by 3 individuals in relation to 2022-2, with seven, making up 21.8% of this period's population, claiming to be at that level. And 4 people, corresponding to 12.5% of this period, claimed to be level C1 (refer to figure 12). The previous percentages reveal that in the total population of both academic periods. 9.67% of the population, corresponding to 6 individuals, claim to be level A2. 51.6%, which is made up of 32

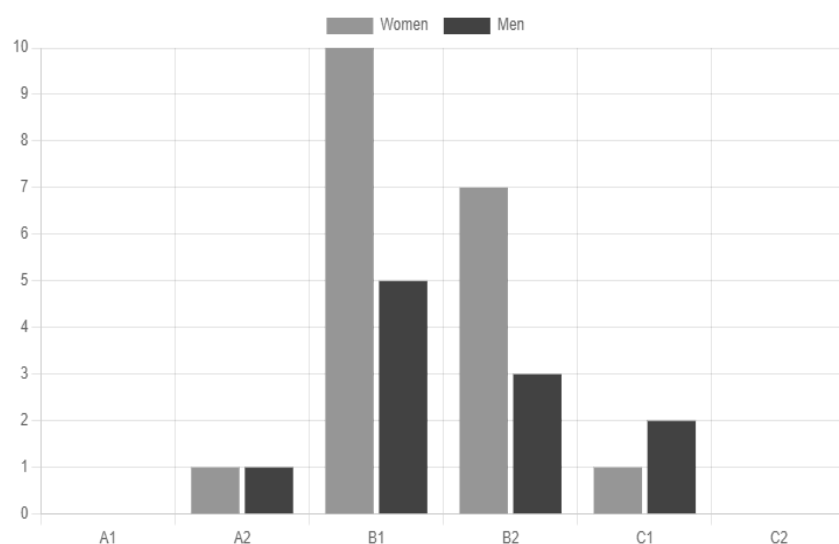
individuals, claim to be level B1. 27.41%, corresponding to 17 individuals from both academic periods, affirm to be level B2. And 11.29%, encompassed by 7 individuals, declared to be level C1.

With the data presented in the previous paragraph, the effort of finding a relationship between gender and level of proficiency was made including the generation of graphs to represent the levels of proficiency in each academic period based on gender, As well as the average of both academic periods.

Starting with period 2022-2, it is noticeable that no student claimed to have a level of proficiency of neither A1 nor C2. When it comes to level A2, it is found that one man (accounting for 9% of the male population of period 2022-2), and one woman (Making up 5.2% of the female population of the same period) claimed to be level A2. With regards to level B1 in academic period 2022-2, it was noticed that 5 men (encompassing 45.4% of this period's population) affirmed to be level B1, while 10 women (52.6% of this period's female population) declared to be level B1. Concerning level B2, it was learned that 3 men (27.2% of this period's male population) asserted to be level B2, while 7 women (36.8% of the female population) claimed to be said level. Finally, in relation to level C1, it was determined that 2 men (18.1% of the male population) said to be in this level while only one woman (5.2% of the respective population) made the same affirmation (refer to figure 51).

Figure 51

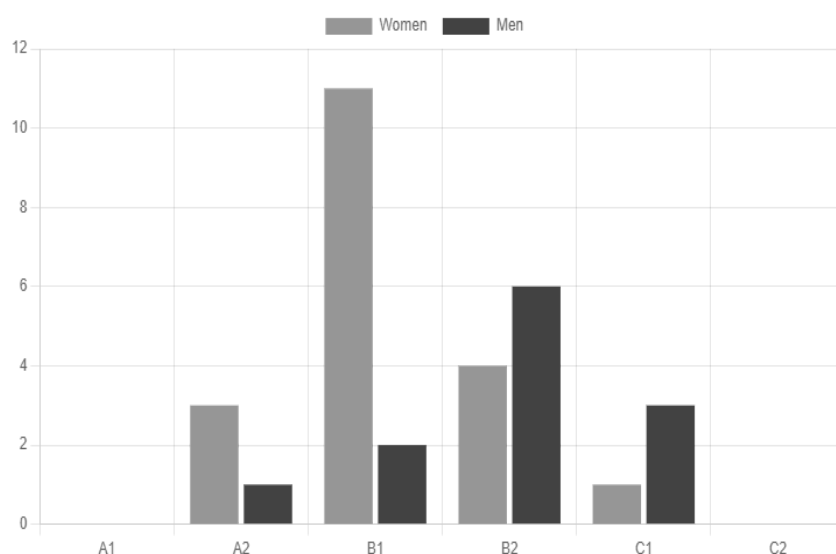
Level of English proficiency by gender: Academic period 2022-2



Regarding academic period 2023-1, the following results are found: In the same way as the previous academic period, there were no individuals who claimed to be in either level A1 or C2. Concerning level A1, it is noticed that one man (8.3% of the male population in this period) claimed to be in level A2, while 3 women (15.7% of this period's female population) claimed to be in said level. In respect of level B1, two men (16.6% of their respective population) claimed to be in this level, while 11 women (making up 57.8% of the female population in this period) affirmed to be in said level. On the subject of level B2, it was realized that 6 men (50% of the male population) stated to be in this level, while 4 women (encompassing 21% of the female population) shared this claim. Finally, surrounding level C1, it was perceived that 3 men (25% of their demographic) declared to be in this level, while only one woman (5.2%) held the same claim (refer to figure 52). It is necessary to note that in this specific period, there was one individual who identified as of non-binary gender, this individual claimed to be B1. This data is not represented in the provided graphs as its presence would not influence the percentages of the male and female populations of this analysis.

Figure 52

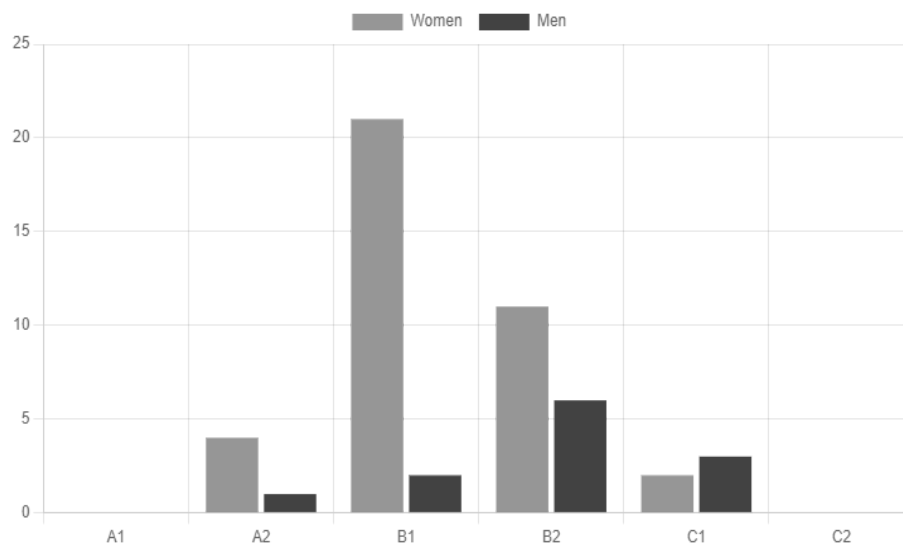
Level of English proficiency by gender: Academic period 2023-1



As the concluding stage of this section of the analysis, an average was made between the populations of each of the academic periods in an attempt to provide a concluding answer in the subject of the correlation between perceived gender and declared level of English proficiency. With the sum of the populations of both academic periods, the results obtained are the following: Two men (8.6% of the total male population) are found to be in level A2, while 4 women (10.5% of the total female population) were found to be in the same level. With regards to level B1, it is noted that 7 men (30.4% of the male population) claimed to be in this level, while 21 women (55.2% of the female population) shared the same claim. As to level B2, 9 men (making up 39.1% of the whole male demographic) attested to be in said level, while 11 women (28.9% of the sample's entire female demographic) made the same affirmation. Finally, in the matter of level C1, it was discovered that 5 men (21.7% of the population) were on level C1, while only 2 women (5.2%) were on this same level (refer to figure 53).

Figure 53

Proficiency levels by gender on both academic periods



Finally, in order to summarize the results of this analysis, we get the following data:

- No individual in either of the academic periods was found to be in level A1 or level C2.
- Out of the entire surveyed population, 61.2% identify as women, 37% identify as men, and 1.6% identify as nonbinary.
- 8.6% of the total male population affirmed to be in level A2, while 10.5% of the total female population were found to be in the same level.
- 30.4% of the total male population claimed to be in level B1, while 55.2% of the female population shared the same claim.
- 39.1% of the total male demographic attested to be in level B2, while 28.9% of the entire female demographic made the same affirmation.
- 21.7% of the male population were on level C1, while 5.2% of the total female population were on this same level.

Taking into account the presented data, it might be possible to affirm that male individuals present higher levels of English proficiency than their female partners, as a consistently higher percentage of male identified individuals are found in levels B2 and C1, while a higher percentage of female identified people is found in levels like A2 and B1. Nevertheless, it is essential to acknowledge that this study has its limitations. The research was conducted within a specific time frame and cultural context, which can impact the generalizability of the findings. Other factors should be taken into account as well, especially the size of the sample used in this study, as its proportions are not suitable to make generalized affirmations regarding the dependence of language proficiency on gender. Consequently, it is possible to state that the results of this analysis consistently indicated the absence of a significant relationship between gender and English level of proficiency. If the existence of such a relationship exists or not, further research is needed to provide a definitive statement in the matter.

4.2.5.2 Socioeconomic factors

The ability to communicate in foreign or second languages has become increasingly important in our globalized world. Proficiency in a foreign language not only enhances job prospects but also facilitates cultural exchange and fosters understanding across borders. However, one significant factor that influences an individual's foreign/second language proficiency is their socioeconomic background. Socioeconomic factors can shape language acquisition and proficiency, and highlights the challenges faced by individuals from different socioeconomic backgrounds in achieving language fluency.

Socioeconomic backgrounds can influence an individual's exposure to different cultures and travel opportunities, for example. Affluent families often have the means to travel abroad, exposing their children to different languages and cultures from a young age. These

experiences foster a natural inclination towards language learning and provide a context for language practice. In contrast, individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may have limited exposure to other cultures, hindering their motivation and opportunities for language acquisition.

The availability of language learning resources significantly affects foreign language proficiency. Affluent individuals can afford private tutors, language classes, and technological aids like language learning apps and software. They may have access to language immersion programs or the ability to attend language schools. Conversely, individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds might not have the financial means to access such resources, relying primarily on traditional classroom education. This discrepancy in available resources can lead to variations in language proficiency levels. “lack of motivation among students in under-privileged contexts is the result of inappropriate educational provision” (Kormos, 2013).

In the case of this study, an attempt was made in order to find out if such socioeconomic background related phenomena were present by, once again, analyzing the results obtained through the data collection tool. It is actually expected to find a correlation between the socioeconomic status of students and their level of proficiency in this study, however, only after the proper analysis is it possible to produce a definite statement. In this instance, the questions that were reviewed in order to achieve this goal were question 5 and question 6.

Question 5, as it has been pointed out previously in the population sample analysis section, is aimed to provide awareness of the socioeconomic levels of the surveyed demographic, based on the Colombian framework of 6 levels of socioeconomic strata, being strata 1 the lowest, usually the poorest, and strata 6 the highest, usually the wealthiest. Strata 3 and 4 falling into the category of “middle class”. The results of this analysis were that

16.1% of the entire sample claim to belong to strata 1, 40.3% of the full sample affirm to be strata 2, 35.4% are strata 3, 6.4%, strata 4, and 1.6% are strata 5.

Question 6, also previously reviewed in the previous section (correlation between gender and English proficiency level) revealed that in the total population of both academic periods. 9.67% of the population, corresponding to 6 individuals, claim to be level A2. 51.6% of the sample, which is made up of 32 individuals, claim to be level B1. 27.41%, corresponding to seventeen individuals from both academic periods, affirm to be level B2. And 11.29%, made of 7 individuals, declared to be level C1.

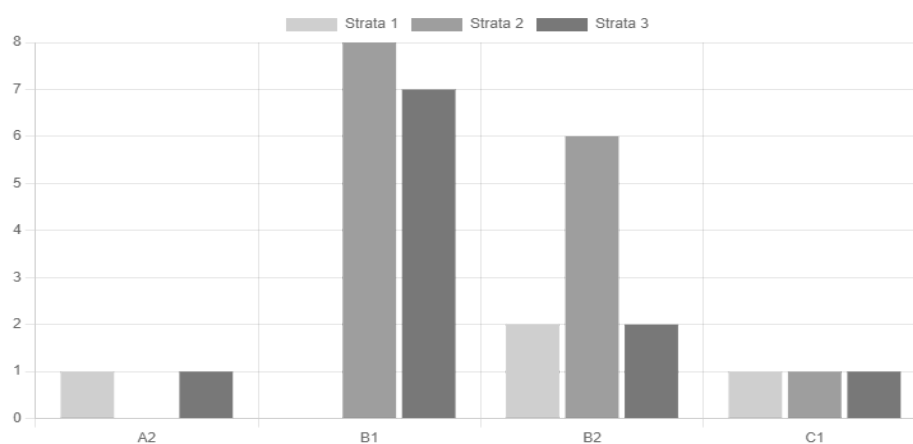
With the results of said questions reviewed, the next step is to try to establish a correlation between them by displaying each of the present levels of proficiency (A2, B1, B2, and C1), and exhibiting which of the 6 strata levels are found in each of the proficiency levels and in which proportion. The population of each academic period was analyzed separately and a posterior analysis of both periods was conducted. Starting with the academic period 2022-2, the obtained results are the following (refer to figure 54):

- Two individuals (6.6% of the sample of this academic period) consider themselves to be level A1. From these two individuals, one of them claims to be strata 1, while the other affirms to be strata 3.
- Fifteen students (50% of this academic period's population) claimed to be level B1. From these fifteen individuals, 53.3% (8 students) stated to be in strata 2, while 46.7% (7 students) claimed to be in strata 3.
- From the ten individuals who declared to be level B2, 20% (2 individuals) belong to strata 1. 60% (6 people) of the level B2 students claimed to be strata 2. And another 20% of the level B2 affirmed to be strata 3.

- From the 3 students who claimed to be in level C1 in this academic period, the percentages are evenly divided among the socioeconomic stratas 1, 2, and 3. Each of them, representing 33.3% of level C1.

Figure 54

Percentage of socioeconomic strata by level of proficiency. Academic period 2022-2



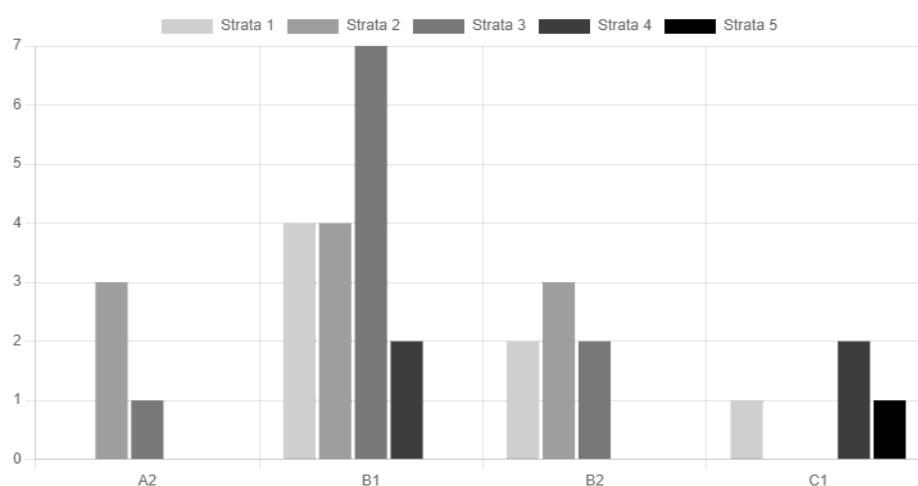
Concerning the information on the academic period 2023-1, the results are the following (refer to figure 55):

- From the four students that claimed to have a proficiency level of A2 in this academic period, 75% of them (three individuals) identified themselves as strata 2, while 25% (one individual) affirmed to be strata 3.
- From the 17 students that declared to be level B1, 23.5% of them (four students) are strata 1, another 23.5% claimed to be strata 2, 41.1% (seven students) are strata 3, and 11.7% (two people) are strata 4.
- From the seven of students that affirmed to be in level B2 in this academic period, 28.5% of them (two students) claimed to be strata 1, 42.8% (three students) claimed to be strata 2, and another 28.5% (two students) appear to be strata 3.

- From the four students that were found in level C1, it was found that 25% of them (one student) is in strata 1, 50% (two students) are in strata 4, and another 25% (one student) is in strata 5.

Figure 55

Percentage of socioeconomic strata by level of proficiency. Academic period 2023-1



After the analysis of the data of both academic periods, the following stage was to create an average between both of them, the results of this process were the following (refer to figure 56):

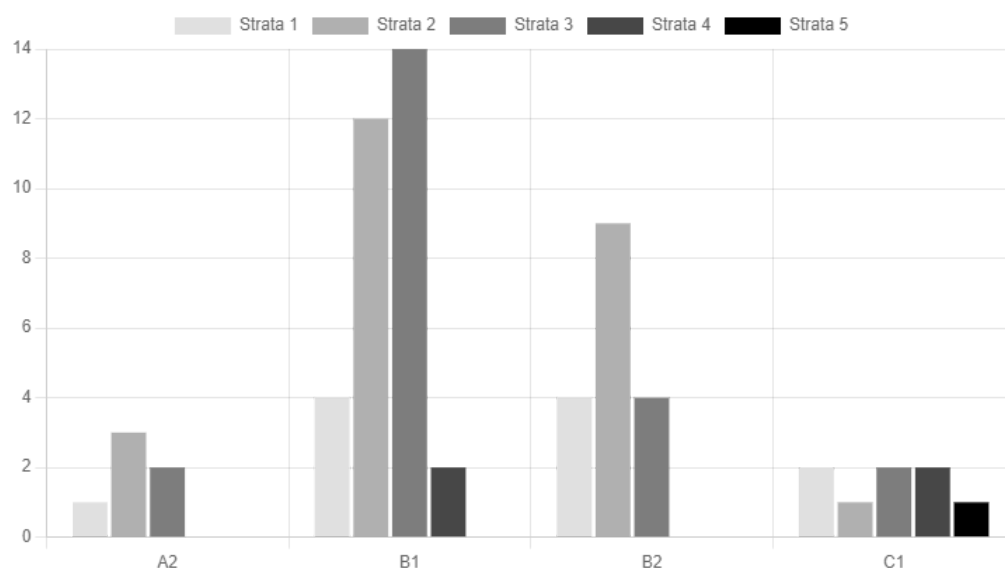
- From the six students from both academic periods that claimed to be level A2, 16.6% (one student) is found to be strata 1, 50% (three students) are found to be strata 2, and 33.3% (2 students) are found to be strata 3.
- From the 32 students that were found to be level B1, it was determined that 12.5% of them (four individuals) are strata 1, 37.5% of them (12 individuals) are strata 2,

43.75% of them (14 people) are strata 3, and only 6.25% of them (two individuals) are strata 4.

- From the 17 students that claimed to have a B2 level of proficiency, it was observed that 23.5% of them (four students) are strata 1, 52.9% of them (nine students) are strata 2, and another 23.5% of them (four students) are strata 3.
- Finally, from the seven students that declared to have a C1 level of proficiency, it was found that 28.5% of them (2 individuals) are strata 1, 14.2% of them (one individual) is strata 2, another 14.2% is strata 3, an additional 28.5% are strata 4, and another 14.2%, corresponding to a single individual is found to be strata 5.

Figure 56

Percentage of socioeconomic strata by level of proficiency. Both academic periods.



The information produced in this analysis could make it possible to support the initial statement of this section regarding socioeconomic status being a determining factor in the achievement of higher levels of proficiency in a foreign language. However, in this specific

case, factors such as the rather homogeneous distribution of individuals from all the socioeconomic groups found in this population, e.g. the presence of strata 1 individuals in both levels A2 and C1 (a pattern that can be observed in most of the other socioeconomic groups found here), makes it rather difficult to establish a pattern that undoubtedly proves that, at least in this context, shows a correlation between the mentioned factors. Nevertheless, it is possible that with access to a more substantial population, the observation of patterns that support the assertion of socioeconomic backgrounds being a determining factor in the development of foreign language proficiency.

5. Conclusions

The central topic of the research is “Incidental language learning” which is defined as the unconscious and unintentional acquisition of elements of a second language outside of formal learning environments.

The inquiries of this research study can be framed by asking the following question: What is the occurrence of incidental language learning among freshman students before and after they begin university? From this primary question, additional inquiries emerged, including the identification of the language skills most frequently acquired through incidental learning and the exploration of the sort of media where incidental language learning commonly occurs. It is important to note that the context of this study occurs entirely within the Universidad Industrial de Santander, in the city of Bucaramanga, Colombia. Specifically in the faculty of Human Sciences where first semester students of the Bachelor’s degree in Foreign languages with Emphasis in English, Also known as the Foreign Language Teaching BA (FLT BA) were the population studied. The scope of the research inquiries was limited to the students coursing their first semester on the academic periods of 2022-2 and 2023-1.

The main reason for conducting this study was a personal interest in determining the prevalence of second language acquisition through incidental learning among freshman students of the FLT BA program. The aim was to gain a better understanding of the significance of incidental learning in the process of second or foreign language acquisition. Furthermore, the findings of this study could contribute to the design of future diagnostic tests, curriculum development, the creation of teaching and learning materials, and potential future research in the fields of language teaching and language acquisition.

The primary objective of this study was to determine the extent to which freshman students of the FLT BA program had encountered incidental language learning prior to and during their first semester. To enhance comprehension of the phenomenon of incidental language learning and its influence on students' language acquisition processes, this study also pursued two specific objectives. Firstly, to identify the prevalent type of incidental second language learning among freshman students. Secondly, to ascertain which of the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, or writing—was most frequently acquired through incidental learning.

As the first stage of this process it was necessary to establish specific, well rounded definitions of the concept of incidental language learning. In the context of this research, several authors were used to provide a theoretical framework to supplement the production of a definition to work around, the most valuable contribution to this attempt was Hulstijn, who defined incidental language learning as The process of acquiring a word or expression unintentionally, without any conscious effort to memorize it, which was compared to "picking up" an unfamiliar word while, for example, listening to someone or reading a text. (2013, p.1).

With regard to the establishment of stalwart definitions to work on, it was also established in the conceptual framework the kinds of incidental learning that can be

experimented by the individuals engaging in second language acquisition. Doughty contributed greatly to the organization of these concepts by claiming that “vocabulary learning requires input to happen, be it written, oral or bimodal. Hence, incidental vocabulary also requires a form of exposure to unimodal or multimodal input that will ultimately allow learning” (Doughty, 2003, p.1). Such a thought was further supported by the following statement: “vocabulary learning requires input to happen, be it written, oral or bimodal. Hence, incidental vocabulary also requires a form of exposure to unimodal or multimodal input that will ultimately allow learning” (Pérez-Serrano et al., 2021, p.2) Following the presented lines of thought, and for the purpose of this research, the “kinds of incidental language learning” were established using the categorization based on the type of input received when engaging in incidental language learning. These categories included strictly audio sources (such as listening to songs, podcasts, or radio), strictly visual sources (such as reading books, comics, or journals), and multimodal sources (such as watching series, movies, videos, or streams).

Lastly, in regards to the construction of a framework using studies that analyzed the occurrence of incidental language learning before formal instruction or from the perspective of students themselves, there appeared to be a gap in the existing literature. Due to the fact that most studies primarily concentrated on examining various inputs among subject groups to measure the degree of incidental vocabulary acquisition, rather than exploring occurrences of this phenomenon within student groups based on their own perceptions of their second language (L2) acquisition processes. This research study aimed to address this gap and contribute to the existing literature.

In relation to the methodological aspect of this study, it was conducted in a quantitative and descriptive manner, with the rationale behind this choice stemming from careful deliberation of the study's objectives. Given that the aim was to determine not only

the presence but also the overall prevalence of incidental language learning among freshman students, adopting a quantitative approach appeared to be the most appropriate decision. Furthermore, the nature of the inquiry allowed for the characterization of this study as descriptive. This study adhered to the information protection laws of the Republic of Colombia (Ley 1266, 2008) during its execution, primarily due to the handling of information input required for its development. Specifically, during the data collection phase, participant information (even if it does not include personal details) was utilized as input. The aforementioned law served as an ethical framework to guide the research process.

In order to collect the desired data, a survey consisting of 25 questions with purposes ranging from population profiling, perception of the language acquisition process, and the student's experience with incidental language learning, was designed. To distribute the data collection tool, permission was requested from the professors teaching in each pre-intermediate English group to present and distribute the survey to the students during classroom sessions. The survey was prepared in Spanish to ensure that students with lower English proficiency could complete it without any difficulties or misinterpretations. Moreover, key concepts, such as incidental learning, were briefly explained within the survey to simplify the process for participants.

After the conduction of the pertinent analysis of the results obtained in the survey it was possible to answer the initial inquiries of this study in a satisfactory way. The conclusion reached after this process is that: 1) All students enrolled in the first semester of the FLT BA program between the periods of 2022-2 and 2023-1 can be acknowledged as having encountered incidental language learning at some stage of their language acquisition journey. 2) Among first semester students in the periods of 2022-2 and 2023-1, incidental language learning predominantly took the form of audio-based occurrences, representing the

most prevalent type of incidental learning in this context. And 3) reading and listening are the skills most likely to be acquired through incidental learning.

Further analysis was conducted in order to find the existence of a correlation between factors such as gender and socioeconomic backgrounds. However, the analysis did not yield results that significantly contributed to the establishment of a possible correlation between the aforementioned factors. However, the possibility of carrying out studies in the future whose objective is this same should not be ruled out.

The final conclusion of this research is that 1) Incidental language learning is definitely a rather common occurrence among first semester students of the FLT BA, 2) Incidental learning occurs mostly in the shape of audio-based input, and 3) the reading and listening are the skills that individuals are most likely to develop through incidental language learning.

Nevertheless, although the main objectives of this study were fulfilled, other inquiries arised, both in relation to the topic of incidental language learning (e.g. Is there a way to develop language skills different from reading and listening by using incidental learning?) and additional topics, such as the role of socioeconomic factors in foreign language acquisition process. Further research with this focus has the potential to produce knowledge that contributes to the fields of language acquisition, linguistics, and foreign language teaching.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Survey



Universidad
Industrial de
Santander

Universidad Industrial de Santander

Faculty of Human Sciences

School of Languages

Trabajo de Grado 1

Esta encuesta está dirigida a los estudiantes de primer semestre del programa de licenciatura en lenguas extranjeras con énfasis en Inglés de la Universidad Industrial de Santander.

Introducción

“Incidental language learning” o aprendizaje incidental de idiomas es un proceso en el cual una persona adquiere elementos de una segunda lengua (L2) inconscientemente en contextos no necesariamente educativos como: Ver películas o series, escuchar música, jugar videojuegos, leer libros, cómics, o fanfics.

El aprendizaje incidental puede venir de fuentes unimodales o multimodales. Las fuentes unimodales son aquellas que son procesadas por un solo sentido, especialmente vista o escucha (Ejemplos de esto serían escuchar música, que solo procesamos con nuestros oídos, o libros, que sólo procesamos con nuestros ojos). Multimodales se refiere a aquellas que son procesadas por dos o más sentidos (La mayoría de los productos multimedia como películas, series o videojuegos caen en esta categoría).

Instrucciones

A continuación responderás a una serie de preguntas hechas para adquirir información sobre tí, tu proceso de aprendizaje de lenguas, y tu experiencia con el aprendizaje incidental de idiomas.

Descripción de la población

Datos que proveen descripciones de la población siendo estudiada.

Q1. ¿Con cuál género te identificas?

- a. masculino
- b. femenino
- c. Otro

Q2. ¿Qué edad tienes?

- a. 15 a 18 años
- b. 18 a 21 años
- c. 21 a 24
- d. 25 o mayor

Q3. ¿Tienes algún trabajo además de estudiar?

- a. Sí
- b. No

Q4. Si respondiste afirmativamente a la pregunta anterior ¿Cuántas horas trabajas a la semana?

- a. 1 a 2 horas
- b. 3 a 5 horas
- c. 6 a 8 horas
- d. 9 a 12 horas

- e. 13 a 16 horas
- f. 17 a 20 horas
- g. Más de 20 horas

Q5. ¿Cuál es tu nivel socioeconómico?

- a. Estrato 1
- b. Estrato 2
- c. Estrato 3
- d. Estrato 4
- e. Estrato 5
- f. Estrato 6

Dominio del idioma

Percepción sobre tu nivel de inglés.

Q6. ¿Cuál dirías que es tu nivel de inglés **actual**?

- a. A1
- b. A2
- c. B1
- d. B2
- e. C1
- f. C2

Q7. ¿Cuántas horas semanales de la materia de Inglés tenías **en primaria**?

- a. 0 horas
- b. 1 a 2 horas
- c. 3 a 4 horas
- d. 5 a 6 horas
- e. 7 a 8 horas
- f. 9 a 10 horas
- g. Más de 10 horas

Q8 ¿Cuántas horas semanales de la materia de Inglés tenías **en bachillerato**?

- a. 0 horas
- b. 1 a 2 horas
- c. 3 a 4 horas
- d. 5 a 6 horas
- e. 7 a 8 horas
- f. 9 a 10 horas
- g. Más de 10 horas

Q9 ¿Qué edad tenías cuando **realmente te interesaste** por aprender Inglés?

- a. 3 a 5 años
- b. 6 a 8 años
- c. 9 a 11 años
- d. 12 a 15 años
- e. 16 a 18 años
- f. 19 a 21 años

g. +21 años

Q10 ¿Hiciste algún **curso de Inglés antes de entrar** a la licenciatura en lenguas extranjeras?

- a. Sí
- b. No

Q11 **Si respondiste afirmativamente a la pregunta anterior** ¿De cuántas horas a la semana era el curso?

- a. 8 a 10 horas
- b. 11 a 18 horas
- c. 19 a 24 horas
- d. 25 a 30 horas
- e. 31 a 36 horas
- f. 37 a 40 horas
- g. Más de 40 horas

Q12 ¿Cuántas horas de **la materia de Inglés** tienes a la semana **en la universidad**?

- a. 4 a 6 horas
- b. 7 a 10 horas
- c. Más de 10 horas

Q13 ¿Cuánto tiempo a la semana dedicas a estudiar Inglés **de forma independiente**?

- a. 1 a 3 horas

- b. 4 a 6 horas
- c. 7 a 10 horas
- d. Más de 10 horas

Q14 ¿Cuál dirías que es la habilidad lingüística que **más se te facilita**?

- a. Speaking
- b. Listening
- c. Reading
- d. Writing

Q15 ¿Cuál dirías que es la habilidad lingüística que **más se te dificulta**?

- a. Speaking
- b. Listening
- c. Reading
- d. Writing

Aprendizaje incidental

Actividades donde puedes haber adquirido elementos del Inglés (u otro idioma) incidentalmente.

Q16 ¿Cuál de las siguientes actividades solías realizar con más frecuencia **antes de entrar a la licenciatura en lenguas extranjeras**? (puedes escoger múltiples opciones)

- a. Ver películas
- b. Ver series (TV o streaming)

- c. Ver videos de youtube
- d. Jugar videojuegos
- e. Leer libros
- f. Leer revistas
- g. Leer fanfics
- h. Escuchar música
- i. Escuchar podcasts

Q17 ¿Cuánto tiempo a la semana dedicabas a las actividades que escogiste en **la pregunta anterior**?

- a. 1 a 3 horas
- b. 4 a 6 horas
- c. 7 a 10 horas
- d. 11 a 14 horas
- e. 15 a 18 horas
- f. 19 a 21 horas
- g. 22 a 25 horas
- h. 26 a 29 horas
- i. +30 horas

Q18 ¿Qué actividades sueles realizar **actualmente**? (puedes escoger múltiples opciones)

- a. Ver películas
- b. Ver series (TV o streaming)
- c. Ver videos de youtube
- d. Jugar videojuegos

- e. Leer libros
- f. Leer revistas
- g. Leer fanfics
- h. Escuchar música
- i. Escuchar podcasts

Q19 ¿Cuánto tiempo a la semana dedicas a las actividades que escogiste en **la pregunta anterior**?

- a. 1 a 3 horas
- b. 4 a 6 horas
- c. 7 a 10 horas
- d. 11 a 14 horas
- e. 15 a 18 horas
- f. 19 a 21 horas
- g. 22 a 25 horas
- h. 26 a 29 horas
- i. +30 horas

Q20 ¿En qué **idioma estaban** la mayoría de las obras (películas, videojuegos, libros, etc) que consumías **antes de entrar a la universidad**?

- a. Inglés
- b. Español
- c. Francés
- d. Portugués
- e. Alemán
- f. Japonés

g. Coreano

Q21 ¿En qué **idioma están** la mayoría de las obras (películas, videojuegos, libros, etc) que consumes **actualmente**?

- a. Inglés
- b. Español
- c. Francés
- d. Portugués
- e. Alemán
- f. Japonés
- g. Coreano

Q22 Antes de entrar a la Universidad ¿Realizabas dichas actividades **por diversión** o con el objetivo de aprender el idioma?

- a. Diversión
- b. Aprender

Q23 Actualmente ¿Realizas dichas actividades **por diversión** o con el objetivo de aprender el idioma?

- a. Diversión
- b. Aprender

Q24 ¿Dirías que **adquiriste vocabulario en una lengua extranjera** gracias a dichas actividades?

a. Sí

b. No

Q25 ¿Dirías que retuviste el vocabulario que aprendiste gracias a dichas actividades?

a. Sí

b. La mayor parte

c. Algo

d. Muy poco

e. No