

**The impact of the english language proficiency in the internationalization  
of the UAGro**

*O impacto da proficiência em inglês na internacionalização da UAGro*

*El impacto del dominio del idioma inglés en la internacionalización de la  
UAGro*

Maria Elena Espin Villegas. ID. 0009-0000-3650-2867

Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero, Facultad de Enfermería No.1, Chilpancingo, Guerrero,  
México, email: eespin@uagro.mx

ROR: <https://ror.org/054tbkd46>

Received: 2026-05-15

Reviewed: 2026-06-17

Accepted: 2026-06-20

Published: 2026-07-27

**Abstract**

Language is a complex tool that human beings possess. Individuals start acquiring language right from birth. They are born with the necessary biological and mental components to develop it (Pinker, 1994, p. 18). Brown (1994) refers that some researchers (e.g., Chomsky) claim that humans are born with a mental abstract component in the brain which he calls the “Language Acquisition Device” (LAD). The LAD enables mankind to secure any language subconsciously with no effort. However, this abstract factor is not sufficient to develop language knowledge. Pinker (1994) comments that language is “culturally inherited” once

humans come into existence they start receiving language input from their parents, the people around them and from the media. They just learn and produce language.

Some researchers (e.g. Brown, 1994; Baker, 1996; Tavi, 2009) mentions a “critical period” within which children procure and develop native-like proficiency in a second language (L2) that they may learn. After the end of the “critical period “, which occurs around puberty, learning a new language seems to be a more difficult task. That happens because they do not have any more access to the LAD. Brown (1994) states that people who have passed the “critical period “present a relative incapability for developing a “native-like accent “when they learn another language. In addition to this, there are other important factors that exert and influence in L2 acquisition or learning.

**Key Words:** Language, acquire, Language Acquisition Device (LAD), Critical Period, Native proficiency, Second Language (L2), Native-like accent, Bilingualism.

## Resumo

A linguagem é uma ferramenta complexa que os seres humanos possuem. Os indivíduos começam a adquirir linguagem desde o nascimento. Eles nascem com os componentes biológicos e mentais necessários para desenvolvê-la (Pinker, 1994, p. 18). Brown (1994) menciona que alguns pesquisadores (por exemplo, Chomsky) afirmam que os humanos nascem com um componente mental abstrato no cérebro, que ele chama de "Dispositivo de Aquisição da Linguagem" (DAL). O DAL permite que a humanidade adquira qualquer idioma subconscientemente, sem esforço. No entanto, esse fator abstrato não é suficiente para desenvolver o conhecimento da linguagem. Pinker (1994) comenta que a linguagem é "herdada culturalmente"; assim que os humanos vêm à existência, começam a receber estímulos linguísticos de seus pais, das pessoas ao seu redor e da mídia. Eles simplesmente aprendem e produzem linguagem.

Alguns pesquisadores (por exemplo, Brown, 1994; Baker, 1996; Tavi, 2009) mencionam um “período crítico” no qual as crianças adquirem e desenvolvem proficiência semelhante à de um falante nativo em uma segunda língua (L2) que aprendem. Após o término do “período crítico”, que ocorre por volta da puberdade, aprender uma nova língua parece ser uma tarefa

mais difícil. Isso acontece porque elas não têm mais acesso ao Dispositivo de Aquisição da Linguagem (DAL). Brown (1994) afirma que pessoas que já passaram pelo “período crítico” apresentam uma relativa incapacidade de desenvolver um “sotaque semelhante ao de um falante nativo” ao aprenderem outra língua. Além disso, existem outros fatores importantes que exercem influência na aquisição ou aprendizagem da L2.

**Palavras-chave:** Língua, adquirir, Dispositivo de Aquisição da Linguagem (DAL), Período Crítico, Proficiência nativa, Segunda Língua (L2), Sotaque semelhante ao de um falante nativo, Bilinguismo.

## Resumen

El lenguaje es una herramienta compleja que poseen los seres humanos. Los individuos comienzan a adquirirlo desde el nacimiento. Nacen con los componentes biológicos y mentales necesarios para desarrollarlo (Pinker, 1994, p. 18). Brown (1994) señala que algunos investigadores (por ejemplo, Chomsky) afirman que los humanos nacen con un componente mental abstracto en el cerebro al que denominan «Dispositivo de Adquisición del Lenguaje» (DAL). El DAL permite a la humanidad adquirir cualquier idioma de forma subconsciente y sin esfuerzo. Sin embargo, este factor abstracto no es suficiente para desarrollar el conocimiento lingüístico. Pinker (1994) comenta que el lenguaje se hereda culturalmente; desde el nacimiento, los seres humanos comienzan a recibir información lingüística de sus padres, de las personas que los rodean y de los medios de comunicación. Simplemente aprenden y producen lenguaje.

Algunos investigadores (p. ej., Brown, 1994; Baker, 1996; Tavi, 2009) mencionan un «período crítico» durante el cual los niños adquieren y desarrollan una competencia similar a la de un hablante nativo en una segunda lengua (L2). Tras finalizar este período crítico, que suele ocurrir alrededor de la pubertad, aprender una nueva lengua se vuelve más difícil. Esto se debe a que ya no tienen acceso al Dispositivo de Adquisición del Lenguaje (DAL). Brown (1994) afirma que las personas que han superado el período crítico presentan una relativa incapacidad para desarrollar un acento nativo al aprender otra lengua. Además, existen otros factores importantes que influyen en la adquisición o el aprendizaje de una L2.

**Palabras clave:** Lenguaje, adquisición, Dispositivo de Adquisición del Lenguaje (DAL), período crítico, competencia nativa, segunda lengua (L2), acento nativo, bilingüismo.

## Capítulo 2

This study encompasses data regarding the concepts, theories, and studies that have taken place in relation to this research. As is known, attitudes reflect a person's motivation to succeed in learning a foreign language. It is then complementary to explore the relationships among the different factors related to motivation and attitudes in a language classroom.

This chapter contains key information on concepts such as motivation and attitudes towards learning an L2. It also contains the factors that affect both motivation and attitudes in L2 learning. Important theories of motivation are discussed, and different strategies to motivate and promote positive attitudes towards language learning are analyzed, as are concepts about the process of internationalization in higher education institutions and the Autonomous University of Guerrero.

### 2.1 English Language Teaching and Learning

English language teaching and learning is an educational process. It requires careful preparation and implementation to sustain teacher-student interaction. It includes various approaches, techniques, and methods involved in teaching English as a first language and in using it as a second and a foreign language.

The difference between language teaching and learning lies in the fact that learning requires a formal educational method in which an instructor provides direct instruction and rules. This is a conscious process. While teaching a language, educators primarily focus on the language's form; they not only explain grammar rules to students but also structures and vocabulary.

To interact effectively in any context, humans should be taught proper language skills so they can comprehend and produce spoken language, thereby developing effective interpersonal communication. There are four basic language skills: Listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In fact, Linguists have identified five basic components of language teaching. They are phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics; found across languages (Vance, 2019).

### 2.1.1 Communicative Competence

Linguists refer to this as how individuals use grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology, and phonology, and it also includes social knowledge about speaking appropriately in the moment. Basically, it assesses a learner's ability to use language to communicate successfully.

COSA (2023) outlines some considerations about communicative competence by stating that:

- The expression Communicative Competence was conceived by Hymes (1966, cited in Brown, 2015). This fact was in reaction to the sensed insufficiency of Noam Chomsky's (1965) distinction between competence and performance to label Chomsky's theoretical notion of competence. Hymes conducted ethnographic studies of communicative competence that encompassed communicative form and function in an integral relation to one another. The term, pioneered by Hymes, is now understood as the ethnography of communication.
- In the educational field, the above-mentioned term is one of the bases that consider the communicative approach to foreign language teaching. Whereas Cannale and Swain (1980) described three main elements that compose the theory:
  1. Morphological competency: terms and regulation
  2. Pragmatic competency: correctness
  3. Strategic competence: appropriate use of communication strategies.
- Cannale (1983) redefined the above model that subsumed four separate but related competencies, adding discourse competence, cohesion, and coherence. The concept of communicative competence emerged as a reaction to earlier approaches. Later on, a survey of communicative competence presented by Bachman (1990) divided it into the broad headings of organizational competence, grammatical discourse (or textual), and pragmatic competence; it also considered both sociolinguistic and illocutionary competences. Strategic competence is the interlocutor's ability to use communication strategies (Faerch & Kasper, 1983; Lin, 2009).

In contrast to earlier views in which grammatical competence was widely accepted, later on, the impact of communicative language teaching was broadly welcomed, and communicative competence was given top priority in language education alongside good classroom practice.

### **2.1.2 English Proficiency**

It is acknowledged that the student's ability to use the target language to produce utterances and communicate efficiently in spoken and written contexts is essential until they complete their educational scheme. According to Vipond (2015), the “Language proficiency levels” are:

- 0 No Proficiency
- 1 Elementary proficiency
- 2 Limited working proficiency
- 3 Professional working proficiency
- 4 Full professional proficiency
- 5 Native/ bilingual proficiency
- 0- No Proficiency

At this first level, there is no knowledge of the language. The person may know a few words but is unable to communicate even with short sentences to start a conversation.

Phrased as: “No English” (example)

- 1 Elementary proficiency

At this elementary level, a person can utter only very basic sentences. They are capable of asking and answering simple questions. This is actually the starting point of the whole process of becoming proficient in the target language. It recalls someone traveling to a new country and just beginning to learn a new language.

Phrased as: “Elementary Spanish”

### **2 Limited Working Proficiency**

Someone at this level can give basic work orders and use socialization phrases. It is also possible for speakers to independently arrange an informal talk at work and discuss certain personal issues in daily life quite well. Whereas, in a more formal conversation, speakers at this level will still need help communicating efficiently.

Phrased as “Limited Working English

### 3 Professional working proficiency

The particularity at this level of proficiency is that, at this point, the speaker will be able to establish formal conversation at a normal pace in different contexts, use a wide vocabulary without hesitation, and perform quite satisfactorily in several activities as required. Though the speakers might still have a particular accent, they may also need assistance understanding certain words or phrases. This level or above is basically considered acceptable.

Phrased as: “Professional Working Spanish”

### 4 Full professional proficiency

This proficiency level is most desired, and if reached, it is considered acceptable. At this point, a speaker can engage in proper discussions on a wide range of topics, including personal life issues, current affairs, and technical topics. People at this level might still have a minor accent and occasionally make minor mistakes. At this level, the vocabulary is extensive, and conversations can be carried out successfully.

Phrased as: “Full Professional Spanish”

### 5 Native/ bilingual proficiency

At this proficiency level, the speaker has grown up speaking the target language as their mother tongue or has used it for so long that they are fully fluent. They have little or no accent. This fact does not affect the communicative process.

Phrased as: “Native English” or “Bilingual English & Spanish”

2.1.2.1 International Standards of English Proficiency. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (Council of

Europe, 2020) is widely used as a guideline to describe language proficiency among language learners. It provides a framework for assessment, teaching, and learning of foreign languages. English is also included across Europe and in other countries. The CEFR also aims to make it easier for educational institutions and employers to evaluate the language qualifications and achievements of candidates for admission to education or employment. Its main goal is to provide proper methods for learning, teaching, and assessing that apply to all languages.

The international standard for describing language ability considers six levels of reference (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2). From A1 for beginners up to C2 for those who have already mastered a language, the CEFR has become widely accepted as the European Standard for grading an individual's language proficiency. It also makes it easy for anyone involved in language teaching and testing, such as teachers or learners, to assess the level of different qualifications. It also means that employers and educational institutions can easily compare qualifications with other exams in their country.

### **2.1.3 Language Learners**

Teaching and learning are not separate processes sharing the same working environment (the classroom) - they are mutually dependent. However, for foreign language learning to occur, the teacher must represent a higher competence level; the teacher pulls learners towards their own interlanguage competence. Additionally, teachers can catalyze the process by developing their workshop, their metaknowledge of language as a system, and their selection of tools and techniques, perhaps even incorporating an eclectic or dynamic combination of several methods or approaches. The mutual relationship between teaching and learning underscores the fact that teachers must motivate students. Thus, for example, their beliefs about the language being taught and the relevant cultural settings will impact the learning process.

2.1.3.1 Factors that Influence Motivation in SL2. A lot of research about motivation has been conducted and written, because it is considered one of the most important factors in L2 learning. Given its importance, it is relevant to mention what motivation is. Motivation is the psychological force that explains why a person does something; it is the driving force behind human actions. To all intents and purposes, it inspires individuals to chase after their goals. In Rod Ellis' Second Language Acquisition (Ellis, 1994), it is mentioned as the goal that

serves as the driving force (impulse) for learners in achieving L2 (learner's orientation with regard to the goal of learning a L2)

However, it is important to take into account that this internal factor is strongly influenced by external factors as well, and it can vary over time. According to this definition, it can be concluded and said without any doubt that motivation is a personal internal factor, and it plays a key role in being successful in the activities and tasks that humans perform. As said by Gardner (2001), motivation involves three elements: effort, desire to achieve a goal, and attitude. So, there seems to be a relationship between motivation and attitude towards learning since they are visible manifestations of motivation.

There are many possible factors that can be taken into account influencing students' motivation and attitudes in class, such as:

- temperature, noise, etc.,
- student's personal factors: language aptitude, cultural background, cognitive style, sex, age, etc.
- institutional factors: features of the classroom, number of students, time of instruction, etc.
- teaching factors: materials, syllabus, resources, teaching strategies, etc.
- socioeconomic factors and many others (Skehan, 1989, pp. 50-51).

However, the affective, cognitive, biological, and personality factors will also be considered since they are more related to motivation and attitudes in language learning.

Affective factors are aspects of a person related to emotions or feelings. Brown (1994) defines the affective domain as "the emotional side of human behavior" (p. 135).

Within affective factors, one of the most important factors in learning is motivation. Motivation has been identified as one of the major factors that influence second language learning. Gardner and Lambert (cited in Ur, 1996) distinguished two kinds of motivation in language learning:

1. Integrative motivation, and

## 2. Instrumental motivation.

The first one occurs when a learner wants to learn a language to integrate into the target language culture. The second one takes place when the learner wishes to get a promotion in his/her job or career or wants to pass a language or course, etc.

Gardner and Lambert (1972, cited in Skehan, 1989) consider integrative motivation a factor firmly based in the personality of a learner; it actually exerts a stronger influence on the learning process since it is likely to extend over a longer period of time and to sustain learning efforts to achieve success. In regard to instrumental motivation, since it “is not rooted in the personality of the learner” (p.53), it is less effective to achieve learning goals because it is likely to vary according to external factors, and, as a result, the learner’s efforts to achieve goals could also change with time.

Ur (1996) proposes one more classification of motivation, “intrinsic” and “extrinsic”. Intrinsic motivation happens when the learner wants to learn something for its own sake, with no external factors that influence his/her motivation. Extrinsic motivation depends on external factors such as reinforcement, gifts, penalties, and the like. Extrinsic motivated learners pursue a goal in order to receive a reward from people.

### **2.1.3.2 Bilingualism. The word “bilingualism” is of Latin origin.**

The prefix bi- means “having two,” and the Latin word lingua means “tongue, language,” so bilingual literally means “having two tongues.” Alternatively, simply put, it is the ability to speak two languages (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Tenth Edition, 1993, cited in Anthony & Kritsonis, 2006, p. 2). Also, Widdowson (2003) refers to bilingualism as the contact of two languages.

The influence of L1 on L2 learning is categorized into two types: negative transfer, or “interference,” and positive transfer, or “facilitation.” Negative transfer or interference refers to the transfer of a skill X from the L1 that impedes or makes the L2 more difficult or has a negative influence on the command of a skill Y in the L2 due to the differences between both skills in both languages. On the other hand, positive transfer or facilitation refers to the transfer of a skill or any L1 part that makes the learning of the L2 easier, or has a positive influence on the command of a skill Y in L2 because of the similarities between both skills

in both languages. For instance, some researchers, e.g., Garcia & Nagy (1993), support the idea that students whose L1 has many cognates with English have an advantage in the recognition of vocabulary, but they also require clear instruction to make the transfer optimal for comprehension.

#### **2.1.4 Characteristics and Attitudes of Motivated Learners**

Ur (1996) refers to some characteristics that motivated language learners to project. Firstly, it is possible to observe that motivated learners do have positive attitudes regarding the chores to be performed and are confident enough that they will achieve learning the target language. Second, a remarkable appreciation for being successful is that language learners maintain their self-image. Third, succeeding and overcoming difficulties is necessary to envision motivated learners. Fourth, they have high expectations (high proficiency, top grades). Fifth, they have properly identified their learning goals, and they place all their efforts into achieving them. Sixth, they are also patient and resilient when ambiguity or misunderstanding arises; understanding will follow.

Skehan (1989) also proposes some strategies that good language learners usually have: like repeating aloud after the teacher, elaborate vocabulary charts so they can memorize them, use the media (TV, radio, internet), to learn further and reinforce the listening comprehension skill, they also read whatever comes across in English (magazines, newspapers, ads, songs etc.,).

#### **2.1.5 Learning Strategies for Proficient, Successful, Motivated Learners**

The significance of language learning strategies has remarkably increased in recent years, with the importance of language learning all over the world. Learning processes require a specific manner or a strategy that has to be adapted in order to achieve the main purpose of learning successfully.

Among other important issues considered in the learning process are “what” and “how” to use it. Nevertheless, human beings involve many different strategies while in the learning process. The term “learning strategies” means different things, and researchers have defined it in diverse ways. The modest definition provided by Brown (1980) referred to learning strategies as the processes that may contribute directly to learning. Chamot (1987, cited in

Ghadesy, 1998) went further when he attempted to define the term as “processes, techniques, approaches, and deliberate actions that students take to facilitate learning and recollect linguistic and content areas of information” (p.102).

Stern (1992, cited in Hismanoglu, 2000) points out that “the conceptualization of learning strategies depends on the supposition that learners in a conscious way are usually involved in chores to achieve specific aims and learning strategies can be considered as widely considered as intentional directions and learning techniques” (p.2). Hismanoglu (2000) states that all learners consciously or unconsciously apply learning strategies in order to achieve learning goals. That is, learners utilize learning strategies when processing new information and performing tasks in the learning process.

Concerning the classification, O’ Malley and Chamot (1987, cited in Ghadesy, 1988) proposed three types of learning strategies:

- Metacognitive strategies,
- Cognitive strategies, and
- Socially effective strategies

In regard to Metacognitive strategies, it can be said that they refer to basically conscious mental processes that regulate or self-direct language learning. Planning, setting goals, self-monitoring, and self-evaluating are considered for this category. Cognitive strategies are involved in specific learning chores. Repetition, manipulation of materials grouping, note-taking, contextualization, transfer, and interference are some examples of these strategies. Social-affective strategies have to do with the interaction among the learners in the language learning process. Cooperation and clarification are perfect examples of these types of learning strategies.

Oxford (2001) proposes a classification of learning strategies, which are: mnemonic, cognitive, compensatory, metacognitive, affective, and social. Mnemonic strategies refer to the mental processes that permit students to store information and to create new mental associations between previous and new knowledge. Cognitive strategies are considered those mental processes which learners use to store data and create a sense of new knowledge;

analyzing, reasoning, reorganizing information, and taking systematic notes could be considered.

Compensatory strategies deal with the performance of certain processes with the purpose of overcoming communicative issues: Predicting the meaning of words or phrases according to context and imitation in speaking are clear examples of compensatory strategies. Metacognitive strategies refer to mental actions that allow learners to regulate their own process of learning by identifying their own goals, interests, preferences, and learning styles: Planning and evaluating are examples of metacognitive strategies.

In reference to affective strategies, they include strategies for improving self-confidence, encouraging oneself, or lowering anxiety. They are strategies that are concerned with the emotional aspect of pupils. Examples of affective strategies that can help to deal with anxiety are deep breathing, positive self-talk, or praising oneself for a performance. Social strategies involve the social aspect of the language learning process; that is, interacting with others is necessary for acquiring and/or learning a language. Asking questions for clarification, asking for help, and learning about cultural or social norms and values are examples of social strategies. It is important to remember that learners sometimes employ more than one strategy while performing a task.

## **2.2 Meaning of Globalization**

From immemorial time, society has conveniently spotted strategic faraway places where they could settle down, manufacture, and trade highly in-demand merchandise permitted by the refinement in the technology and transportation fields. It was not until the 19th century that global integration took off, and the term “Globalization” started to be used to describe the processes by which ideas, knowledge, information, goods, and services spread around the world.

It is a fact that with the development and use of technology, the world has become extremely interconnected, and its impact is being noticed increasingly in all human activities. The economic, cultural, and educational dimensions, among others, have remarkably multiplied due to the cross-border trade of goods, services, and people. Technology has also impacted in a great manner the flows and ways of investment, people, and information. The fast

development of interconnections has also made the world a more interdependent place. Globalization also secures in its scope the economic and social transformation that has resulted in and shaped modern everyday life.

Nations have built economic relationships to expedite these movements in comparison to what they used to be in earlier years. The term “globalization” became popular after the Cold War, around the 1990s. As a matter of fact, cooperative alliances gave shape to the modern everyday lifestyle.

The convergence of cultural and economic systems is driven by Globalization. This phenomenon boosts interaction, integration, and interdependence among nations. With the intertwining of different nations and regions of the world, it becomes more politically, culturally, and economically globalized.

### **2.2.1 The Internationalization of Education in Higher Educational Institutions**

Higher education internationalism is not a new phenomenon. The concept started to grow more over time. Today, it has become the most relevant roadmap for the majority of institutions and governments. Governments continue to invest remarkably in this field. For over 30 years, the internationalization of education in higher education institutions has been placed as an issue of top relevance, among the strategies implemented institutionally, nationally, regionally, and internationally, since it invariably affects history, traditions, and culture in general. Thus, the internationalization of education in higher educational institutions is the way a country responds to globalization. It is worth mentioning that it respects the idiosyncrasies of a nation.

As mentioned above, the internationalization of higher education is a very important issue in the vast majority of public and private institutions. The importance of this fact is that it promotes the improvement and quality of education and further develops the skills and competencies of the students. The strategies and initiatives undertaken by higher education institutions at the university level do not respond to and limit the goals and needs of higher education institutions but are also guided by the views and priorities of the country and the whole world's economic and strategic development.

This initiative deals with how individual universities design their policies and implement their strategies at an institutional level and their approaches to internationalization. It is a whole process that seeks cooperativeness and integration among them with their counterparts in other countries. These vision quests allow higher education institutions to have a statelier presence internationally and to reach competitiveness. This process entitles them to also undertake the international and intercultural dimension to teaching and investigation in higher education. To be internationally present demands from higher education institutions the designing of policies, implementing initiatives, creating organizations, the signing of memorandums of understanding and agreements (cooperativeness) among institutions, and also the integration of formative programs that consider the particulars that internationalization demands. According to Altbach and Knight (2007), there are two types of internationalization:

1. Home internationalization

The conceptualization of internationalization at home evolved in Europe throughout the late 1990s. It came to light as a substitute for “study abroad,” which was broadly known at the time through the Erasmus mobility scheme. The University of Malmö (Sweden) was, in fact, without an associate network in 1998 and so could not dispatch students overseas. For that reason, global and cross-cultural educational events were pursued domestically in the city by the Vice President for International Affairs, Bengt Nilsson, renowned as ‘the father of internationalization at home.’ Internationalization at home is restricted to the local learning environments.

In 2001, internationalization was defined as: “Any international related activity with the exception of outbound student and staff mobility” (Crowther et al., 2001, cited in Arnó-Macià & Aguilar 2018, p. 187). Afterwards, it was redefined as “the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments” (Beelen and Jones, 2015, cited in Robson, 2017, p. 370).

Although internationalization at home has been favorably acknowledged, as it supplies international and intercultural proportions of teaching and learning to all undergraduates who do not have the chance to travel to foreign countries, as the universal surroundings develop

progressively, there is a need for scholars to possess individual and professional comprehension of the international and intercultural characteristics of their area of knowledge, so internationalization at home has significantly increased and so has its importance, parallel to the idea of an internationalized curriculum more generally.

It is in this context that the UAGro aims to integrate the international dimension in local contexts, favoring multicultural spaces while UAGro students interact with international students, which in turn will allow them to learn about global visions without leaving their home institution. This fact will favor the understanding of the international dimension.

## 2. Internationalization abroad

It considers all means and ways of education beyond established borders, in which international mobility students, or international students, undertake all or part of their education in a country other than their own. It may also involve teachers, administrative staff, programs, courses, curriculum, and projects.

Higher educational institutions take part in both affairs through memorandums of understanding and agreements with peers from other countries. The ways considered at UAGro for its university students, teachers, and administrative staff to participate in such programs are:

- Dual/joint degree program
- Academic exchange programs
- International internships
- Dual co-degree or joint programs
- Short courses
- Representation internationally of higher educational institutions
- Joint ventures (for investigation)
- Teacher exchange programs

### **2.2.2 The Importance of English as Lingua Franca in the Globalization Era**

Lingua franca is a concept used to refer to a common language among speakers of different native languages, generally of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Back in the 14th century, the increase in trade between people of different ethnicities around the Mediterranean area led to the creation of a pidgin language. This language was peculiar because of its simple grammar and lexicon; it made communication possible between traders.

Nowadays, the term "lingua franca" has evolved to encompass vehicular languages utilized around the world between individuals with contrasting origins and native languages (Brosh, 2015). As it is today, English is the most widely used language around the world due to the fact that it is the most widespread form of communication that enables people to understand one another. It makes communication a lot easier regardless of the culture or the cultural and ethnic backgrounds. English has indeed contributed to the boundless technological progress of the past decades. Thus, as it is today, it is undeniable that English has become the most widely spread lingua franca in the world.

### **2.2.3 The Impact of the English Language in Higher Education Institutions**

In the heightening of the field of educational mobility in the contemporary internationalized world, quite a number of changes regarding the educational programs of European universities and elsewhere have indeed taken place. An extraordinary fact worth mentioning is that the presiding language wielded, both at the local and international spheres, is English, and with the help of modern technology, it has become the most popular means of communication demanded by scholars, lecturers, and administrative staff personnel. In addition, it plays a crucial part in a great deal of skilled sectors like medicine, engineering, politics, economics, international relations, and college education, to name a few.

As a matter of fact, English is a language for academic issues in higher education institutions in most countries around the world, a basic means of second language learning/teaching, an accessible source of modern knowledge and scientific research, and a means of global communication and for earning a living. It is nowadays taken into account that the

significance of providing formal instruction in English at a higher level is that it improves the quality of education. Quite a number of English language proficiency, instructional, and academic programs are directed not only inside the university, but also overseas, for the globalization of higher education to keep it renovated.

The spread of courses in higher education institutions has been spurred by the fact that the universities compete globally not only for international acknowledgement, but also to allure international students and staff while encouraging international research and networking (Coleman, 2006; Lasagabaster, 2015; Perez, 015). Other reasons include the advancement of multilingualism in education, enhanced by the European Union and the Council of Europe, which results in the introduction of courses that integrate language and content at all levels of education.

### **2.3 Public Universities in Mexico**

Nowadays, there are six subsystems of university education institutions in Mexico: public federal universities, public state universities, polytechnical universities, technical universities, technological institutes, and private universities. If you count all of them, it comes to the fact that, in reference to a recent estimate, Mexico has 1,250 universities and institutions of higher education. In spite of the fact that the number may not distinguish between public and private institutions. Conventionally, educational institutions operated under their own organic rules and regulations and substantial legalized self - direction; nonetheless, in 1973, they were incorporated into the national education system. In 1997, SEP strengthened the State Commissions for Higher Education Planning to harmonize higher education more productively in the different locations of the territory (Compostela, 2025).

A model of raising the number of educational institutions and registration started in 1940. At that particular time in the history of Mexico, it had only eight educational institutions; the number grew to 124 in the course of 1980. Throughout the 1998-1999 instructional period, ANUIES (National Association of Universities and Institutions of Higher Education) registered 213 universities. Of these, 45 were government universities from which 50 percent of the educational investigation in Mexico was imparted. These institutions registered that 52 percent of the scholars pursued an undergraduate education and 48 percent of those pursued a graduate degree (Compostela, 2025).

### **2.3.1 History of the Autonomous University of Guerrero (UAGro)**

The edict of its foundation was first printed in the Guerrero State Constitution on March 30th, 1960. It mentioned that the establishment of the university was with the objective of being the institute responsible for superior education in the state, in all areas of science, technology, and culture, and that it would work as per its own statute. It is also considered necessary to have an institution that could manage the essentials and expectations of individuals in general, trained personnel. In 1960, there was a resolution that contemplated the necessity to have an educational role model that could provide a solution to the socioeconomic, political, and cultural issues that society was then experiencing.

The Autonomous University of Guerrero (UAGro) is a public upper secondary and higher education Institution. Its major campus is located in Chilpancingo, Guerrero, Mexico. It accounts for further premises in Acapulco, Zihuatanejo, Taxco, Iguala, Tixtla, Ometepec, Coyuca de Catalán, Cruz Grande, Ciudad Altamirano, Tecpan de Galeana, Cuajinicuilapa; all of them located in the State of Guerrero, Mexico.

### **2.3.2 The Role of UAGro as a Public University**

The concept of a popular university was brought to Guerrero by the rector Rosalío Wences Reza, who was in service from 1972 to 1975. The new proposed model focused mainly on the establishment of a university open to the public, which would support students with poor economic status. Also, the creation of high schools across the state took place with the university's support and resources. Today, a total of 20 rectors have served the university. The one in turn is Doctor Javier Saldaña Almazan (Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero, n.d.).

The University's objectives are to concede services in upper secondary and higher instruction; manage investigation, encourage technological growth and transformation; confer to the evolution of the surroundings by expanding its utilities; contribute to education, expansion, and dissemination of culture; as well as relating with the community to grant constitutional rights and in turn answer to the calls and demands of the social, economic, cultural environmental order. Likewise, it will give due attention to state problems, will also give the right importance to the most disadvantaged and vulnerable sectors, and will also contribute by itself or in coordination with other entities of the public, social, and private

sectors to promote punctual national development (Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero, n.d.).

### **2.3.3 The Policy of Internationalization of UAGro**

Internationalization of higher education is not a new phenomenon. It has evolved over time, and the concept has grown more over throughout the years, and now it has become an important strategic priority for the UAGro as well as for many institutions and governments. They have invested and continue to invest considerable resources in internationalization, since it is seen as one of the ways a country responds to the impact of globalization, given the challenges and opportunities posed by the process of internationalization of higher education.

The UAGro is firmly determined to be a key player in this dynamism, working daily to consolidate itself as an open space for the exchange of ideas and the generation of knowledge, a challenge that is assumed with great enthusiasm and with concrete actions.

This vision is based on the diverse capacities that the academic community has built over decades, and that in recent years materialize in a set of quality indicators that make everyone proud and place it as one of the largest and most prestigious universities in the country.

Based on the strength of the broad and diversified educational offer, the largest infrastructure in the State, student and teacher mobility programs, research support, a strong social vocation, a permanent link with all sectors, as well as the achievements in sports and culture promotion, it is always a great pleasure for the UAGro to invite the academic community of Mexico and the whole world to visit and know what the UAGro is, and the educative offer that it has to offer.

The shared conviction of the student community is in favor of science, technology, and humanities, attending to local needs as well as global trends, in a creative exercise focused on the construction of material solutions and social consensus.

In the UAGro, each action and each process is framed in advanced institutional policies such as social inclusion, gender equity, transparency, sustainability, and tolerance. The UAGro is an institution where a vigorous academic environment is lived, where successful

professionals and good citizens are trained with a vision of commitment to the context and able to join the new realities that humanity experiences (Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero - Coordinación General de Vinculación y Cooperación, 2020).

### **2.3.4 The Office for Cooperation and Internationalization of UAGro (DCI)**

This place is located in the rectoria building and plays a major role in fostering global engagement for the UAGro, by managing student and staff mobility, for both academic, administrative staff, and students of the university. Sometimes, some of the programs are also extensive to the public in general. Basically, it monitors, maintains, and updates the international relations of the university with the objective of entrusting the consolidation of the global and cross-cultural extents into the university. It fastens with international higher education organizations and some other institutions between our university, as well as international partnerships with foreign campuses through projects, agreements, and many other collaborative networks, promoting national and international programs and research opportunities. It is also responsible for coordinating and administering the exchange of international scholars and students, promoting, and implementing internationalization processes for the UAGro global vision that local impact, “The world is yours.”

## **Conclusion**

Considering the analysis and the interpretation of the data obtained from the participants, and supported by the theoretical framework of the literature review of this study, some general conclusions are presented. The general conclusions are expressed by answering the main research question, stated as follows:

**What is the impact of English language proficiency on the process of the internationalization of the UAGro for the students applying for the international programs?**

Founded on the previously interpreted results, it can be stated that:

- Participants realized the importance of being proficient in English. They mentioned the fact that having knowledge of the target language gave them confidence to apply for the international programs.
- They became aware that English is a lingua franca.
- They also mentioned that knowing English was fundamental, because they could communicate effectively while doing their tasks and accomplish them successfully.
- It helped them to interact socially in an international context, meet people from different countries, and get to know their cultures, understand their contexts, and compare.
- The relevance of the international programs is considered very successful because it made them move out of their comfort zone, but eventually they could successfully overcome the new challenges that it represented.
- It made traveling easier and fun, since they could freely communicate anywhere, they were and interact in the target language with people from different countries, and get to know and understand their cultures, the way they think and do things.
- It helped them to strengthen their language skills, furthermore, develop abilities, and boost their personal goals, academic achievements, and professional training that will project them as the professionals that the globalized world demands today.

Regarding the subsidiary research questions, it might be concluded that:

#### **SRQ1: On the Internationalization of the UAGro Projects**

- In this aspect, it can be said that since worldwide collaboration has turned out to be one of the most important elements in the development of superior educational level institutions globally speaking, it appeals to the UAGro as well.
- Considering that the process of internationalization has become more dependent on globalization, the main criteria at UAGro reside boldly in the context of creating modern knowledge and training graduates who can work in conditions of global competition in international teams, live and feel tolerant in multinational environments, as well as work in conditions of professional mobility and migration resources.

- Create a sociocultural environment that can promote the development of international and intercultural understanding for best practices in teaching and research. Therefore, achieving the necessary competencies and strengthening university management is essential.
- Face contemporary summons that the community models for universities. To help graduates live and work worldwide.
- Prepare under international bases scholars, instructional, and managerial staff.

#### **SRQ2: How UAGro Facilitates Students' Access to Internationalization**

-The international UAGro department provides several programs that are quite attractive and successful for students. As said by the participants, their involvement was a rich, long-lasting life experience right from the moment they approached the office staff, because they felt welcome and safe. They always felt the help and support provided by the office staff.

- The experience actually overcame their expectations since they could travel, learn, meet people, make friends, and strengthen the developed abilities and skills that will help them to be better, more skillful, and competitive professionals,

- It also made them realize the importance of being proficient in English in order to communicate effectively.

#### **SRQ3: What the role of English is when Students Apply for International Programs**

- Firstly, it gave them confidence to apply for the selected program.
- The participants could accomplish all their tasks successfully.
- They could communicate efficiently.
- It made traveling easier and fun, while interacting with people.
- It changed their whole life vision.

#### **SRQ4: What Problems Students Face with the English Language when Participating in International Programs**

- The fact of not being proficient in the language interfered with their activities in the sense that they could not accomplish their tasks successfully.
- The participants could not understand some technical words.
- They could not communicate efficiently.
- They would not have participated.

#### **SRQ5: How Knowing English has Helped Students to Participate in International Programs**

- Knowing English motivated the participants to apply to and experience the international program.
- It allowed them to travel to a foreign country, see new places easily, meet people from different countries, develop strong friendship bonds, and know and understand their culture.
- It helped them to realize the importance of the English Language in order to communicate efficiently and solve problems.
- They could strengthen and develop their communication skills and abilities that enable them to be more confident, competitive, and better professionals.

Having explored all the aspects presented above, it can be said that the impact of English proficiency has on the people who had the opportunity to apply and participate in the international programs is positive, because it motivated them to initially approach the internationalization office and start with the procedures involved in the process.

Participants actually had to come out of their comfort zone to have an experience that has remarkably impacted their lives. They could observe how the world is beyond the physical boundaries, and the most rewarding is living in and understanding it. In the process, they successfully overcame all the challenges that it implied. Most important is the fact that they could also develop and strengthen abilities and skills that will help them to become successful in their future productive life as the professionals that nowadays globalized society demands.

#### **5.2 Implications**

The outcomes provided by this research give detailed information about the impact of English proficiency in the process of the internationalization of the UAGro. The activities involved in the program in which English was engaged from the beginning were positive and gave the participants the confidence to continue until they accomplished it successfully.

The benefits for the participants are overwhelming, not only on account of that they could realize the importance of English but also because they could actually use it in a significant context, communicate effectively, and solve problems.

Also, in the process, they could strengthen their language abilities and skills that made them more professional and competitive. A well-learned lesson for teachers in the area of English teaching is to continue motivating their students and carry on working and reinforcing students' English learning skills, because there will come a time when their students will have the opportunity to put into practice what they learnt in the classroom and they will be able to meaningfully and successfully communicate wherever their destination could be.

## References

- Altbach, P.G., Knight, J. (2007). Internationalization of higher education: Motivation and Realities. *Journal of Studies in International Education*.
- Anthony, T. D. & Kritsonis, W. (2006). Bilingualism and how it impacts the African American child. *National Journal for Publishing and Mentoring Doctoral Student Research*, 3 (1), 1–5. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED492546.pdf>
- Brosch, C. (2015). On the Conceptual History of the Term Lingua Franca. *Apples - Journal of Applied Language Studies*, 9(1), 71–85. <https://doi.org/10.17011/apples/2015090104>
- Brown, H. (1994). *Teaching by Principles: An interactive approach to language teaching*. Prentice Hall Regents.
- Cherry, K. (2023, May 3). Motivation: The Driving Force Behind Our Actions. *Verywell Mind*. <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-motivation-2795378>

- COSA (2023). Communicative Competence. [https://www.cosa.k12.or.us/sites/default/files/materials/events/65\\_communicative\\_competence.pdf](https://www.cosa.k12.or.us/sites/default/files/materials/events/65_communicative_competence.pdf)
- Council of Europe (2020). Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment – Companion volume. Council of Europe Publishing. [www.coe.int/lang-cefr](http://www.coe.int/lang-cefr).
- Gardner, R. C. (2001). Integrative motivation and second language acquisition. In Z. Dörnyei & R. Schmidt (Eds.), *Motivation and Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 1–19). Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press.
- Ghadessy, M. (1998). Language learning Strategies for some university students in Hong Kong. *Estudios Ingleses de la Universidad Complutense*, (6), 101–128.
- H. Consejo Universitario (2018). Reglamento de Internacionalización de la Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero. Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero.
- Hismanoglu, M. (2000). Language learning strategies in foreign language learning and teaching. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 6 (8).
- Oxford, R. (2001). Language learning strategies. In R. Cauter and D. Nunan (Eds.). *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to Speakers of other languages* (pp. 166–172). Cambridge University Press.
- Lasagabaster, H. D. (1998). Metalinguistic Awareness and the learning of English as an L3. *Atlantis XX*, 2, 69–79.
- Arnó-Macià, E. & Aguilar, M. (2018). Esp, emi and interculturality: how Internationalized are university curricula in Catalonia? *ESP Today*, 6(2018).
- Nagy, W. E., García, G. E, Durgunlu, A. Y. & Hancin-Bhatt, B. (1993). Spanish-English bilingual students' use of cognates in English reading—*Journal of Reading Behavior*, 25(3).
- Robson, S. (2017). Internationalization at home: internationalizing the university experience of staff and students. *Educação*, 40(3), 368–374.
- Skehan, P. (1989). *Individual differences in Second Language learning*. NY: Arnold.
- Stern, H. (1983). *Fundamental concepts of language teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Strombach, T., Strang, S., Park, S. Q., & Kenning, P. (2016). Common and distinctive approaches to motivation in different disciplines. In B. Studer & S. Knecht (2016).

- Progress in Brain Research (Vol. 229, pp. 3–23). Elsevier.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/bs.pbr.2016.06.007>
- Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero (2020). Numeralia, 7 (13), 48.
- Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero (n.d.). Historia de la Autonomía de la Universidad.  
<https://www.uagro.mx/conocen/index.php/historia>
- Ur, P. (1996). A course in language teaching: Practice and Theory. Cambridge University Press.
- Vance, N. (2019). Four language skills. EBSCO. <https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/education/four-language-skills>
- Vipond, T. (n.d.). Language Proficiency Levels. CFI.  
<https://corporatefinanceinstitute.com/resources/career/language-proficiency-levels/>
- Widdowson, H. (2003). Defining issues in English Language Teaching. Oxford University Press.