

## Self-Directed Learning in Adult Second Language Acquisition

*Aprendizaje autodirigido en la adquisición de una segunda lengua en adultos*

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### Abstract

The pervasive challenge in adult education is achieving effective second language acquisition through self-directed learning (SDL). As globalization intensifies, the demand for bilingual proficiency emerges, yet traditional educational structures often fall short in fostering necessary language skills among adults. This investigation aims to dissect the efficacy of SDL in adult second language learners, focusing on the specific factors that influence successful outcomes. Our methodology embraced a qualitative approach, concentrating on an exhaustive bibliographic review to uncover nuances in SDL practices and outcomes. This included the analysis of 49 scientific articles sourced from recognized academic databases, ensuring a robust foundation for our insights. Results from the study indicated that intrinsic motivation, access to technology, and effective use of strategic learning practices are paramount in enhancing language proficiency through SDL. However, barriers such as inadequate digital literacy and economic disparities significantly impact learning outcomes. In conclusion, while SDL presents a viable pathway for adult language acquisition, its success is heavily dependent on overcoming technological and motivational hurdles. Tailored educational strategies and support systems are essential to maximize the benefits of SDL.

**Keywords:** Self-Directed Learning; Second Language Acquisition; Adult Education; Language Proficiency; Educational Technology.

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## Resumen

El desafío generalizado en la educación de adultos es lograr la adquisición efectiva de una segunda lengua a través del aprendizaje autodirigido (SDL). A medida que se intensifica la globalización, surge la demanda de dominio bilingüe, pero las estructuras educativas tradicionales a menudo no logran fomentar las habilidades lingüísticas necesarias entre los adultos. Esta investigación tiene como objetivo analizar la eficacia del SDL en estudiantes adultos de una segunda lengua, centrándose en los factores específicos que influyen en los resultados exitosos. Nuestra metodología adoptó un enfoque cualitativo, concentrándose en una revisión bibliográfica exhaustiva para descubrir matices en las prácticas y resultados del SDL. Esto incluyó el análisis de 49 artículos científicos procedentes de bases de datos académicas reconocidas, lo que garantiza una base sólida para nuestros conocimientos. Los resultados del estudio indicaron que la motivación intrínseca, el acceso a la tecnología y el uso eficaz de prácticas de aprendizaje estratégicas son fundamentales para mejorar el dominio del idioma a través del SDL. Sin embargo, barreras como la alfabetización digital inadecuada y las disparidades económicas afectan significativamente los resultados del aprendizaje. En conclusión, si bien el SDL presenta una vía viable para la adquisición del lenguaje en adultos, su éxito depende en gran medida de la superación de obstáculos tecnológicos y motivacionales. Las estrategias educativas y los sistemas de apoyo personalizados son esenciales para maximizar los beneficios del SDL.

**Palabras clave:** Aprendizaje Autodirigido; Adquisición de una Segunda Lengua; Educación de Adultos; Dominio de Lenguas; Tecnología Educativa.

## Introduction

Self-directed learning has emerged as a crucial paradigm in adult education, particularly in the field of second language acquisition. This approach highlights the importance of learner autonomy, encouraging greater involvement and personal responsibility in the learning process. With the advancement of educational technology and the increase in accessible online resources, adults now have unprecedented opportunities to direct their own language learning (Masrul & Yuliani, 2024). This article examines how these tools and resources can be used effectively to facilitate self-directed learning in adults seeking to acquire a second language, highlighting the key challenges and strategies that emerge in this context.

In the existing literature, various competencies have been identified that learners must develop to successfully manage their self-directed learning. These include metacognitive skills, such as planning and evaluating one's own learning, as well as motivational and affective aspects that support persistence in autonomous learning (Hafizah & Sayadi, 2021). This work aims to explore how these competencies can be cultivated and optimized in the second language learning process, providing a theoretical framework that links the theory of self-directed learning with concrete pedagogical practices.

This study contributes to the existing literature by analyzing empirical data collected from adults participating in language learning programs. Using quantitative and qualitative methodologies, this article seeks to identify behavioral patterns and perceptions that characterize success in self-directed second language learning. The results hope to offer significant insights for educators and curriculum designers, in order to improve teaching and learning strategies that empower adults to take charge of their language education (Kilde, 2022).

In Ecuador, self-directed learning in second language acquisition among adults faces significant challenges, particularly in terms of access and effectiveness. Despite the growing need for bilingualism in the global context, only a small percentage of the adult population actively participates in language learning programs. In provinces such as Esmeraldas and Morona Santiago, less than 10% of adults report using online resources to learn a second language, suggesting a low penetration of educational technologies and a limited scope of autonomous learning programs (Hassan et al., 2024).

Furthermore, the lack of metacognitive skills and structured support results in many self-directed learning initiatives ending up being ineffective, with high dropout rates and low levels of language proficiency achieved. These issues underscore the urgent need to develop more robust educational infrastructures and strategies that can facilitate and encourage effective autonomous learning among Ecuadorian adults (Van & Cardoso, 2022).

The general objective of this documentary bibliographic research is to analyze and synthesize the existing literature on self-directed learning in the acquisition of a second language in adults, with a specific focus on the factors that influence its effectiveness and the methodologies applied in different geographical contexts. to identify gaps in current knowledge and propose future directions for educational research and practice in this field.

### **Theoretical development**

Acquiring a new language is a complex and time-intensive endeavor. To successfully learn a second language, it is essential for learners to devise effective strategies and plans. This approach goes beyond mere memorization of information; it involves active engagement and learning through practical application. The emphasis on learning by doing has prompted numerous researchers to explore various language learning strategies (Moummou & Fathi, 2022). These strategies are not recent innovations but have roots extending back to methods used by ancient storytellers over millennia.

According to researchers such as Willoughby & Sell (2024), learning strategies are defined as specific mental and communicative techniques that learners utilize to enhance their language acquisition and usage. Moummou & Fathi (2022), highlight the prevailing belief in the field that strategic focus not only bolsters the effectiveness of learners but also fosters a more learner-centered approach. By integrating these strategies, learners can optimize their language learning process, making it more efficient and tailored to their individual needs.

Exposure to learning strategies often encourages learners to take a more proactive role in enhancing their own learning effectiveness. Numerous researchers have offered definitions of what constitutes language learning strategies, yet a common thread runs through these various definitions (Dođru & Ozen, 2023). Generally, language learning strategies are described as specific steps,

actions, techniques, approaches, and procedures employed to deepen understanding of specific information in language learning. These strategies are tailored to facilitate easier language acquisition, adapting to individual learners' styles and preferences.

As individual learning styles vary, so too do the strategies employed by each learner, shaped by their unique preferences. According to Mitchell (2023), learning strategies are typically organized into three distinct categories. This classification helps in understanding the different ways learners approach language learning, indicating a diverse set of tools that cater to various learning needs and enhancing the overall approach to language education.

### **Autonomy**

As defined in the literature of cognitive psychology, autonomy refers to the extent to which a person sees himself as capable of learning materials and performing tasks. There is abundant evidence in the literature that L2 autonomy is one of the most significant determinants of L2 acquisition. In fact, the early SDL programs were designed based on the proposition that the most important purpose of L2 teaching should be to help learners become autonomous in their efforts to acquire an L2 (Subekti, 2021).

The argument was that the extent of L2 input learners would receive in L2 classrooms is limited in both quantity and quality and thus, learners should be empowered to seek L2 input outside of the institutional context where the teacher or other instructional resources are not available to provide the learner with L2 input. An extreme version of this position is that L2 acquisition has happened when the learner has become autonomous in L2 learning. In other words, this version contends that L2 teaching is not about teaching the L2; rather, it is about making learners independent in their L2 learning attempts (Moradi, 2018).

### **Self-directed learning**

Self-directed learning of a second language in adults refers to a learning process where individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, to diagnose their learning needs, formulate learning goals, identify human and material resources for learning, choose and implement appropriate learning strategies, and evaluate learning outcomes. This method is particularly significant in adult education as it empowers learners to take control of their language acquisition process, tailoring it to fit their personal, academic, or professional needs (Rai et al., 2016).

This approach contrasts with traditional, structured classroom learning and is often facilitated by various tools and resources, such as online courses, language learning apps, social media groups, and real-world practice through conversations with native speakers. Adults engaging in self-directed learning often leverage their existing knowledge and life experiences, which can help contextualize and deepen their understanding of the new language (Sari & Ashadi, 2020).

## Acquisition of a second language

The acquisition of a second language in adults refers to the process through which individuals beyond the critical period of early childhood learn and internalize a language other than their native tongue. This process can be significantly different from how children learn their first language, often requiring more deliberate effort and the use of explicit learning strategies (Givohr et al., 2018). Adult learners typically rely on their existing cognitive skills, such as problem-solving and memory, to grasp and apply new language rules.

They often benefit from a structured learning environment, where grammatical rules, vocabulary, and pronunciation are explicitly taught and practiced. Unlike children, who acquire language through natural immersion and social interaction, adults might need to overcome more pronounced barriers such as language transfer issues, where habits from the native language interfere with learning the new one (Umiera et al., 2018).

Furthermore, adult second language acquisition is influenced by factors such as motivation, exposure, and the use of the language in daily life. Adults who are highly motivated—whether for personal, professional, or social reasons—tend to achieve higher levels of fluency and competence in the second language. Practical exposure to the language, whether through living in a language-rich environment, engaging with media in the target language, or interacting with native speakers, also plays a critical role (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2017).

The cognitive flexibility of the adult learner, which includes the ability to adapt learning strategies to suit individual needs and contexts, greatly enhances the acquisition process. Therefore, while adults may face more initial difficulties compared to young children, their focused and intentional approach to learning can lead to successful language acquisition.

Figure 1. Key points about self-directed learning in adult second language learners.



Source: self-made Masrul & Yuliani (2024).

### ***Learner autonomy***

Adults typically possess a more refined understanding of their own learning styles and preferences compared to children, a factor that significantly benefits self-directed learning. This awareness enables them to selectively employ methods, resources, and strategies that align with their personal learning modalities. For instance, a visually-oriented learner might prefer resources like charts and videos, while a kinesthetic learner might seek interactive experiences or physical engagement with the language, such as role-playing conversations (Hafizah & Sayadi, 2021).

### ***Integration of previous experience***

Adults bring a wealth of work and personal experiences into their language learning journey, which significantly enhances the relevance and application of the new language to their daily lives. By drawing on professional jargon or industry-specific vocabulary, they can immediately apply new linguistic skills in practical contexts, such as business meetings or technical discussions. Similarly, personal experiences and cultural knowledge allow adult learners to make deeper connections with the language, fostering a better understanding of its nuances and cultural subtleties (Kilde, 2022).

### ***Motivation and goals***

In self-directed learning, the ability of adults to set their own goals and objectives plays a crucial role in increasing their motivation. By tailoring their learning targets to meet specific professional, personal, or academic needs, learners are more likely to stay engaged and committed to their language studies. For example, a professional might set a goal to master business communication in a second language to advance their career, while a traveler might focus on conversational skills for better immersion in foreign cultures (Hassan et al., 2024).

### ***Flexibility and resources***

Self-directed learning offers adults unparalleled flexibility in choosing when, where, and how they engage with their studies, an advantage particularly valuable for those juggling work or family commitments. This flexibility means that learning can happen during a morning commute, on a lunch break, late at night, or any other time that fits into a busy schedule. It also allows learners to select the learning environment that best suits their needs, whether that's a quiet home office, a bustling café, or a library (Van & Cardoso, 2022).

## **Challenges and support**

Although self-directed learning offers many advantages, it can also present challenges such as a lack of structure and formal support. In this sense, it is useful for learners to look for learning communities or form study groups with others who are learning the same language.

## **Methodology**

In this section, the methodology used for the research will be explained in detail, highlighting its qualitative approach. This approach focuses on an exhaustive bibliographic review that allows contextualizing and delving into the key themes of the study. Likewise, the sample population will be described, detailing the selection criteria and representativeness within the research field. This methodology is designed to capture the deep perspectives and experiences of the subjects involved, providing a rich and nuanced understanding of the issues studied. The choice of a qualitative methodology reflects the interest in understanding the complexities inherent in human behaviors and perceptions, beyond what quantitative data could reveal.

### **Qualitative approach**

The qualitative approach in research refers to methodologies that primarily focus on understanding human behavior, thoughts, and experiences from the perspective of those being studied. This approach is rooted in the social sciences and aims to gather rich, detailed data through methods such as interviews, focus groups, ethnographic research, and content analysis of texts and media. Unlike quantitative research, which seeks to quantify data and typically uses statistical analysis, qualitative research aims to explore various aspects of a topic in-depth, providing complex descriptions and interpretations of social phenomena (Kalra et al., 2021).

The qualitative approach allows us to understand internal processes, such as personalized learning strategies, autonomous decisions and the influence of life experiences on learning a new language. Using techniques such as interviews, observations and analysis of learning diaries, qualitative research offers detailed insight into how adults manage their own learning, identifying patterns and themes that emerge in natural and personal contexts.

### **Bibliographic study**

A literature study is a form of research that focuses on the review and analysis of written and published material on a specific topic. This type of study involves the collection, evaluation, and synthesis of existing sources such as books, journal articles, theses, and other academic documents to obtain an in-depth understanding of the existing literature in a particular field (Guamán et al., 2021). The primary objective of a literature study is to identify, describe, and understand trends, research gaps, and current debates within the study area.



The use of literature study is crucial because it provides a solid theoretical foundation and a comprehensive understanding of the current state of knowledge in this field. By extensively reviewing and analyzing the existing literature, the main theories, methods and previous results that have marked research in this area can be identified. This allows us to detect gaps in previous studies, understand the various perspectives and approaches that have been adopted, and recognize best practices and common challenges faced by adults in the autonomous learning process.

### Study sample

For the research, 60 scientific articles were initially selected from recognized academic databases, including Scopus. The selection was based on the use of specific keywords such as “self-directed learning”, “acquisition” and “second language”, which ensured the relevance and specificity of the materials with respect to the topic of study. After a meticulous review process that evaluated the relevance and contribution of each article to the understanding of the phenomenon investigated, 11 articles were discarded that did not meet the established inclusion criteria, such as the depth of the analysis or the direct relationship with self-directed learning. of languages in adults. Thus, the final sample consisted of 49 carefully chosen articles that provide a comprehensive and diverse view of the dynamics and factors involved in this learning process, providing a solid basis for an exhaustive and detailed analysis.

## Results

### Facilitating Factors and Barriers

Self-directed learning in adults is influenced by a complex interplay of factors that can either facilitate or impede the learning process. One of the primary facilitators is motivation. Adult learners often bring a high level of intrinsic motivation to their educational endeavors, driven by specific personal, professional, or academic goals. This motivation is critical in maintaining focus and persistence through the challenges of learning. However, if the learning outcomes seem irrelevant or if the adult learner faces excessive stress or pressure, motivation can wane, significantly hindering progress (Hafizah & Sayadi, 2021).

*Cognitive factors* also play a crucial role in self-directed learning. Adults typically have established cognitive frameworks and a wealth of life experiences that they can draw upon during learning. These can be double-edged swords; on one hand, they provide a rich resource for making connections and understanding new concepts through the lens of prior knowledge. On the other hand, existing cognitive biases or rigid thinking patterns can make it challenging to assimilate new information or adapt to new ways of thinking (Hassan et al., 2024).



*Socio-economic factors* are also significant determinants in the success of self-directed learning. Adults with access to supportive learning environments, whether through community learning centers, libraries, or educational institutions, tend to find greater success. These supports can mitigate the challenges posed by limited personal or financial resources. Conversely, those who face economic hardships may struggle with accessing necessary resources like books, technology, and quiet spaces conducive to study. Furthermore, individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds might have limited exposure to learning opportunities or models of successful self-directed learning, which can impede their ability to engage effectively in such activities (Moummou & Fathi, 2022).

*Technology* is another critical factor in modern self-directed learning. With the advent of the internet, e-learning platforms, and digital libraries, adults now have unprecedented access to educational resources. Technology can facilitate learning by providing flexible access to information and learning communities regardless of geographical and time constraints. However, technological factors can also serve as barriers. Lack of digital literacy, limited access to reliable internet services, and the digital divide can significantly hinder an adult's ability to benefit from these resources. For those adept with technology, it can greatly enhance their learning experiences, while for others, it can be a source of frustration and a barrier to learning (Doğru & Ozen, 2023).

Self-directed learning in adults is a multifaceted process influenced by a variety of factors that can either promote or obstruct their learning journey. Understanding these factors—motivational, cognitive, socio-economic, and technological—is essential for designing supportive structures that facilitate effective learning. For educators and policymakers, addressing these barriers and leveraging facilitators is key to enhancing adult education and empowering individuals to engage successfully in self-directed learning Endeavors (Subekti, 2021).

### **Effective learning strategies that adults**

*Social interactions* also play a critical role as a learning strategy in the self-directed acquisition of a second language. Engaging with native speakers and other learners can greatly enhance linguistic skills and provide real-life contexts for language use. Adults might join language exchange groups, participate in community language classes, or use social media platforms to connect with language partners (Sari & Ashadi, 2020). These interactions not only help in practicing speaking and listening skills but also deepen understanding of cultural nuances, which are often pivotal for achieving fluency.

*Metacognitive strategies* are equally important in self-directed learning scenarios. Adults benefit from actively monitoring and regulating their learning processes. This involves setting clear goals, planning learning sessions, tracking progress, and adjusting methods as necessary. Effective self-directed learners frequently assess their understanding and adapt their strategies, such as allocating more time to challenging aspects of the language or experimenting with different learning resources until they find the most effective ones (Umiera et al., 2018).

Another significant strategy involves creating a structured learning environment. Even in self-directed settings, the importance of structure cannot be overstated. Adults often need to establish a dedicated study schedule and environment that minimizes distractions and maximizes focus. Whether it's setting aside specific hours in the day for study or creating a quiet, organized space, these structural elements can significantly enhance the efficiency of learning.

Finally, *integrating the new language* into daily life is a powerful strategy for adult learners. This might involve listening to music, watching films and TV shows in the target language, or reading books and articles. Making the language a part of everyday activities helps in normalizing its use and improving retention. It transforms learning from a segregated task into an integral part of daily life, thereby increasing exposure and opportunities to use the language in diverse contexts (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2017).

### Impact of Technologies

Modern technologies, particularly mobile applications and online platforms have revolutionized the way adults engage in self-directed language learning. Mobile applications designed for language learning, such as Duolingo, Babbel, and Memrise, offer user-friendly interfaces that make learning accessible and engaging. These apps utilize gamification strategies to motivate learners by incorporating points, levels, and badges as rewards for completing lessons and challenges (Umiera et al., 2018).

Online platforms also play a pivotal role in self-directed language learning by providing a plethora of resources tailored to diverse learning needs and preferences. Websites like Rosetta Stone, FluentU, and Coursera offer structured courses that range from beginner to advanced levels. These platforms often include interactive components such as video lessons, pronunciation guides, and automated feedback on exercises, which help learners to improve their language skills systematically (Sari & Ashadi, 2020).

Another significant advantage of modern technologies in language learning is the opportunity for real-time interaction with native speakers and language communities worldwide. Platforms such as Tandem and HelloTalk facilitate language exchange by connecting learners with native speakers through text, voice, and video chats. This real-world interaction not only enhances linguistic skills but also provides cultural insights, which are invaluable for gaining fluency and understanding the social context of the language (Moradi, 2018). Such interactions mirror immersive language experiences without the need for travel, making them both cost-effective and convenient.

Furthermore, modern technologies often incorporate sophisticated tools for tracking progress and personalizing learning paths. Many language learning apps and online platforms come with dashboards that provide detailed analytics on the learner's performance, areas of strength, and weaknesses (Subekti, 2021). These insights allow learners to monitor their progress over time and make informed decisions about what learning strategies to focus on next. This self-awareness and ability to tailor one's learning journey significantly boost the effectiveness of self-directed learning.

## Learning outcomes

Evaluating learning outcomes in self-directed language learning involves assessing various aspects, primarily focusing on linguistic competence and learner satisfaction. Linguistic competence is typically measured through proficiency in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing the target language. Self-directed learners can gauge their competence through standardized language tests, self-assessment tools, or feedback from native speakers. Such evaluations help in determining the effectiveness of the learning strategies and resources employed, revealing areas where the learner has improved and where additional focus is needed (Moradi, 2018).

Learner satisfaction is another crucial outcome to evaluate in self-directed language learning. Satisfaction in this context relates to how fulfilling the learning experience is for the individual. This can be influenced by factors such as the relevance of the learning content to the learner's goals, the usability of the learning platforms, and the extent to which the learner feels progress towards their objectives. Satisfaction is often gauged through surveys, interviews, or informal feedback mechanisms (Rai et al., 2016).

The self-directed approach also allows for the integration of various learning tools and methodologies, which can lead to a more holistic development of language skills. For example, learners who utilize a combination of mobile apps, real-world practice, and formal courses might develop a more balanced skill set than those who rely on a single method. This holistic development is crucial for achieving not just functional proficiency but also a deeper linguistic competence that includes cultural and idiomatic understanding (Doğru & Ozen, 2023).

Moreover, the technology-driven aspects of self-directed learning provide analytics and tracking features that offer insights into specific competencies and progress metrics. These tools help learners identify patterns in their learning, areas of strength, and aspects that require more intensive practice. The immediate feedback provided by digital platforms facilitates quicker adjustments in learning strategies, promoting a more efficient learning process that is closely aligned with personal progress and goals.

## Comparison with Other Methods

Self-directed learning in language acquisition offers a distinct contrast to traditional classroom-based methods in several key areas, including effectiveness, efficiency, and learner satisfaction. One of the primary advantages of self-directed learning is its effectiveness, which is largely driven by the ability to tailor the learning experience to individual preferences and needs (Willoughby & Sell, 2024).

Unlike traditional settings where the curriculum is fixed and may not align perfectly with every learner's goals or learning style, self-directed learners can choose resources and strategies that best match their specific objectives and learning pace (Hassan et al., 2024).

In terms of efficiency, self-directed learning methods can often outpace traditional approaches. Traditional language classes typically follow a set schedule and progress at a pace that may not suit all learners. In contrast, self-directed learning allows individuals to progress at their own pace, potentially accelerating their learning when they devote more time and resources to it. This can be particularly beneficial for motivated learners who wish to achieve fluency faster than what a standard classroom timeline permits (Hafizah & Sayadi, 2021).

Learner satisfaction is another crucial factor where self-directed learning often excels compared to traditional methods. Self-directed learners have the autonomy to make choices about what, how, when, and where they learn, which can significantly increase their satisfaction and intrinsic motivation. This sense of control and personalization makes the learning process more enjoyable and engaging, which is essential for long-term commitment and success in language learning. In contrast, traditional classrooms may impose constraints that can lead to frustration and disengagement, particularly among adult learners who value flexibility and relevance in their educational pursuits.

However, it's important to note that self-directed learning requires a high degree of self-motivation and discipline, which can be a significant challenge for some learners. Traditional classroom environments provide structure, regular schedules, and direct support from teachers, which can benefit learners who thrive under guided instruction and find it difficult to maintain consistency on their own. In these cases, the external motivation and support provided by traditional methods can lead to better outcomes for certain individuals.

## Discussion

When adults engage in self-directed learning to acquire a second language, they often employ a range of effective learning strategies that cater to their personal needs and lifestyles. One of the most prominent strategies is the use of digital resources. The digital age has ushered in a wealth of online tools, from language learning apps and interactive websites to virtual classrooms and video tutorials, all of which provide flexible, on-demand access to language learning materials. These tools can adapt to individual learning speeds and styles, offering personalized pathways to language mastery (Van & Cardoso, 2022).

These strategies, when combined, offer a robust framework for adults learning a second language through self-directed means. By leveraging digital tools, engaging in social interactions, applying metacognitive techniques, maintaining structured learning environments, and integrating language use into daily life, adult learners can optimize their language learning process and achieve greater fluency and confidence in their new language (Kilde, 2022).

Modern technologies such as mobile applications and online platforms are indispensable tools in the realm of self-directed language learning. They offer flexibility, a variety of learning modalities, and connectivity with global language communities, all of which are essential for effective language acquisition. As technology continues to evolve, its role in facilitating self-directed learning is likely to grow even more integral, providing learners with innovative ways to engage with and master new languages more efficiently and enjoyably (Masrul & Yuliani, 2024).

Evaluating learning outcomes in self-directed language learning centers on assessing linguistic competence and learner satisfaction, which are critical for determining the approach's overall effectiveness. These evaluations are enhanced by the flexibility and adaptability of self-directed methods, the integration of diverse learning tools, and the advanced tracking and feedback capabilities of modern educational technologies (Van & Cardoso, 2022). Together, these factors contribute to a robust framework for individuals to achieve their language learning objectives effectively and satisfyingly.

The comparison between self-directed learning and traditional language learning methods reveals significant differences in effectiveness, efficiency, and learner satisfaction. While self-directed learning offers customization, flexibility, and potentially faster progress, it demands considerable self-motivation and discipline. Traditional methods provide structured learning environments and support that may be more suitable for learners who prefer a guided approach (Hafizah & Sayadi, 2021).

## Conclusions

The findings underscored the crucial role of learner autonomy and intrinsic motivation in successful self-directed language learning. Adults who engaged in SDL were driven by personal, professional, or academic goals, which not only sustained their motivation but also influenced the overall effectiveness of their learning process. This suggests that motivation is a key determinant in maintaining focus and persistence, particularly when learners face the inherent challenges of self-learning environments.

The paper highlighted the dual role of technology in SDL, serving both as a facilitator and a barrier. Modern tools such as mobile applications and online platforms revolutionized language learning by making resources widely accessible and supporting flexible, personalized learning pathways. However, challenges like digital literacy and access to reliable internet services could hinder the learning process, indicating that technological integration needs to be carefully managed to support all learners effectively.

It was concluded that employing effective learning strategies—such as engaging with native speakers, using structured learning environments, and integrating language use into daily activities—significantly enhanced language acquisition among adults. These strategies enabled learners to optimize their learning process and achieve a higher level of fluency and linguistic competence, demonstrating that strategic, well-structured approaches are essential in maximizing the benefits of SDL in language learning.

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