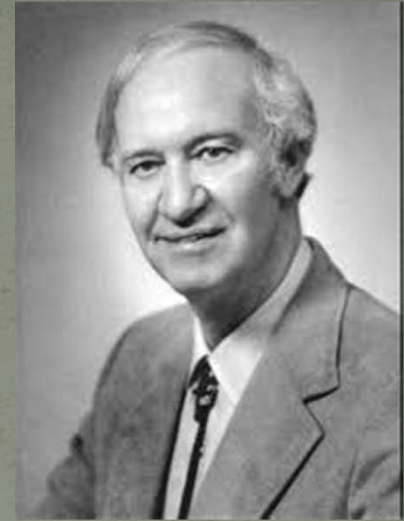


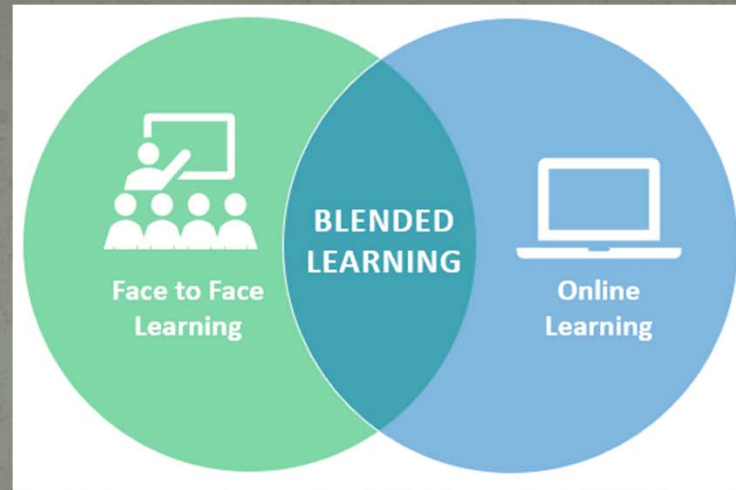
**Some Resources
for Independent Learning
in the Spanish Language Program
at the Foreign Service Institute**

Strategies for Effective Independent Learning
LEARN Workshop

Carlos Parra, PhD



Independent Learning
is a principle of Adult Education
Malcolm Knowles



Independent learning
is increasingly interacting
with traditional education
through hybrid courses
in academic settings

FSI's Spanish Curriculum
Hacia Adelante

FSI's Spanish Calendar

FSI's Spanish Section *One-on-one*

Weekly presentations
on destination countries

Other activities to foster autonomy

What are the characteristics
of an
Independent Learner?

Responses based on experience
of some learners of Spanish
at FSI

Time Management

Setting priorities Flexibility

Acknowledgment of challenges **Enjoyment**

Compromise Decision making

Development of **habits**

Motivation



The Spanish Language Program at the Foreign Service Institute

A Curriculum for Independent Learning

Paul Nation's
Principle of the Four Strands

Meaning focused input

(Reading – Listening)

Main focus: Understanding

Meaning focused output

(Speaking – *Writing*)

Main focus: Oral production

Fluency Development

Best use of learning

Familiar/larger content
faster performance

Language focused learning

(Pronunciation, spelling,
vocabulary, grammar,
discourse)

Main focus: Language awareness

Independent learning
requires a curriculum
that is not only accessible
but flexible,
dynamic,
and interactive

FSI's *Hacia Adelante* is

accessible – online platform
flexible – below/above average
dynamic – constantly changing
interactive

<https://sites.google.com/fan.gov/newhaciaadelante/inicio>



Bienvenidos a Hacia Adelante

Fase 1

Fase 2

Fase 3

Fase 4



tecas



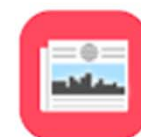
Gramática



Lectura extensa



Medios digitales



HA Noticias



La

FSI's flipped classroom approach
in the Spanish language program
aims at integrating
the best of both worlds:

1. learners prepare for class
as teachers do
2. learners attend lessons

How do students prepare for class?

Daily tasks

Weekly tasks

Bi-weekly tasks

FSI's Spanish Calendar

An invaluable tool

<https://calendar.google.com/calendar/r?tab=mc>

MON

3

TUE

4

WED

5

THU

6

FRI

7

Fase 3 - Week 1 / Immigration and Drug Trafficking

Independent study 7:30 - 8:30am	Independent study 7:30 - 8:30am One-on-one, 7:40	Independent study 7:30 - 8:30am	Independent study 7:30 - 8:30am	Independent study 7:30 - 8:30am
Warm-Up and Extensive Reading 8:30 - 9:30am	Warm-Up and Extensive Reading 8:30 - 9:30am	Warm-Up and Extensive Reading 8:30 - 9:30am	Warm-Up and Extensive Reading 8:30 - 9:30am	Warm-Up and Extensive Reading 8:30 - 9:30am
Focus on Speaking: Artículos disparadores 9:30 - 10:30am	Focus on Speaking: Artículos disparadores 9:30 - 10:30am	Focus on Speaking: Artículos disparadores 9:30 - 10:30am	Focus on Speaking: Artículos disparadores 9:30 - 10:30am	Focus on Speaking: Artículos disparadores 9:30 - 10:30am
Focus on Listening 10:30 - 11:30am	Focus on Listening 10:30 - 11:30am	Focus on Listening 10:30 - 11:30am	Focus on Listening 10:30 - 11:30am	Focus on Listening 10:30 - 11:30am
Mid-day class recess 11:30am - 1:30pm	Mid-day class recess 11:30am - 1:30pm One-on-one, 12:15pm	Mid-day class recess 11:30am - 1:30pm Afternoon Warm-Up and Intensive Reading 12:30 - 1:30pm	Mid-day class recess 11:30am - 1:30pm Thompson, Cody F-42	Mid-day class recess 11:30am - 1:30pm
Afternoon Warm-Up and Intensive Reading 1:30 - 2:30pm	Special programs - Individual study - No class 1:30 - 2:30pm	Administrative Wednesday 1:30 - 4:30pm	Afternoon Warm-Up and Intensive Reading 1:30 - 2:30pm	Afternoon Warm-Up and Intensive Reading 1:30 - 2:30pm
Focus on Speaking and Multiple Fluency 2:30 - 3:30pm	Individual study 2:30 - 3:30pm		An Interview with Marlene Vargas 2:30 - 3:30pm	Focus on Speaking and Multiple Fluency 2:30 - 3:30pm
Individual study 3:30 - 4:30pm	Individual study 3:30 - 4:30pm		Individual study 3:30 - 4:30pm	Individual study 3:30 - 4:30pm

“I'm very impressed with the Hacia Adelante content. Sure, not every reading pertains to my specialty within the Foreign Service, but it's great that the curriculum creators have worked so hard to present a holistic platform from which diplomats can learn Spanish related to the wide variety of work that we accomplish overseas. **Given time constraints, my interactions with the resources varies depending on the day, ranging from merely reading the text and reviewing the vocabulary once to doing deep dives of the texts/audios with repetition. I'm glad the curriculum allows that level of flexibility.**”

Learner A

Time management

Setting priorities

Flexibility

Independent learning
also requires
independent facilitators
willing to get learners take charge
of their own learning process

In addition to the instructor,
learners of Spanish at FSI
count on a learning consultant,
learning specialists
for special weekly programs,
a language lab coach,
and a language learning supervisor.

Over half of the classroom program
can be spent with learners
doing individual work.

Paul Nation



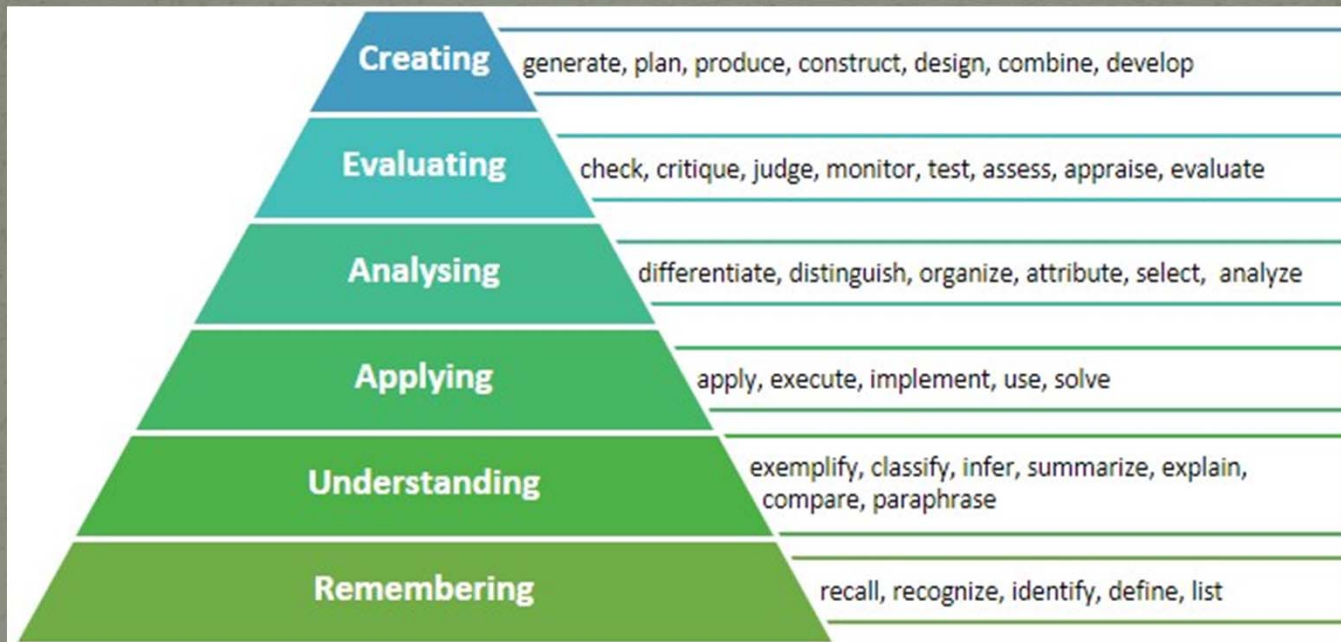
**Independent learning
through a bi-weekly one-on-one
for debriefing and self-evaluation**

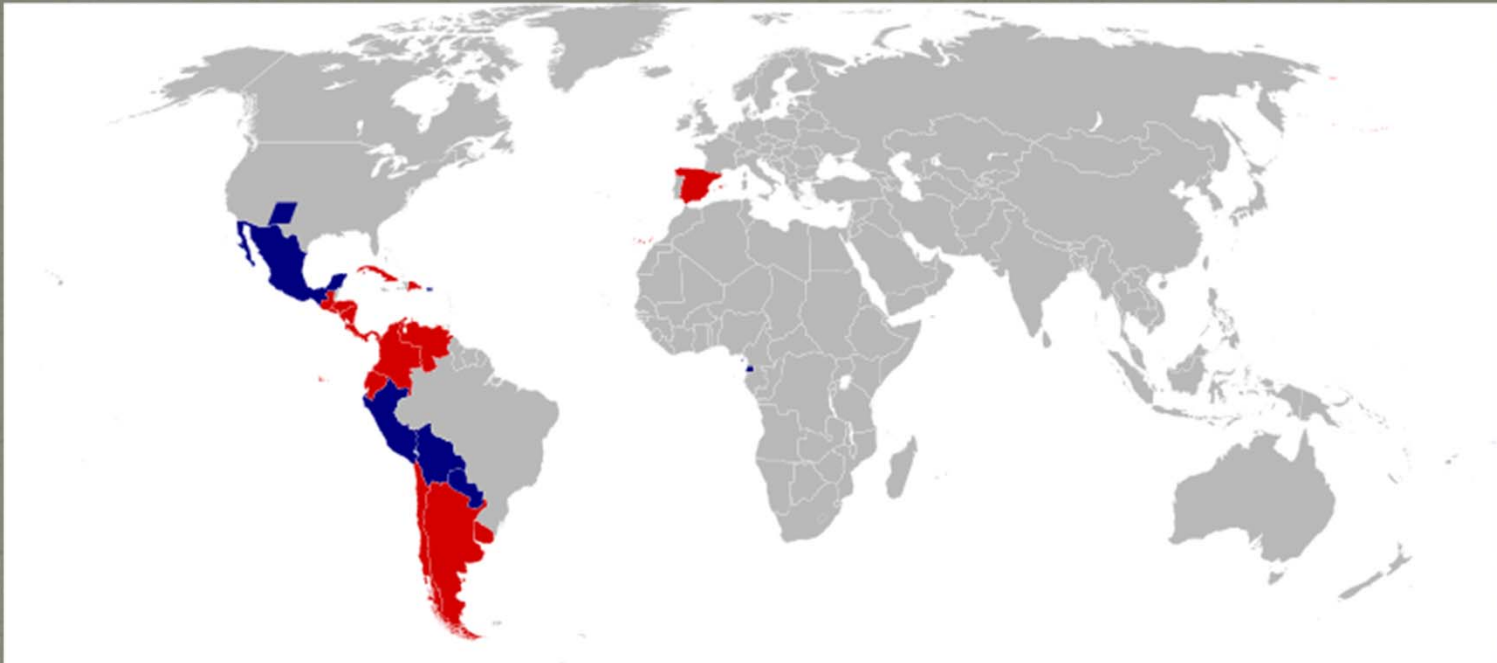
You must come prepared to answer the following questions:

1. What progress do I realize I am making? Give specific examples.
2. What obstacles am I facing personally? Give specific examples.
3. What elements in our daily activities do I find most helpful? Give specific examples.
4. What elements in our daily activities do I find most challenging? Give specific examples.

The unexamined class
is not worth taking
(nor teaching)

Bloom's levels of cognitive learning





Independent learning
through weekly presentation
on the destination country

Lo Mejor de ...

Lo Mejor de México

Lo Mejor de Nicaragua

Lo Mejor de Colombia

Lo Mejor de Bolivia

Turismo en Bolivia
El Lago de Nicaragua
Campeche: el mejor estado mexicano
Lo mejor de Colombia: la naturaleza
La comida típica de Nicaragua
La Ciclovía de Bogotá
La Guerra del Agua en Bolivia
Lo mejor de México: Monterrey
El Tejo: el deporte nacional de Colombia
Los Garífuna de Nicaragua
Nuevo León: un estado extraordinario
Las Cholitas de Bolivia
Arte y literatura de Nicaragua
El mercado Paloquemao de Bogotá
La lucha libre en México

La Guerra del Agua



¿Que fue la Guerra del Agua?

- A. Una guerra entre los peces y los cangrejos en el océano pacifico.
- B. La última película de Tom Cruise.
- C. El nombre del campeonato mundial de waterpolo.
- D. Una serie de protestas y manifestaciones populares que tuvieron lugar en Cochabamba en contra de la privatización del agua potable municipal.

¿Dónde esta la sede de
compañía de Bechtel?

A. Moscú, Rusia

B. FSI

C. Mordor

D. Reston, VA





JUGADORES DEL TEJO
TIENEN UNA META DE
PARTICIPAR EN ESTOS
JUEGOS INTERNACIONALES



Lo mejor de Colombia:
el café





LOS GARÍFUNA DE NICARAGUA



*ARTE Y LITERATURA DE
NICARAGUA*







Lo mejor de Colombia—el Mercado
Paloquemao

NICARAGUA:



EL JUEGO HERMOSO

CDMX
CIUDAD DE MÉXICO



El Consejo Mundial de Lucha Libre
se une al merecido reconocimiento promovido por la
Secretaría de Cultura Capitalina ante el
Gobierno de la Ciudad de México

al decretar a:

LA LUCHA LIBRE

"Patrimonio Cultural Intangible de la CDMX"

MÁS ESPECTACULAR DE LOS DEPORTES Y EL MÁS DEPORTIVO DE LOS ESPECTÁCULOS

CMLL: 85 Años de Historia

1933-2018

30 de Noviembre del 2018 || Arena México, CDMX



**Weekly presentation
and
The Four Strands**

**Meaningful Input
Meaningful Output
Language-Focused Learning
Fluency**

“While **preparation for these presentations is no small task**, I do enjoy the opportunity to delve into the exciting aspects about my host country. Furthermore, I've enjoyed learning about the other WHA posts via the presentations of my colleagues.”

Learner A

Acknowledgement of challenges

“I have really enjoyed the opportunity to practice presenting skills while also learning about my country. Even reading Wikipedia articles in Spanish while in the process of researching topics has been an interesting exercise. The biggest downside I can identify is that between the research, writing/outlining my script, and powerpoint I would estimate that this task took several hours at lunch on Wed/Thurs and often several hours on Thursday evenings to complete. **It definitely overrode a lot of my other study intentions on Thursdays**, and it usually resulted in me doing the bare minimum of readings and other class prep for Friday. I personally did not mind this, as I really find the presentation task to be very interesting.”

Learner B

Enjoyment

Time restrictions

Compromise

Other activities that foster independent learning

1. Daily news
2. Co-facilitation twice a week



Independent learning
through a daily news report
(research, choice of news, write-up and email
a short paragraph, oral delivery)

**Daily News Report
and
The Four Strands**

**Meaningful Input
Meaningful Output
Language-Focused Learning
Fluency**

“The daily news reporting has been one of my favorite components to class. First, this has required me to become acquainted with various news sources in future host country. Second, this has helped me to hone my presentation skills. Finally, **I have reached a decision that each article I select be related to a generalized theme on which I can present** (in preparation for our test). For example, if the article pertains to healthcare in the United States, then I will build an outline related to my perspective on that matter. **This has allowed me to use assignments to reinforce my independent study of Spanish beyond the curriculum.**”

Learner A

Decision making

Personal initiative

Creativity in learning planning

“I really appreciate this task, because I like having the structure of a somewhat specific assignment (to find and summarize a news article) but to **still have flexibility within the parameters to choose anything that interests me.** The news articles have helped me get more comfortable with reading and understanding real life situations in outlets intended for native speakers. I find that I usually spend a long time choosing an article simply because I end up reading multiple articles **before I decide on one** (which is not a bad thing!). I also have enjoyed finding articles that relate to the main themes of our class (environment, public health, immigration in particular) and recognizing the vocabulary we learned in class.”

Learner B

Flexibility to choose content



Personal interest

Motivation

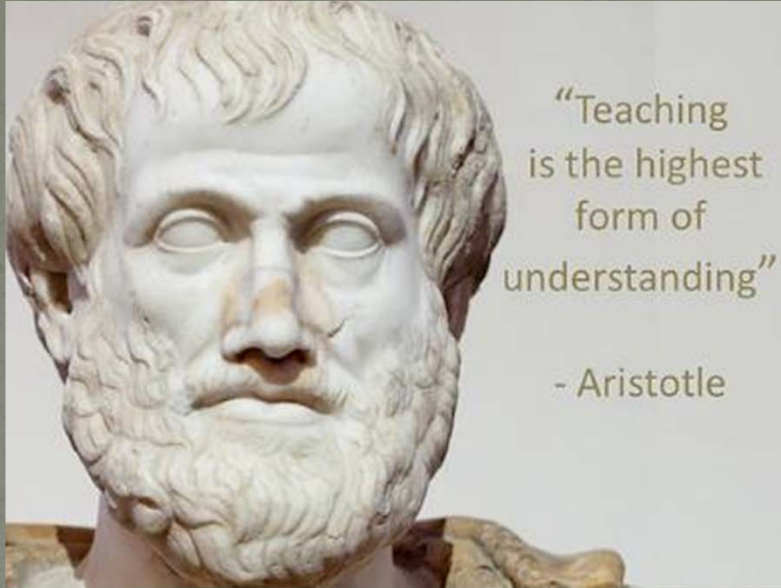
“The daily news articles have allowed me to find topics that are not only interesting to me but have allowed me to increase my knowledge of my onward assignment. This has the double benefit of increasing my language ability as well as my substantive knowledge of the country, both of which will be valuable once arriving to post. One downside has been that I find myself spending too much time trying to find the "right" article. **With limited time, this often leads to me sacrificing other aspects of my studies searching for news articles.**”

Learner C

Relevance for onward assignment

Decision making

Prioritizing



Independent learning
through learner's co-teaching
for twenty minutes
twice a week

Modeling

**Student co-teaching
and
The Four Strands**

**Meaningful Input
Meaningful Output
Language-Focused Learning
Fluency**

“I appreciate the opportunity to lead the presentation of a text a couple times a week. **I think that if I am really short on time, this is the area that is most easily streamlined** and most routine-- which offers great flexibility. However, sometimes it's a nice platform to reinforce parts of the curriculum.”

Learner A

Routine

•

Development of habits

“For me, the utility of this has been to force me to do a "deep dive" of at least one of the readings several times a week. I read each text every day, but on the days where I have to lead the text, I find that I get a lot more out of the reading because I come at it from a more critical eye (ex. **thinking to myself**: What would I ask someone to test comprehension? What words tripped me up and what ones do I think would trip up my peers? etc). I also think it has helped me **practice giving pseudo-commands and instructions**, which I had never learned before. The only downside I have found is that **it is hard to come up with creative ways to make the vocabulary practice interesting!**”

Learner B

Strategy design
Bloom's top skill



Leadership of meetings

“When leading the discussion, I enjoyed selecting different activities for the lessons I was in charge of as well as seeing what my colleagues selected. If there were certain aspects that I personally needed to focus on I could direct the discussions to those, which was very useful for me.”

Learner C

Enjoyment

Freedom to choose activities
(crosswords, multiple choice, fill-
in-the-blanks)

Humor - Fun

“As with the news articles, **I have appreciated being able to choose topics that interest me** and increase my understanding of my host country. However, in much the same way, I often spent too much time trying to think of the topics to speak about rather than focusing on language learning.”

Learner C

Gratefulness

Motivation

Through these four activities
independent students
enhance the curriculum,
act as facilitators,
work on Area Studies,
and appraise their progress.

Thanks!

Language Training Supervisors
Language Training Specialists
Language and Culture Instructors
FSI